Ability to search multiple instances

Ability to search

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User types involved

- Faculty user type
- Researcher user type
- Administrator user type

Narrative User Story (for sharing/review/voting)

A user conducting a search on a single VIVO instance should be able to easily expand the search to include multiple other VIVO installations.

Background

Because VIVO is intended to provide (inter)national networking for scientists, there exists a need to execute a search that spans more than one VIVO instance. This could include all known VIVO instances, or a limited pre-selected group relevant to a particular institution.

Weill Cornell Medical College, for instance, could potentially have a need for five different search scopes:

1. "Local search: WCMC-only (1 VIVO instance);
2. "University search": Cornell University + WCMC (2 VIVO instances);
3. "CTSC search": a search that covers the local CTSA consortium (3-4 instances);
4. "National search": all of the core VIVO grant schools (7 instances)
5. "Worldwide search": every known instance of VIVO anywhere (instances)

The search results screen need to clearly indicate the scope of the search (local vs. multi-site) and allow for users to easily alter that part of the query.

Wish list for improvement

- Administrators being able to custom-define "networks" of VIVO instances and have those appear as search options. (For instance, a CTSA consortium, or other cross-institution working groups.)

Technical considerations

Because very large search networks could easily have millions of graph nodes in the search index, performance considerations must be considered, including whether or not it would be possible to off-load this to a separate server. (While such search can be offloaded currently to the Drupal project previously built, it does not integrate well back into VIVO proper.)

Priority or staging considerations

Some of this work has already been done as an outside tool for Drupal that uses the Apache Solr indexes to create a cross-site search – see vivosearch. org.

Two components – "Linked data index builder improvements" and "Vivosearch.org Drupal site (beta)" address next steps for multiple-VIVO search.