

# OME2024 NGFF Challenge Results

**Josh Moore,** Research Software Engineer



# Next-generation file formats (NGFF)

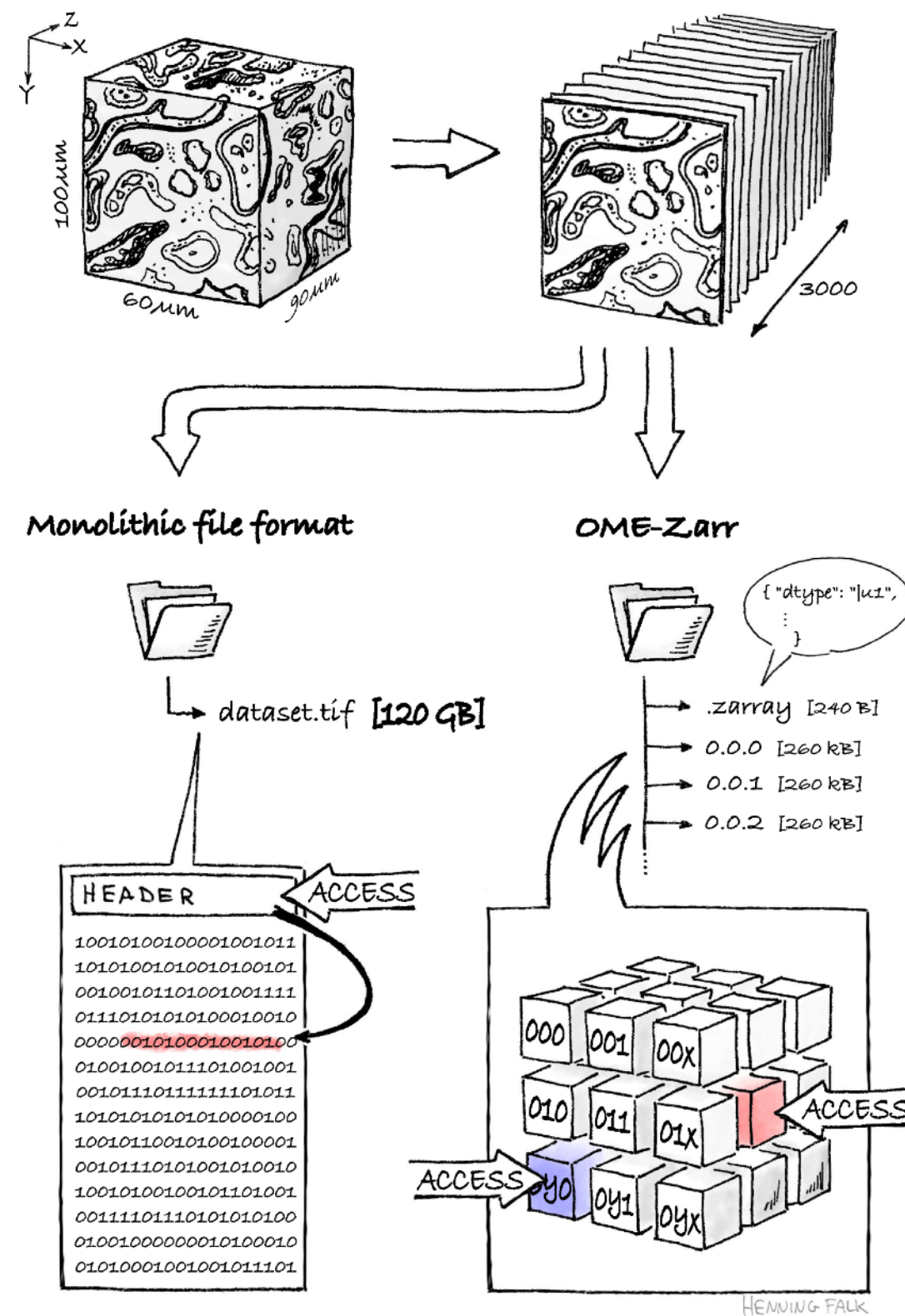


Image "Monolithic vs. chunked" by Henning Falk  
<https://github.com/zarr-developers/zarr-illustrations-falk-2022>  
 ©2022 NumFOCUS (CC BY 4.0 license)

**Def.** (*n*) directory-like layout of data rather than a single file, header information is available in formats like JSON or YAML.

