# ANNUAL REPORT 2026



Specify
Collections Consortium

# Credits

**FRONT COVER**
Scherz M, Johansson D K (2026). NHMD Herpetology Collection. Natural History Museum of Denmark. Occurrence dataset https://doi.org/10.15468/52vc7r accessed via GBIF.org on 2026-07-16. https://gbif.org/occurrence/5160061292

**CREDITS**
Bottom left: DeCicco L, Moyle R (2026). KUBI Ornithology Collection. University of Kansas Biodiversity Institute. Occurrence dataset https://doi.org/10.15468/hlh5ud accessed via GBIF.org on 2026-07-16. https://gbif.org/occurrence/1937485463

**PAGE 5**
Top: University of Kansas Biodiversity Institute Collection, Lawrence, KS, United States, photo by Brian Goodman

Lower left: University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS, United States, photo by Andy Bentley

Lower right: Muséum d'histoire naturelle de Genève, Geneva, Switzerland, photo by Aimee Stewart

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Top: University of Kansas Biodiversity Institute Collection, Lawrence, KS, United States, photo by Brian Goodman

Bottom left: CSIC Workshop Group Photo (December 2025), Museo Nacional de Ciencias Naturales, Madrid, Spain, photo by Íñigo Granzow-de la Cerda

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Clockwise from top left: Swiss GeoSpecify Workshop (June 2026), Palais de Rumine, Lausanne, Switzerland, photo by Grant Fitzsimmons

Swiss GeoSpecify Workshop Group Photo (June 2026), Lausanne, Switzerland, photo by Grant Fitzsimmons

CSIC Workshop, Aimee Stewart and Íñigo Granzow-de la Cerda (December 2025), Madrid, Spain, photo by Theresa Miller

CSIC Workshop Group Photo (December 2025), Madrid, Spain, photo by Íñigo Granzow-de la Cerda

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Lower left: Natural History Museum, University of Oslo / CC BY 4.0

Lower right: Wild A (2026). University of Texas, Biodiversity Center, Entomology Collection (UTIC). Version 1.322. University of Texas at Austin, Biodiversity Collections. Occurrence dataset https://doi.org/10.15468/sanyq7 accessed via GBIF.org on 2026-07-16. https://gbif.org/occurrence/5085604304

**PAGE 14**
Left to Right: Coetzer W (2026). Occurrence records of southern African fish biodiversity. The South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity. Occurrence dataset https://doi.org/10.15468/pv7vds accessed via GBIF.org on 2026-07-10. https://gbif.org/occurrence/6227240049

Coetzer W (2026). Occurrence records of southern African fish biodiversity. The South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity. Occurrence dataset https://doi.org/10.15468/pv7vds accessed via GBIF.org on 2026-07-16. https://gbif.org/occurrence/6227248434

**PUBLISHED IN OCTOBER 2026**

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT**
To all the people and institutions that provided images and information for this report.



Coetzer W (2026). Occurrence records of southern African fish biodiversity. The South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity. Occurrence dataset https://doi.org/10.15468/pv7vds accessed via GBIF.org on 2026-07-16. https://gbif.org/occurrence/6227239472

Coetzer W (2026). Occurrence records of southern African fish biodiversity. The South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity. Occurrence dataset https://doi.org/10.15468/pv7vds accessed via GBIF.org on 2026-07-16. https://gbif.org/occurrence/6227237606

Coetzer W (2026). Occurrence records of southern African fish biodiversity. The South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity. Occurrence dataset https://doi.org/10.15468/pv7vds accessed via GBIF.org on 2026-07-16. https://gbif.org/occurrence/6227236354

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Top left: 7.11: Image credit to KUBI Herpetology Collection accessed via GBIF.org | Occurrence Detail KUH 331535

Bottom left: 7.11.1: GBIF Citation: Bentley A, Osborn R (2025). Snow Entomological Museum Collection. University of Kansas Biodiversity Institute. Occurrence dataset Snow Entomological Museum Collection accessed via GBIF.org on 2025-07-24. Occurrence Detail 5139898369, Image Credit: Samanta Orellana, University of Kansas Biodiversity Institute

Bottom right, left to right, clockwise: CSIC Workshop (December 2025), Philippe Verley from the French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development (IRD), Madrid, Spain, photo by Theresa Miller

CSIC Workshop (December 2025), Grant Fitzsimmons, Madrid, Spain, photo by Beatriz Álvarez Dorada

CSIC Workshop (December 2025), Íñigo Granzow-de la Cerda, Madrid, Spain, photo by Theresa Miller

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Far right: Swiss GeoSpecify Workshop (June 2026), Grant Fitzsimmons and Nicolas Greber, Lausanne, Switzerland, photo by Grant Fitzsimmons

Bottom right: 7.12: Image credit to Carlin J Green, United States Geological Survey. Accessed via USGS.gov.

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Clockwise from top left: University of Kansas Natural History Museum Breakout Room (April 2026), Lawrence, KS, United States, photo by Theresa Miller

Specify Staff and KU Informatics Halloween Group Photo (October 2025), Lawrence, KS, United States, photo by Aimee Stewart

University of Kansas Biodiversity Institute Meet and Greet (February 2026), Lawrence, KS, United States, photo by Grant Fitzsimmons

Specify Staff Explores Spain during CSIC Workshop (December 2025), Madrid, Spain, photo by Grant Fitzsimmons

Staff Sendoff Lunch, Lawrence, KS, photo by Grant Fitzsimmons

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Lower left: Bailey-Matthews National Shell Museum (BMSM) https://doi.org/10.15468/49s45k accessed via GBIF.org on 2026-07-16. https://gbif.org/occurrence/6406422328

**PAGE 20**
Far right: Coetzer W (2026). Occurrence records of southern African fish biodiversity. The South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity. Occurrence dataset https://doi.org/10.15468/pv7vds accessed via GBIF.org on 2026-07-17. https://gbif.org/occurrence/2849474115

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Top: University of Kansas Biodiversity Institute Collection, Lawrence, KS, United States, photo by Brian Goodman

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Top: University of Kansas Biodiversity Institute Collection, Lawrence, KS, United States, photo by Brian Goodman

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# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Specify Consortium Members,

Happy Fiscal Year 2027! We are thrilled to start out the year by reviewing the Specify Collections Consortium (SCC) fiscal year ending June 30, 2026, in our second Annual Report. We offer a huge thank you to our membership for their understanding during our year of change. While some changes have been difficult, every change was made with the long term strength and continuity of the SCC and Specify software in mind.