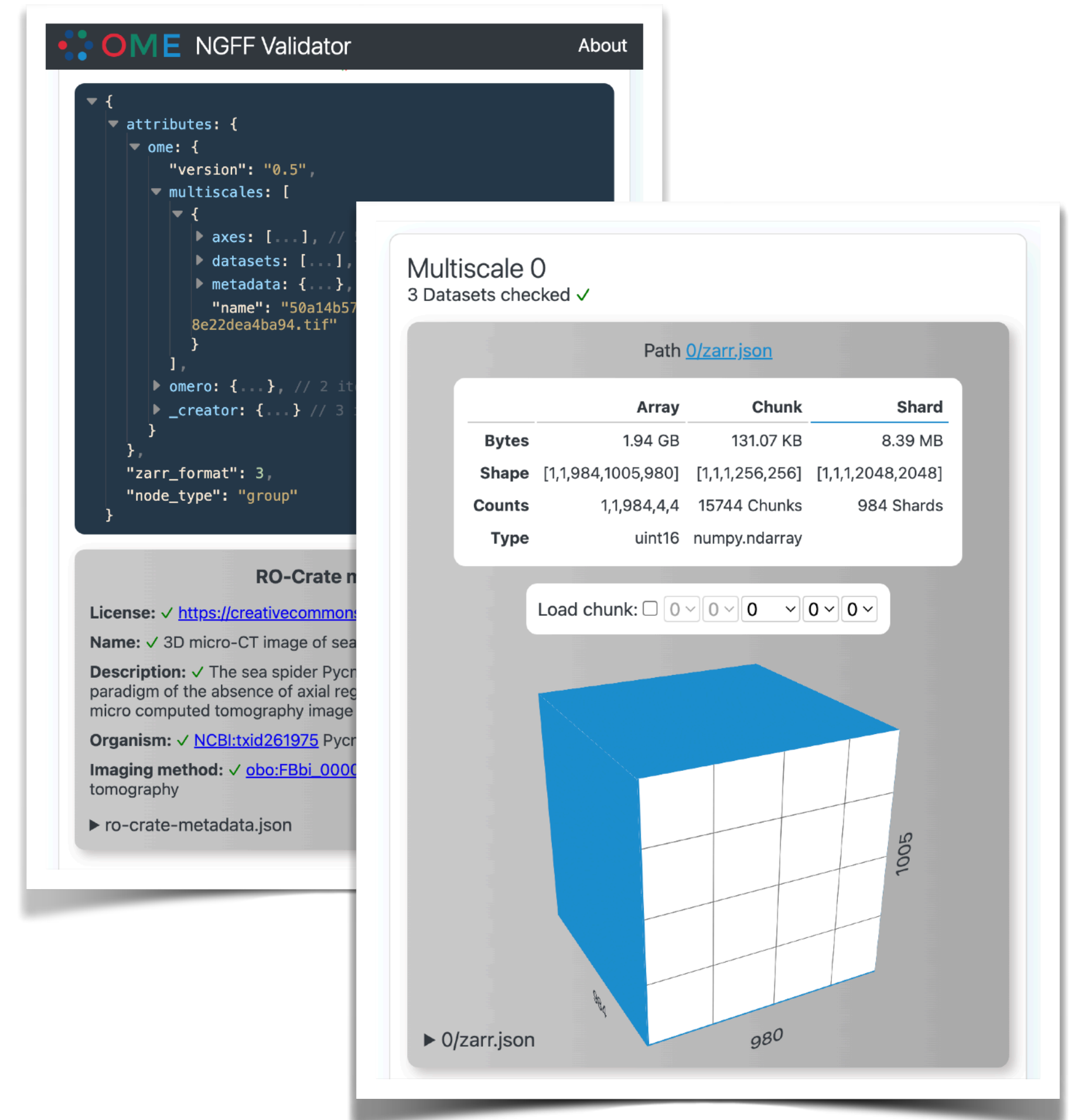
▶ See [Zarr](#) and [N5](#).