Fiscal year 2026 brought real challenges alongside our achievements. Our primary challenge was staffing. We lost two developers and a hiring freeze delayed our ability to fill those positions. These positions will be filled this fiscal year. This reduced capacity directly impacted our 2025 Work Program schedule, but thanks to the tremendous dedication and skill of our team, we managed to deliver most of what we planned. The documentation, processes, and structure that we brought to our development pipeline have served us well during this transition period.

The SCC's primary focus in FY26 was sustainability. One strategy was rebuilding our membership structure with the benefit of six years of experience. With the encouragement and cooperation of our Board of Members, we built a new structure that better reflects the size, resources, and community status of member institutions. This resulted in fee adjustments for some member institutions to align with their actual usage and tier criteria, while establishing a formula for the entire consortium. Importantly, we remained flexible for institutions facing financial constraints, while successfully transitioning the SCC to an operating model where revenues reliably cover our operating costs for the first time.

Sustainability necessarily includes increasing member satisfaction. A second strategy was an examination of how we were distributing our support resources. Supporting self-hosted installations at smaller institutions, where IT resources are often limited, had placed an unsustainable strain on our support desk. To address this, we chose to include hosting as a core benefit to membership. This shift allows our support staff to focus on training, documentation, and faster resolution of user issues, and allows smaller institutions to focus on their collections rather than the software infrastructure. In the long run, we anticipate Specify Cloud hosting will reduce support costs further than our increased cloud costs.



With the growth we have experienced in the last few years, it became clear that we needed new or updated documentation, processes, and internal infrastructure to support our growing membership and guide our staff. This challenge resulted in a plethora of outputs. We updated our Bylaws and Mission Statement and created new Vision and Core Values documents to better reflect the operation, goals, and purpose of the Consortium and its Board of Members. We refined our Membership Levels and benefits to better support the wide variety of member institutions, while ensuring the sustained health of the SCC. We adopted a new support ticketing system to track support issues and solutions, as well as internal resources needed to resolve them.

Perhaps most importantly, we have created hundreds of pages of new and updated user and staff documentation on the Speciforum. A huge part of this documentation includes strategic decisions, tools, procedures, and scripts that govern our Consortium growth and software development pipeline. We have three goals with this effort: first, the Speciforum provides members a complete "user manual" that explains how the software works, documents best practices for configuration, describes common workflows, and answers a wide variety of questions. Second, the Specify team maintains a full understanding of where we are and why, so that development and membership decisions are made within the context of that history and with some idea of the consequences, enabling us to move forward with confidence. The third goal is to provide transparency for existing and potential members by publishing formal documentation of the Consortium decisions, long term trajectory, and sustainability plan.

I look forward to working with our members to advance natural history and geosciences collections, to continually improve, and to enjoy the ride!



**Aimee Stewart**
***Director***

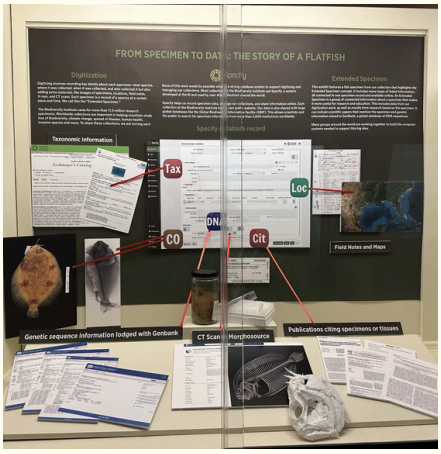
# WHAT IS THE SPECIFY COLLECTIONS CONSORTIUM?

The Specify Collections Consortium (SCC) is an international member-driven community dedicated to producing highly customizable, uniquely transparent, open-source software for the management of biological and geological collections and cultivating a thriving collections community.

For over 35 years, we have partnered with institutions of all sizes, developing and sustaining robust software solutions that empower researchers, curators, collection managers, and collection staff across a wide variety of disciplines, including botany, entomology, geology, herpetology, ichthyology, vertebrate and invertebrate paleontology, invertebrate zoology, mammalogy, meteoritics, mineralogy, mycology, ornithology, paleobotany, petrology, and many more.

The SCC provides the domain expertise and collaborative power that allows member institutions to focus on their core mission: research, curation, and education.








## VISION

The SCC envisions a future where the rich data residing within natural history and geological collections databases worldwide is not only accessible and seamlessly integrated, but also actively leveraged as a foundation for groundbreaking scientific discovery and profound societal benefit.

This future is built upon the collective strength of diverse member institutions, strategically harnessing the capacities and leadership of larger organizations to universally elevate the entire natural history and geological collections community.

Through unwavering commitment to the development of innovative, user-centric, and robust open-source tools, coupled with the cultivation of a collaborative and supportive network, the SCC will empower every participant, regardless of their size, resources, or current digital maturity, to contribute to and draw from this shared knowledge.

We foresee a landscape where collections data, managed with integrity and transformed into actionable knowledge, fuels new research paradigms, informs critical environmental and conservation decisions, enhances educational outreach, and ultimately ensures the enduring preservation and relevance of Earth's biological and geological heritage for generations to come, truly fostering advancement for every single member of our global community.

# MISSION

The Specify Collections Consortium (SCC) advances scientific research and innovation by managing the data from biology and geology collections and by supporting and fostering the collections community.

With engagement and collaboration from its member institutions, the SCC will:

- Engineer innovative, robust, open-source software for the acquisition, integration, and curation of digital collections data;
- Create tools promoting FAIR principles; and
- Foster collaborative networks to facilitate the use of collections data in broader initiatives.

# VALUES

**Strong Community**

• **Member-Driven**: We are a membership-based organization dedicated to fostering a supportive, collaborative network. We succeed by supporting and connecting institutions, curators, collection managers, researchers, educators, decision makers, and aggregators to collectively advance the practice of collections management.

• **Inclusive**: We are committed to benefiting the entire biological and geological collections community through leveraging the strength of larger members in order to advance the entire community.

• **Reciprocal Knowledge**: We empower all members by sharing procedural and software knowledge, experience, and developments with all members of the SCC community.

**Robust Software**

• **Quality Tools**: We develop robust, secure, user-friendly, state-of-the-art software and tools to ensure collections information is high-quality, consistent, and easily shared to maximize its research impact.

• **User-Centric**: We strive to make our members' work easier and more effective. Our software design and support services are centered on creating an efficient, intuitive, and reliable user experience.

• **Open & Accessible**: We champion open-source principles in our software and support open-access to scientific data.

• **Innovative & Flexible**: We are committed to continuous evolution. We provide the flexibility to meet the changing needs of the biological and geological collections community.

**Integrity**

• We believe in the foundational value of scientific collections. We act with integrity to support the institutions that preserve our critical biological and geological heritage, ensuring their data can serve research and society for generations to come.



# LOOKING BACK AT FY 2026

FY 2026 was a year shaped by connection, shared learning, and a growing sense of community across the Consortium. As more institutions joined Specify and long-time members deepened their use of the software, our outreach efforts focused on helping people feel supported, informed, and confident in the choices they make for their collections.

This work unfolded alongside an important internal priority. Throughout the year, the SCC placed renewed emphasis on transparency and on building the policies and procedures that help members understand how decisions are made and how services are delivered. Several policies and procedures were formalized and published for members to review, and many more were shaped through conversations in workshops, office hours, and community meetings. These efforts were strengthened by the questions members asked, the challenges they shared, and the feedback they offered. By the end of the year, the Consortium had taken meaningful steps toward a more transparent and predictable governance and support structure, one that reflects the needs and voices of the community.

This commitment to clarity also guided a major milestone for the Consortium. FY 2026 marked the introduction of the refreshed Specify logo, a project shaped through thoughtful discussion, member input, and a desire to express the identity of a community that is collaborative, global, and forward-looking. The new logo now anchors our communications with a consistent and welcoming presence. It reflects not only where Specify stands today, but the shared purpose and momentum that carried the Consortium through the fiscal year and will take us into the future.

## Workshops That Bring People Together

Workshops continued to play an important role in helping members strengthen their skills and connect with one another. The advanced workshop hosted by the Museo Nacional de Ciencias Naturales in Madrid was one of the most influential events of the year, bringing together experienced Specify users from across the CSIC network and 16 countries for four days of hands-on learning and shared problem solving. Later in the year, SCC staff also worked with institutions in Lausanne during a smaller GeoSpecify training event that supported geology and paleontology collections as they explored the new tools and workflows. Together, these workshops reflected the value of shared learning and the importance of creating spaces where members can collaborate, exchange ideas, and deepen their understanding of Specify.



## Creating More Ways to Connect

FY 2026 also brought new opportunities for members to stay informed and engaged. The launch of monthly Open Office Hours created a welcoming space where members could drop in, ask questions, and hear about ongoing projects. Alternating morning and evening sessions helped ensure that members across time zones could participate. We also introduced the Specify Newsletter, which highlights community news, practical tips, and updates from across the Consortium. These communication efforts helped strengthen relationships and made it easier for members to stay connected to one another and to the SCC.

## Collaborating to Strengthen Long Term Digitization and Community Knowledge

As institutions continued refining their workflows and planning for long term stewardship of their data, the SCC contributed to several community conversations about sustainable practices and effective data management. Our collaboration with iDigBio remained an important part of this work, including participation in the Digitization Academy and a presentation in the Sustaining Collections Digitization Beyond NSF Funding series that highlighted how Specify supports durable, high quality digitization. We also shared our growing support for geology collections at the Primer Simposio de Mineralogía, Colecciones y Exposiciones de Geología del MNCN (CSIC), connecting with earth science specialists and highlighting the expanding capabilities of Specify for geological and paleontological data. Together, these activities reflected the SCC's broader commitment to supporting collections professionals across disciplines and helping institutions build strong, resilient, and accessible data practices.

## Expanding International Engagement

FY 2026 also brought meaningful growth in international engagement. The Consortium continued building relationships with institutions across Europe and beyond, strengthening connections that support shared learning and long term collaboration. Conversations in workshops, symposiums, and community meetings helped highlight the needs of collections working in different regions and disciplines. These interactions reinforce the importance of global perspectives in shaping Specify's development and the SCC's outreach priorities, and they reflect the enthusiasm of a community that is expanding and eager to work together.

## Sharing Real Experiences to Support Implementation

Institutions continued to ask thoughtful questions about how to configure Specify for their collections, and the Specify Institutional Implementation Series became an important resource for navigating those decisions. SCC staff reviewed important concepts to understand and questions to ask during the setup process. Members also shared their own implementation stories, including the choices they faced, the challenges they encountered, and the strategies that helped them succeed. These discussions helped demystify the implementation process and encouraged institutions to approach it with confidence. They also highlighted how much the community benefits when members are willing to share their experiences openly.







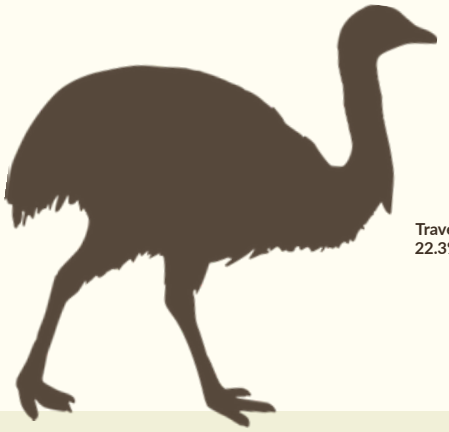


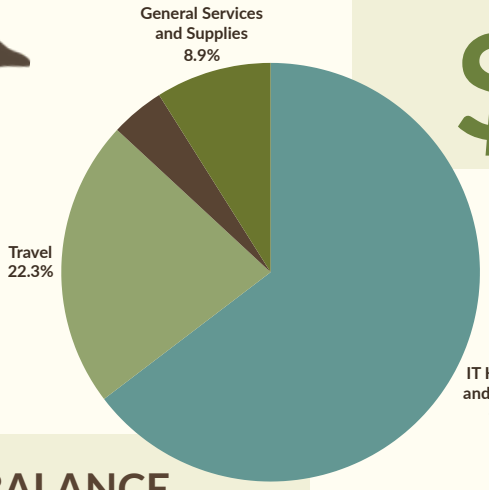
# FY 2026 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

| | FY 2025 | FY 2026 |
|---|---|---|
| **Beginning Fund Balance** | **$337,106** | **$213,653** |
| **Revenue** | | |
| Membership and Services | $546,275 | $816,456 |
| University of Kansas - Salary Support | $241,421 | $271,420 |
| GeoSpecify Grant | $31,756 | |
| FWS - Student Salary Support | $19,407 | $29,090 |
| **Total Revenue** | **$838,859** | **$1,116,966** |
| **Expenses** | | |
| Salary and Fringe - Students | $144,172 | $131,423 |
| Salary and Fringe - Staff | $765,020 | $830,985 |
| IT Hardware and Software | $28,545 | $22,835 |
| Travel | $13,606 | $7,862 |
| Miscellaneous | $10,969 | $4,628 |
| **Total Expense** | **$962,312** | **$997,733** |
| **Ending Fund Balance** | **$213,653** | **$332,886** |

The prior year's annual report did not include FWS funds, therefore revenue and expense totals for FY 2025 may appear different. Ending fund balance remains unchanged.