## Pros:

- ▶ natively supports **parallel writes**
- ▶ **server-less** access to contents
- ▶ much more **web-like** access
- ▶ can avoid costly downloads, e.g. when on S3

## Cons:

- ▶ many more files on disk
- ▶ no easy way to lock on update
- ▶ reduced desktop support



**OME NGFF Validator** About

```

{
  attributes: {
    ome: {
      version: "0.5",
      multiscales: [
        {
          axes: [...], //
          datasets: [...],
          metadata: {...},
          name: "50a14b578e22dea4ba94.tif"
        }
      ],
      omero: {...}, // 2 it
      _creator: {...} // 3
    }
  },
  "zarr_format": 3,
  "node_type": "group"
}
  
```

**Multiscale 0**  
3 Datasets checked ✓

Path [0/zarr.json](#)

	Array	Chunk	Shard
Bytes	1.94 GB	131.07 KB	8.39 MB
Shape	[1,1,984,1005,980]	[1,1,1,256,256]	[1,1,1,2048,2048]
Counts	1,1,984,4,4	15744 Chunks	984 Shards
Type	uint16	numpy.ndarray	

Load chunk:  0  0  0  0  0

RO-Crate metadata

License: ✓ <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Name: ✓ 3D micro-CT image of sea spider Pycnogonidae

Description: ✓ The sea spider Pycnogonidae paradigm of the absence of axial regression in micro computed tomography image

Organism: ✓ [NCBI:txid261975](https://ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/taxonomy/taxids/info?id=261975) Pycnogonidae

Imaging method: ✓ [obo:FBbi\\_000000000](https://obolibrary.org/obo/FBbi_000000000) tomography