# FY 2026 IN NUMBERS






## $35,325

spent on **non-payroll expenses** during FY 2026. This includes various travel to and from workshops and conferences, hosting platform costs, bank and administrative fees

Not labeled: 4.2% for professional services and consulting, dark brown

## END OF YEAR FUND BALANCE

has **increased by $119,233** during FY 2026. This increase can be attributed to new members joining the SCC and recent membership pricing changes

**FY 2025** $213,653

**FY 2026** $332,886

## 23%

of **total membership and services revenue** came from **new members** who joined SCC during FY 2026

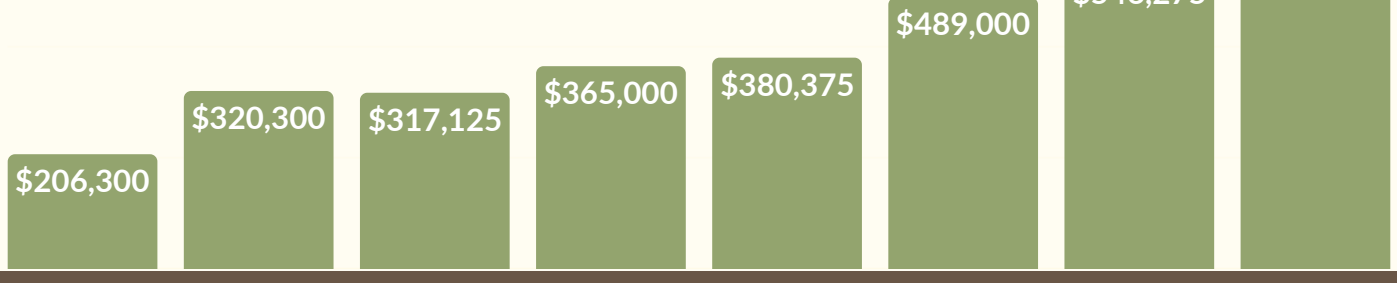
## 49%

**total percentage increase** in membership and services revenue from FY 2025 to FY 2026

## MEMBERSHIP REVENUE - IN USD

Membership revenue stems from both annual consortium membership fees and from various additional services that we offer our members for their convenience. Including, but not limited to; cloud database hosting, attachment server hosting, web portal hosting, customized training, on-site workshops, form customization, label/report creation, data conversion and migrations





# MEMBERSHIP

During FY 2026, **21 new members** joined the SCC, representing an additional **141 collections**. Of our 21 new members, we have brought **4 new countries** into the fold - Norway, Croatia, Portugal, and Mongolia. We look forward to welcoming even more members and countries into the Consortium as our software functionality and community needs expand. We thank all of our established and new members for the continued support!




## NEW MEMBERS IN FY 2026

### VISIONARY MEMBERS

UniMus:Natur (Norway)

### CATALYST MEMBERS

Croatian Natural History Museum (Croatia)

### AFFILIATE MEMBERS

Eidikos Logariasmos Kondilion kai Ereunas - University of Patras (Greece)
Maria Mitchell Association (US)
Museum Cantonal de Sciences Naturelles (Switzerland)
National and Kapodistrian - University of Athens (Greece)
National Museum of Natural History - Goulandris (Greece)
National Oceanography Centre (UK)
National University of Mongolia (Mongolia)
Naturhistorisches Museum Bern (Switzerland)
North Dakota Geological Survey (US)
Northern Territory Government - Department of Lands (Australia)
Ohio State University Museum of Biological Diversity (US)
Principia College (US)
Sofia University (Bulgaria)
Truman State University Herbarium (US)
Turtle Conservancy (US)
University of Aveiro (Portugal)
University of Georgia (US)
University of Guam (US)
Zoological Society of London (UK)