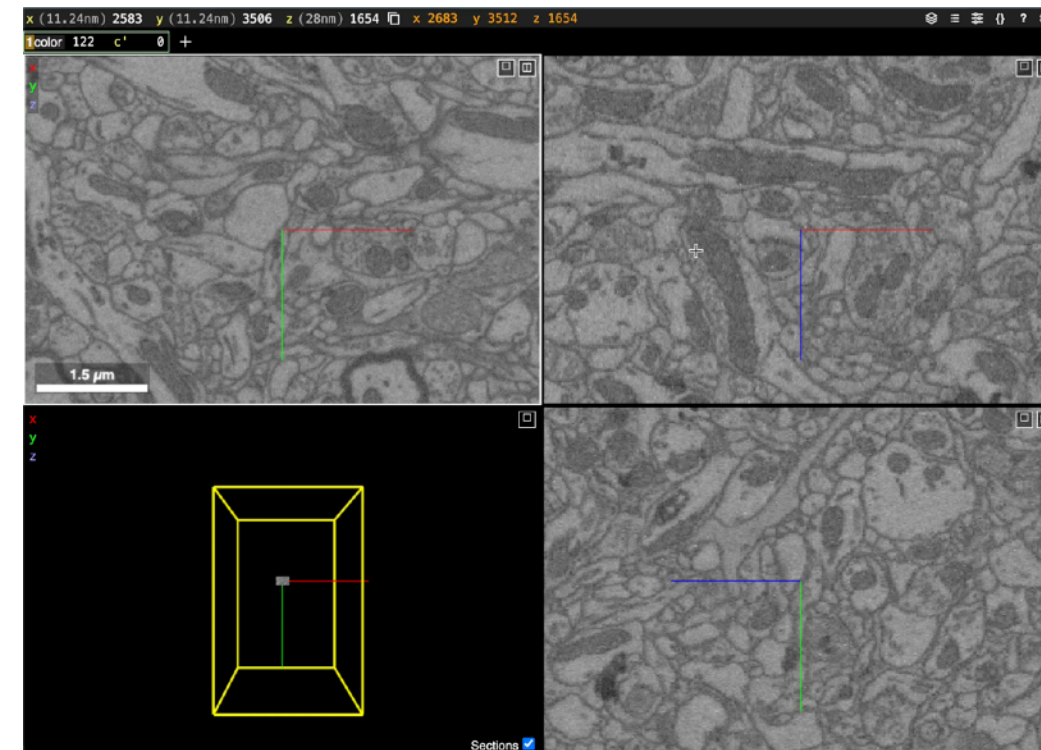
▶ ro-crate-metadata.json

▶ 0/zarr.json

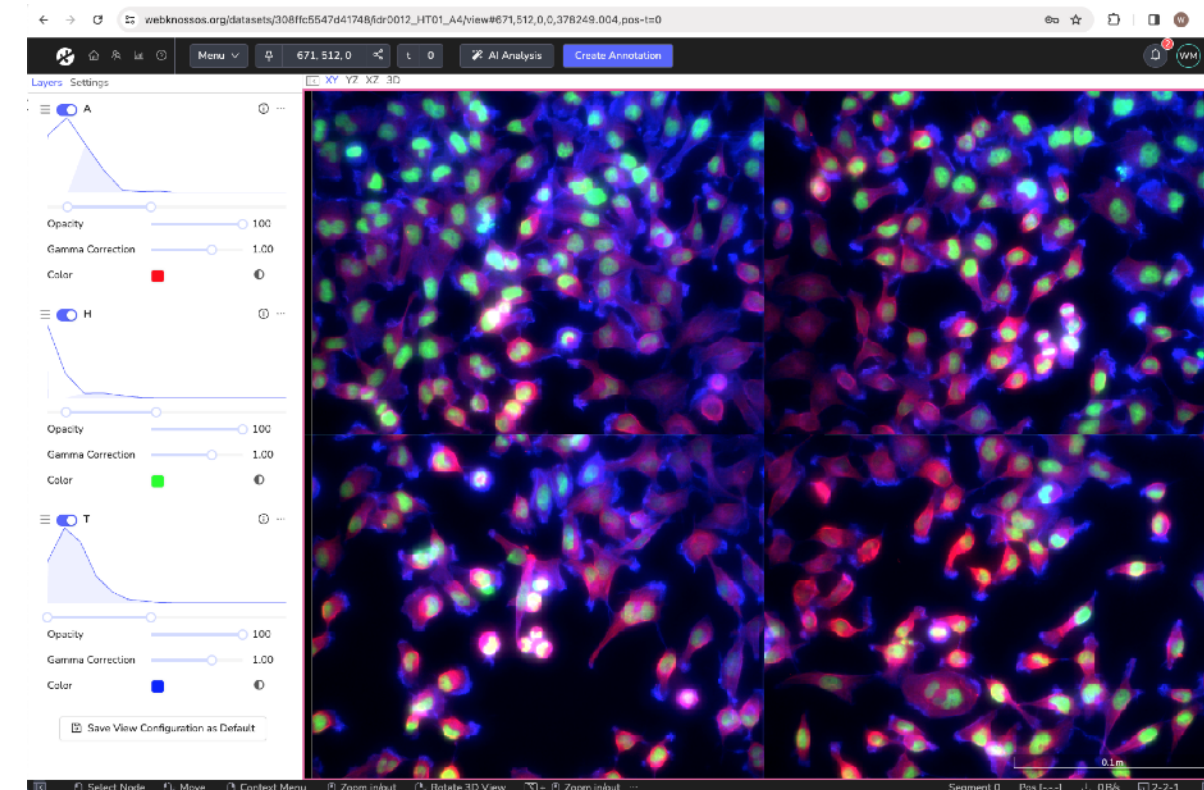
<https://bit.ly/40hnF50>



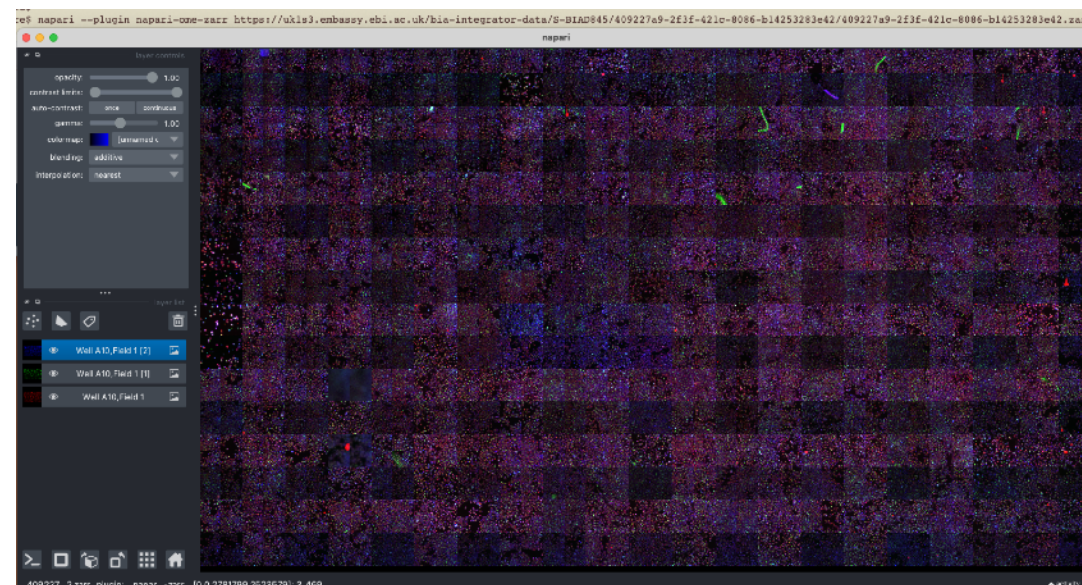
# "Standardized" access



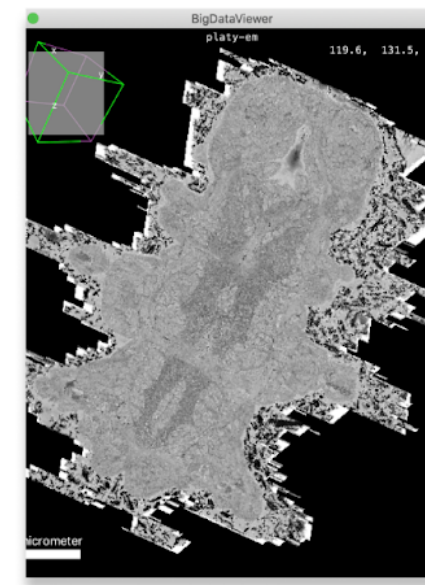
Neuroglancer  
<https://bit.ly/4hh9P8A>



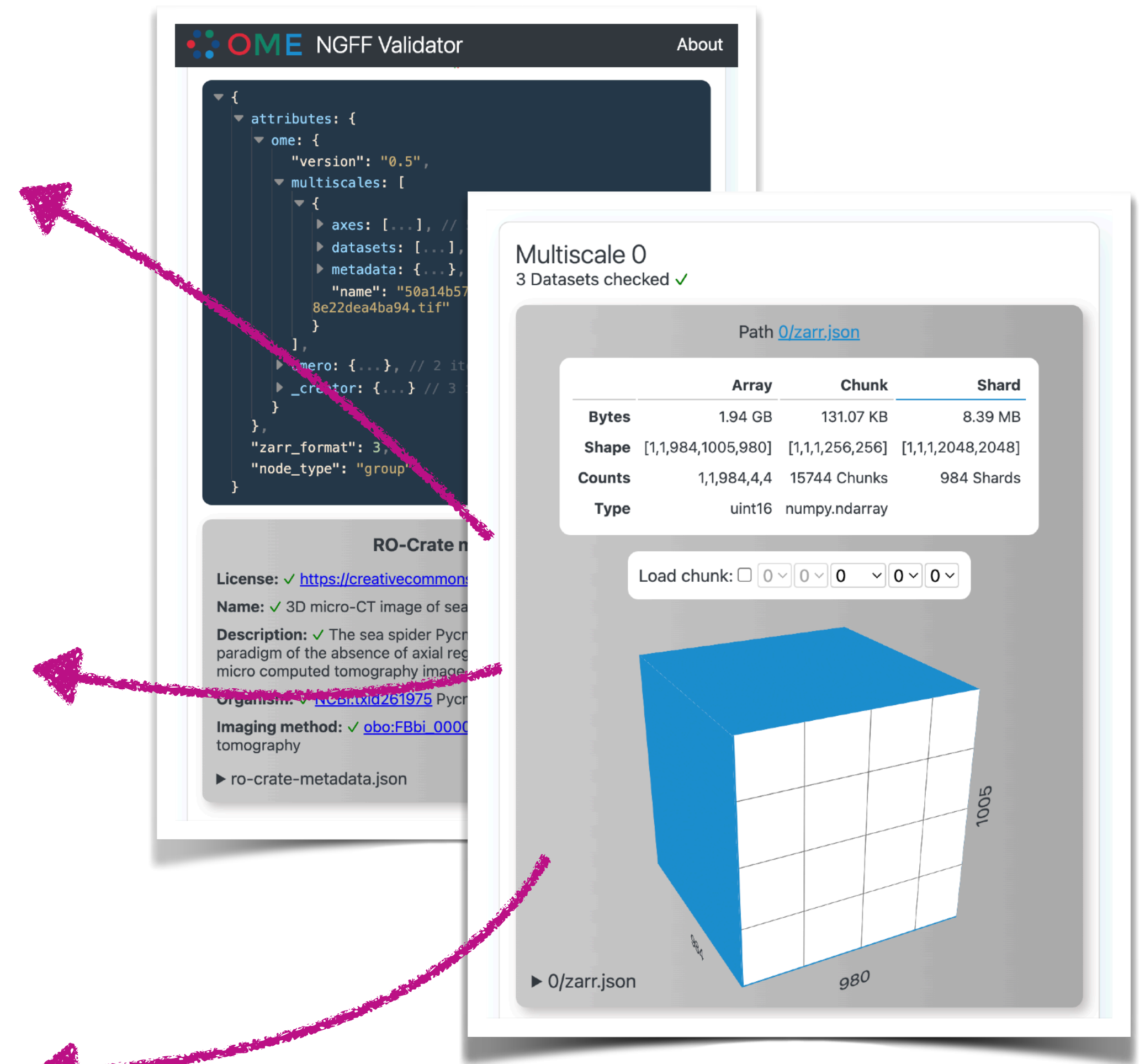
Webknossos  
<https://wklink.org/6422>



Napari



Fiji/BDV/MoBIE



OME NGFF Validator

```

{
  attributes: {
    ome: {
      version: "0.5",
      multiscales: [
        {
          axes: [...], //
          datasets: [...],
          metadata: {...},
          name: "50a14b578e22dea4ba94.tif"
        },
        {
          axes: [...], // 2 it
          _creator: {...} // 3
        }
      ]
    },
    "zarr_format": 3,
    "node_type": "group"
  }
}

```

Multiscale 0  
3 Datasets checked ✓

Path `0/zarr.json`

	Array	Chunk	Shard
Bytes	1.94 GB	131.07 KB	8.39 MB
Shape	[1,1,984,1005,980]	[1,1,1,256,256]	[1,1,1,2048,2048]
Counts	1,1,984,4,4	15744 Chunks	984 Shards
Type	uint16	numpy.ndarray	

Load chunk:  0  0  0  0  0

3D visualization of the dataset structure showing a 1005x980x1005 volume.