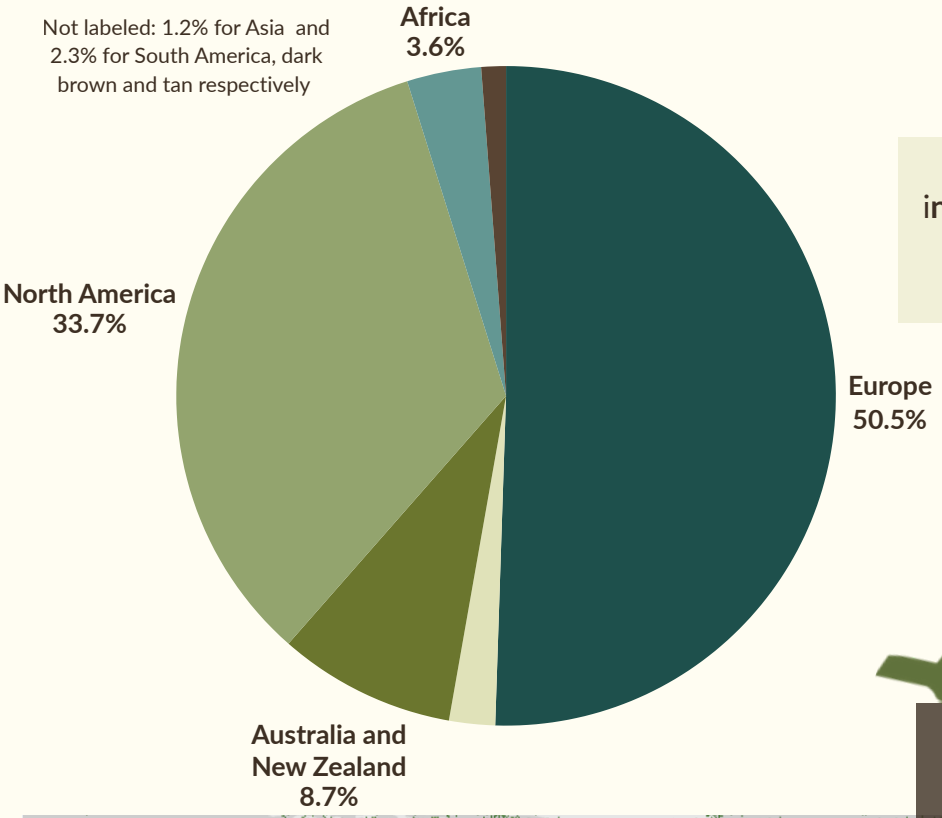
**135** MEMBERS

**6** CONTINENTS

**25** COUNTRIES

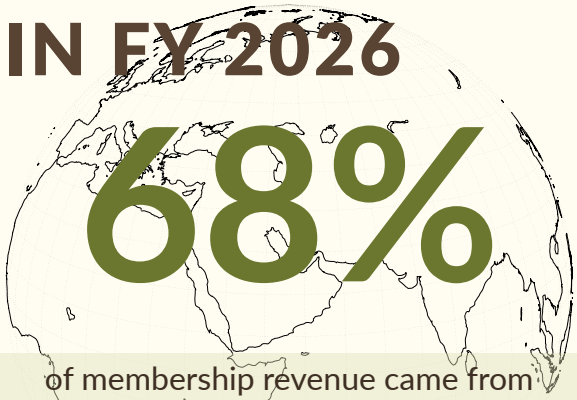
# MEMBERSHIP BY REGION

during FY 2026, there was **$785,531 in membership revenue**. This revenue comes from members all over the world. Below is a breakdown of revenue by geographic region




**31** U.S. STATES are currently represented through **68 Specify Consortium members** in the United States

## IN FY 2026

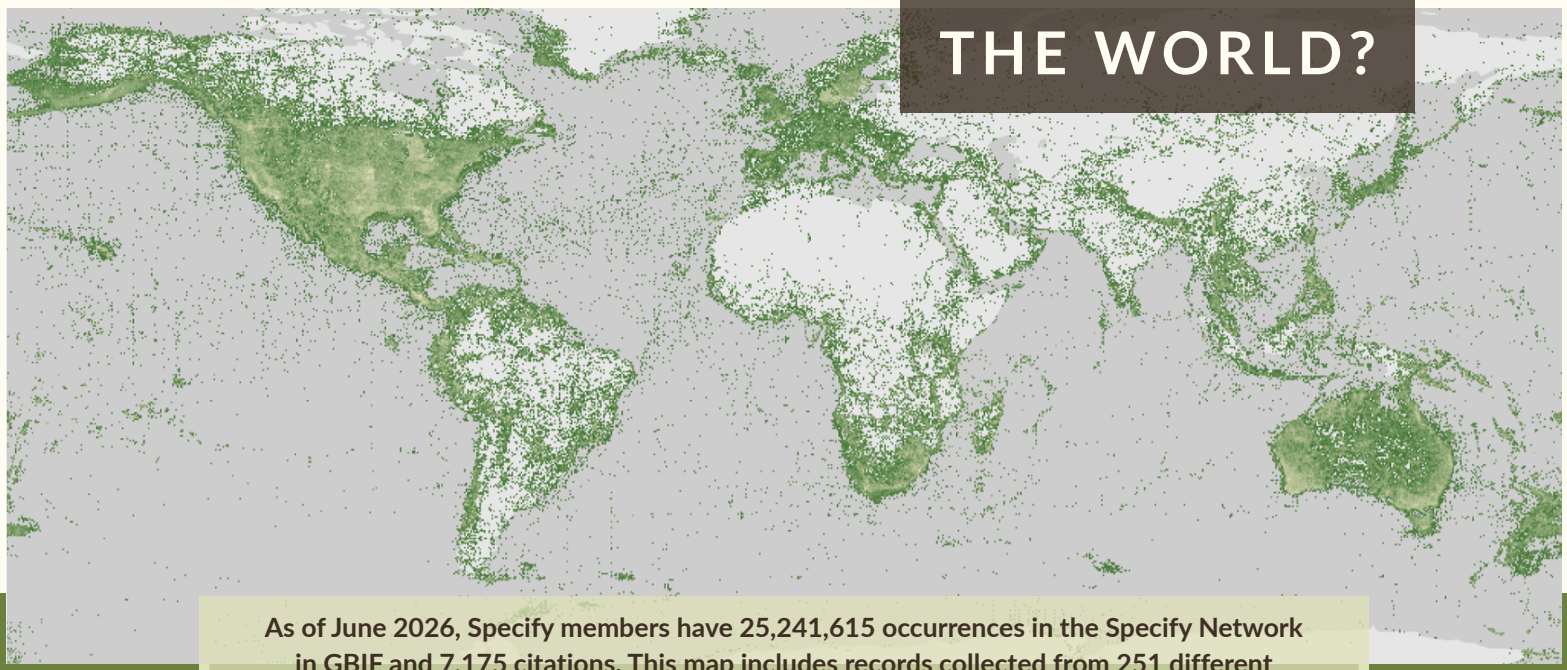


# 68%

of membership revenue came from **international members**, this percentage is up 8% from FY 2025 and will **continue to increase** in FY 2027



## WHERE IN THE WORLD?



As of June 2026, Specify members have 25,241,615 occurrences in the Specify Network in GBIF and 7,175 citations. This map includes records collected from 251 different geographical areas, which includes 47 publishers and 135 participating datasets.

# NEW AND IMPROVED MEMBERSHIP MODEL

With the growth of the Consortium, it became clear that we needed to better define and standardize our membership structure to assure the sustainability of the SCC, while accommodating the wide variety of institutions and collections in our membership. With valuable input from the Board, we are merging smaller, collection-based membership levels into one Affiliate Membership, in which fees are assigned by "collection", defined as a collection, discipline, or administrative unit. We remain flexible on the definition of "size", taking into account collection type, object count, activity, utilization, and institutional support. All other membership categories are institutional level memberships, starting at Catalyst and moving up through Foundation, Visionary, and Luminary with sliding scales based on the organization size, number and complexity of collections, user count, and budget.

The new membership model now includes Specify Cloud hosting as a member benefit. While not all members take advantage of hosting, it is a meaningful advantage to smaller organizations without adequate local IT support to install, configure, and maintain Specify software. Specify Cloud hosting reduces user frustration and Specify support time needed to troubleshoot the unique combination of hardware and software in every local installation.

This new structure will bring new and existing memberships into a more consistent and fair pricing structure and allow us to provide competitive compensation to our employees, attract new talent, and provide better hosting and support services. In order to support our commitment to the collections community from the very beginning of a person's journey, we have also added a level for Student Membership, so Master's and PhD students working with natural history or geology collections for their theses or dissertations can manage their project data and produce more reliable results. The membership model is fully described in the SCC Membership Rights and Responsibilities.

## INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Institutional Members help guide the SCC's strategic direction and software roadmap. These memberships now scale more transparently with organizational size and capacity, offering four levels of engagement:

| Catalyst | Foundation | Visionary | Luminary |
|---|---|---|---|
| $25,000+/year | $50,000+/year | $100,000+/year | $150,000+/year |

## COLLECTION MEMBERSHIPS

Affiliate memberships support individual collections or groups of related collections. These are organized into categories based on size, activity, and support needs. All Affiliate Members receive hosting, access to Specify tools and updates, and opportunities to participate in SCC advisory committees.

## STUDENT MEMBERSHIPS

A new addition to the model, Student Memberships provide graduate students with time-limited hosting and access to Specify for thesis or dissertation projects, supporting emerging researchers while keeping their work connected to the broader community.





# WORK PROGRAM

The Annual Work Program defines SCC priority areas and planned activities, created by staff with input and recommendations from the Board of Members, Technology Advisory Committee, and User Advisory Committee.

In the past, SCC Annual Work Programs have followed the Calendar Year. Now that we are producing Annual Reports in sync with our Fiscal Year, we will add to and extend our **2026 Work Program** to follow the same schedule.

The first half of fiscal year 2026 (July-Dec 2025) concluded the **2025 SCC Annual Work Program**. With the exception of several items that shifted into the 2026 Work Program, all 2025 Priorities were completed by December 2025. The SCC lost 25% of developer time (9 of 36 months) in 2025, so incomplete items were not unexpected. Most of the incomplete work was finished in the first quarter of 2026, leaving Data Export improvements on the 2026 work program.

In January the board approved the **2026 SCC Annual Work Program** for software development and technical support activities. Priorities were categorized into Specify 7 Independence, Data Export Enhancement, Asset Management, and Policy and Procedures Update. In addition to these four main priority areas, the SCC built time into the 2026 Work Program for dependency updates, improved scaling and performance, general feature enhancements, Help Desk support work, data conversion and modification, and random emergency issues. These are built in to allow the SCC to keep up regardless of when a change occurs.

By the end of June 2026, the Specify team had completed approximately half of the 2026 Work Program goals. In FY26, Specify had two major releases: 7.11 in July 2025 and 7.12 in April 2026, with four minor 7.11 releases in between. These releases included 12 dependency updates within the core software, and three dependencies in the Web Portal. The team closed 441 issues, including 226 bugs, 88 features, and 127 improvements, tests, and deployment maintenance tasks.

# SPECIFY SUPPORT

In late August 2025, we transitioned to a new support ticketing system called BoldDesk to support our team and facilitate better collaboration, communication, and effort tracking. Time spent on each ticket is now properly tracked, activity is logged comprehensively, and tickets can be organized by institution to give both our users and our internal team a complete picture of private support tickets. More than one team member can collaborate on tickets, which improves our responsiveness and increases transparency on both sides of our organization. We can more effectively identify bottlenecks and unify disparate email threads into a single, easy-to-use system. Since the public launch, our team has tracked over 800 hours spent responding to more than 1,050 tickets received from member collections in BoldDesk. On the Speciforum side, there have been over 220 “Get Help” requests responded to by members of our team. In this time, the support team has also authored over 100 new pieces of user documentation available now for members.







# **YOUR** MEMBERSHIP AT WORK

We have accomplished so much at Specify during FY 2026. Here is a timeline of new developments made throughout the year. We could not have done it without our members' continued support!




## July 2025

Began annual Institutional Check-In Meetings.

**Specify 7.11.0** released with major extensions to Batch Edit, Query Builder, and WorkBench.

## August 2025

Published SCC Mission Statement and Core Values.

**Specify 7.11.1** released with improvements Bulk Carry Forward, User Settings and Preferences.




## September 2025

SCC transitioned to BoldDesk for support ticketing and tracking.

Draft 2026 SCC Work Program presented to Board and Advisory Committees.

Draft Bylaws presented to Board of Members.

**Specify 7.11.2** released including support for WorkBench attachments, backups, time zones, TIFF thumbnails, and more.

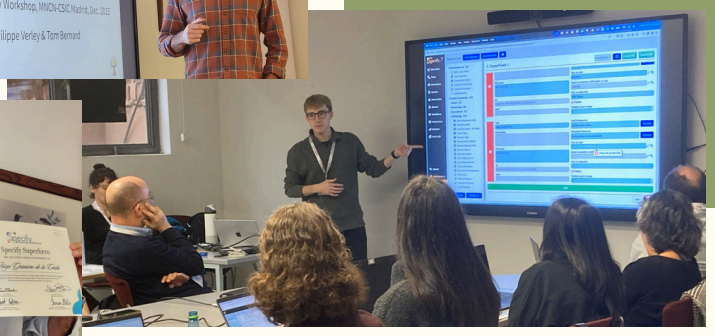
## October 2025

Draft Membership Model presented to Board of Members.

Webinar iDigBio Digitization Academy: *Introduction to Biodiversity Specimen Digitization*.





## November 2025

Hosted SIIS (Specify Institutional Implementation Series) webinar: *Database Planning, Structure & Sharing in Specify* (Specify team).

**Specify 7.11.3** released with generic collection statistics.

## December 2025

Hosted SIIS webinar: University of Kansas Biodiversity Institute *digital infrastructure and Specify setup* (KU).

Specify Workshop held December 9-12 at CSIC in Madrid.

## January 2026

Welcomed Norway as our first Visionary Member and Croatia as our first Catalyst Member.

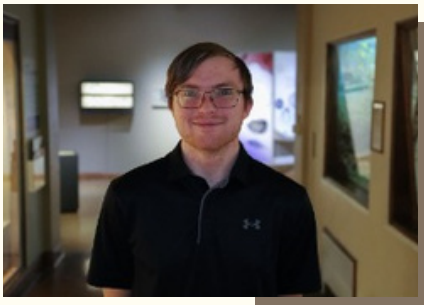
Hired new full-time developer, **Jason Melton**!

Published first SCC Annual Report, covering FY 2025.

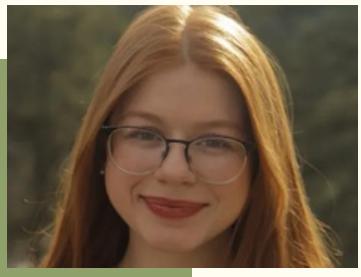
Board approved the 2026 SCC Annual Work Program.

Finalized new membership model.

Facilitated two SIIS webinars: *Specify Implementation and Planning* with the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and *Insights from our Implementation Journey* with the Canadian Forest Service.



"I have been a student developer at Specify for over 3 years, and I'm excited to say I have transitioned into a full-time position within Specify! As a full-time employee, I'll be focusing on cloud administration, maintaining our older microservices, technical user support, improving our developer operations and CI/CD pipelines, and every-now-and-then a Specify 7 feature or bugfix."

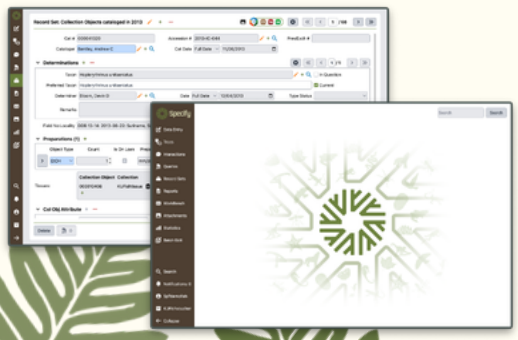


"I'm thrilled to join the team full time! I look forward to continuing to work with the SCC and supporting Specify users!"

## February 2026

Facilitated two SIIS webinars: *Implementing Specify for the Australian National Research Collections* and *Supporting a Large Userbase in Specify*, both with the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO).

Released **Specify 7.11.4**, allowing concurrent use during WorkBench validation and uploads.



## March 2026

Welcomed returning Technical Support Specialist, **Bronwyn Combs**!

Facilitated SIIS webinar: *Towards a Single Natural History Museum and Nationwide Mass Digitization* with the Natural History Museum Denmark

## April 2026

Adopted a new look, including UI, logos, colors, and WCAG 2.1 AA accessibility compliance.

Published new website.

Began a monthly SCC Newsletter for members.

Board approved updated bylaws.

Released **Specify 7.12.0** including: GeoSpecify, Guided Setup and System Configuration, Collection Preferences UI, Field Formatter editor UI, Tree Import feature, Components, Collection Object Types (COTs) and Groups (COGs), Attachment zoom.

Held Specify 7.12.0 overview webinar.

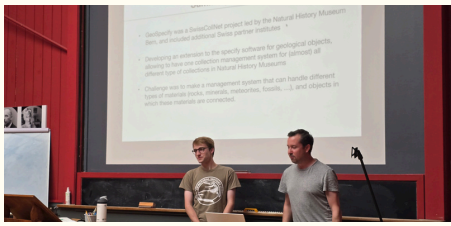
## May 2026

Held in-depth webinar *Batch Editing in Specify7*.

Released **Specify 7.12.0.6** with significantly faster database performance.

## June 2026

Conducted a two-day Specify Workshop for Swiss members in Lausanne, Switzerland.





# STAFF



**Aimee Stewart**
*Director*



**Theresa Miller**
*Membership & Fulfillment Officer*



**Grant Fitzsimmons**
*Technical Support Manager*



**Caroline Denis**
*Software Technical Lead*



**Andy Bentley**
*Specify Usability Lead*



**Alec White**
*Research Engineer*



**Jason Melton**
*Research Engineer*



**Ashley Cowell**
*Finance Specialist*



**Bronwyn Combs**
*Specify Support Specialist*



**Jim Beach**
*Director Emeritus*




**Students**

**Left to right: Anya Combs, Lexi Clevenger, Alejandro Sandoval, Elizabeth Enslin, Kaden Huber, Bhumika Gupta, Marco Aurelio Martinez Reyes**











# CONGRATULATIONS

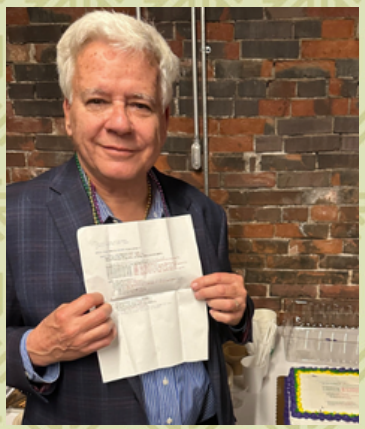
to our graduating students. Thank you for the hard work and dedication you have shown Specify during your time with us. We wish you the best in your future endeavors!






"I like working at Specify because it is very different from a typical student job, so I have learned new skills and have been given opportunities I would not have normally had.

ELIZABETH ENSLIN



Watching Specify evolve from when it was the vision of Dr. Julian Humphries as the MUSE Project has been a 50-year journey. Today's wide adoption of the Specify platform for curating collections was enabled by tranches of engineers and waves of university students who gave their all to make Specify thrive. We must also acknowledge that Specify's sustainability is directly due to the thousands of users and stakeholders in hundreds of collections institutions who continue to commit their intellectual and funding contributions. Efficient data management and open-source cyberinfrastructure will help keep research collections visible and vital. Happy trails Specifriends!

JIM BEACH

# GOVERNANCE

The Board of Members was put to work this year, engaging in discussions on the Bylaws, Mission Statement and Core Values, Membership Model, and Annual Work program, and providing final approval after suggestions were incorporated. Meetings are held quarterly, generally in January, April, July, and October.

## *Board of Members*

**ALEXIS BECK**
Museum of Natural History of Geneva

**ANDREW BENTLEY**
University of Kansas

**HUGO DE BOER**
UniMus:Natur

**WARREN BROWN**
Florida Museum of Natural History

**ROB CUBEY**
Royal Botanic Garden of Edinburgh

**MARION DEPRAETERE**
Museum für Naturkunde

**NICO FRANZ**
University of Kansas

**TED HANSS**
University of Michigan

**DRAŠKO HOLCER**
Croatian Museum of Natural History

**ANTHONY MAGEE**
South African National Biodiversity Institute

**GUNNHILD MARTHINSEN**
UniMus:Natur

**CORINNA PAEPER**
Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization

**KIM STEENSTRUP PEDERSEN**
Danish Consortium of Museums



**NATHAN PETERSON**
Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization

**DAVID REED**
Florida Museum of Natural History

**RICARDA RIINA**
Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas

**FRANZISKA SCHUSTER**
Museum für Naturkunde

**NIKOLAJ SCHARFF**
Danish Consortium of Museums

**JENNY SMEDMARK**
UniMus:Natur

**THAIS VASCONCELOS**
University of Michigan

**RAFAEL ZARDOYA**
Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas

### *Non-Voting Members*

**WOUTER ADDINK, at-large**
Distributed System of Scientific Collections

**ELIZABETH ELLWOOD, at-large**
iDigBio

**DOUG JONES, at-large**
Florida Museum of Natural History

**JOE MILLER, at-large**
GBIF

**NATALIA LÓPEZ CARRANZA, UAC Chair, ex officio**
University of Kansas

**FEDOR STEEMAN, TAC Chair, ex officio**
Danish Consortium of Museums

**AIMEE STEWART, Director, ex officio**
Specify Collections Consortium

# *Technology Advisory Committee*

**FEDOR STEEMAN, Chair**
**Danish Consortium of Museums**

**LUCAS DECICCO**
**University of Kansas - Biodiversity Institute**

**MARION DEPRAETERE**
**Museum für Naturkunde**

**RAY GARCIA**
**San Diego Natural History Museum**

**GARTH HOLMAN**
**University of Michigan**

**ADRIAAN JORDAAN**
**South African National Biodiversity Institute**

**HÉRYK JULIEN**
**Laurentian Forestry Centre**

**NIELS KLAZENGA**
**Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria**

**SILVIA LUSA**
**Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas**

**MIŠO PAUNOVIĆ**
**Croatian Natural History Museum**

**MARK PITBLADO**
**University of British Columbia - Beaty Biodiversity Museum**

**VIVEK PULUKURI**
**Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization**

**EIRIK RINDAL**
**UniMus:Natur**

**JOE RUSSACK**
**California Academy of Sciences**

**TOMISLAV URBAN**
**University of Texas - Austin**

**TAYLOR WILSON**
**Florida Museum of Natural History**



# *User Advisory Committee*

**NATALIA LÓPEZ CARRANZA, Chair**
**University of Kansas**

**BEATRIZ ÁLVAREZ**
**Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas**

**BLANKA AGUERO**
**Duke University**

**DAN BAKER**
**Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization**

**TORKILD BAKKEN**
**UniMus:Natur**

**FRANZISKA BÖTTGER**
**Museum für Naturkunde**

**WILLEM COETZER**
**South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity**

**CASEY DILLMAN**
**Cornell University**

**NINA FILIPPOVA**
**Yugra State University**

**KEVIN HOLSTON**
**Swedish Museum of Natural History**

**ZSUZSANNA PAPP**
**Danish Consortium of Museums**

**GUSTAV PAULAY**
**Florida Museum of Natural History**

**BRAD RUHFEL**
**University of Michigan**

**TESS BONACHITA SANGUILA**
**Father Saturnino Urios Biological Collection**

**LESLIE SKIBINSKI**
**Paleontological Research Institute**

Both advisory committees provided recommendations for the Annual Work program, as well as their regular work of absorbing SCC reports and giving feedback on progress and priorities.



# LOOKING TOWARDS FY 2027

Building on the successes and effort of FY 2026, we are well positioned to ensure long-term sustainability moving forward. Our strengthened financial position gave us a little breathing room, so we are setting our sights to the future, while continuously focusing on growth and sustainability. We began FY 2027 in July 2026 and took off running.

In September, the Specify Collections Consortium (SCC) attended the annual the Society for Preservation of Natural History Collections (SPNHC) conference in Cape Town, South Africa, followed by hosting a workshop for UniMus and attending the annual Biodiversity Information Standards (TDWG) conference, the European Specify Summit, and the DwC-Dack project kickoff meeting in Oslo, Norway. In the GBIF-funded DwC-Dack project, Specify will work with DiSSCo to establish a default mapping for exporting collections data in the expanded standard, Darwin Core Data Package (DwC-DP). This will enable Specify users to export richer data from their databases to support research, and the “extended specimen” concept, of great interest to the community.

These meetings have proved invaluable for understanding how to prepare for upcoming community initiatives and how we can better satisfy our members. Webinars and workshops are two of our key tools for increasing member satisfaction. We already have three webinars under our belt this year, and are looking forward to more on a monthly basis. Workshops will continue with one in January for Cranbrook Institute of Science in Michigan, and another regional workshop hosted by the Museum für Naturkunde Berlin next summer following the success of last December’s CSIC-hosted workshop in Madrid.

With support from our board, the new pricing structure has taken effect, and we are meeting with member institutions to collaboratively determine the appropriate size and level for their membership. This updated model establishes a fair, consistent framework for our entire membership while allowing us to provide competitive compensation, recruit exceptional talent, and enhance our hosting and support capabilities. Building on last year's momentum, we are continuing our institutional check-ins. Should you wish to schedule a discussion before we reach out, please contact our team.

We continue our search for full-time developers, incorporating changes to encourage a higher level of expertise in the candidate pool. Even with fewer developers than ideal, contributions from student developers continue to enhance the stability and robustness of our codebase. Our support team has grown with a new full-time Technical Support Specialist, allowing us to offer stronger and more capable support services than ever before.

We will continue to publish monthly newsletters and host online Open Office Hours and webinars. If you are interested in receiving our newsletters, please email membership@specifysoftware.org with your name, position, email, and institution and we will add you to our mailing list.

As we look ahead through the remainder of FY 2027 and beyond, our shared dedication to biodiversity and earth science, robust data standards, and community empowerment positions us to achieve remarkable milestones. By fostering deeper collaborations, expanding our educational offerings, and strengthening our support ecosystem, we are building a more connected and resilient future for our community worldwide.



## Conferences and Meetings

The Society for Preservation of Natural History Collections (SPNHC) 2026 Conference
**September 2026 in Cape Town, South Africa**

- Session: Hosting Specify Spotlight: Data Digitization and Management in South Africa and Beyond, with 6 speakers
- Presentation: SCC Staff talk: Supporting Collaboration with Specify 7
- Presentation: Specify Collections Consortium: Transitioning to Sustainability

Biodiversity Information Standards (TDWG) 2026 Conference
**September 2026 in Oslo, Norway**

- Session: Hosting Meeting Biodiversity Data Standards Using Specify Software, with 11 speakers
- Presentation: Meeting Biodiversity Standards with Specify 7
- Presentation: Extending Specify 7 for Geological Collections

European Specify Summit
**September 2026 in Oslo, Norway**

DwC-Dack Hackathon and Workshop
**March 2027 in Leiden, Netherlands**

Living Data 2027 Conference (SPNHC/TDWG/GEO/BON/iBOL/QCBS)
**June 2027 in Montreal, Canada**

**If your organization is interested in hosting a workshop, please email us at membership@specifysoftware.org for more info!**

## Webinars

Working with APIs - Part I
**July 2026**

Working with APIs - Part II
**August 2026**

Working with Independent and Dependent Tables in Specify
**September 2026**

Installing Specify on a Linux Server
**October 2026**

From Field to Freezer to FAIR Data: The Role of Specify in Modern Biobanking
**November 2026**

Data Migration Mastery Series
**TBD**

## Workshops

University of Oslo, 3-day
**September 2026**

Cranbrook Institute of Science, 2-day
**January 2027**

Museum für Naturkunde Berlin
**TBD**