RO-Crate metadata:

- License: ✓ <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>
- Name: ✓ 3D micro-CT image of sea spider Pycnogonidae
- Description: ✓ The sea spider Pycnogonidae paradigm of the absence of axial region micro computed tomography image
- Organism: ✓ NCBI:txid:261975 Pycnogonidae
- Imaging method: ✓ obo:FBbi\_0000000000 tomography

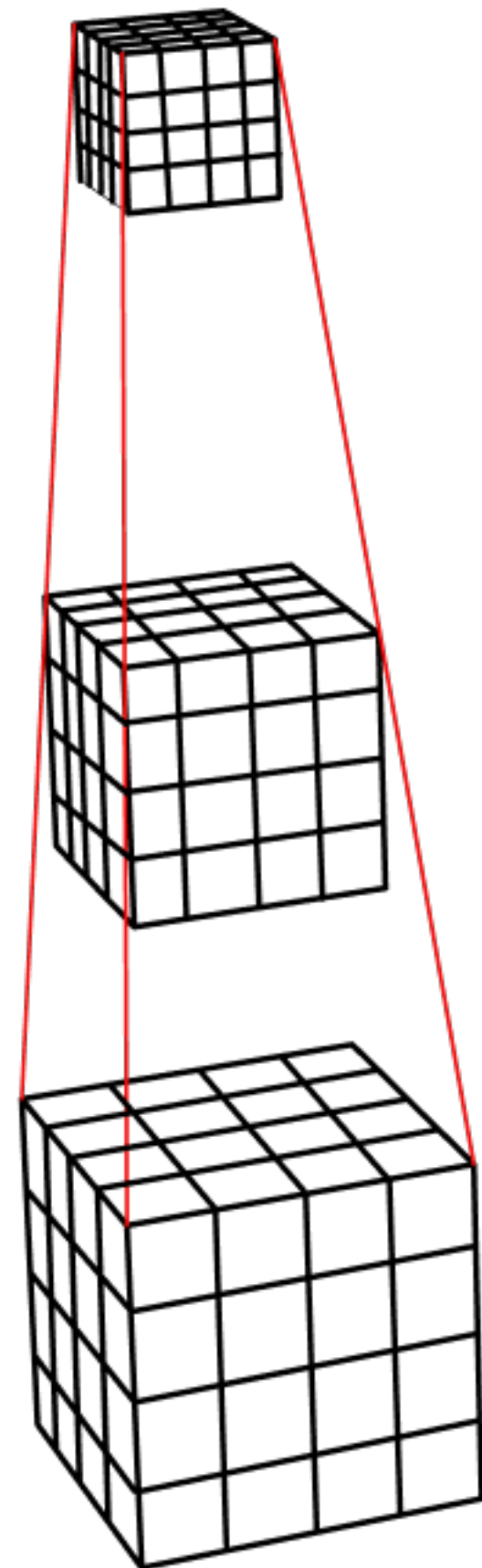
▶ ro-crate-metadata.json

▶ 0/zarr.json

<https://bit.ly/40hnF50>



# Becoming OME-Zarr



```
example/  
├── s0    # Full-sized  
├── s1    # ...  
└── s2    # Smallest
```

```
example/  
├── 0     # Full-sized  
├── 1  
└── 2     # Smallest
```

```
example/  
├── 0     # Smallest  
├── 1  
└── 2     # Full-sized
```

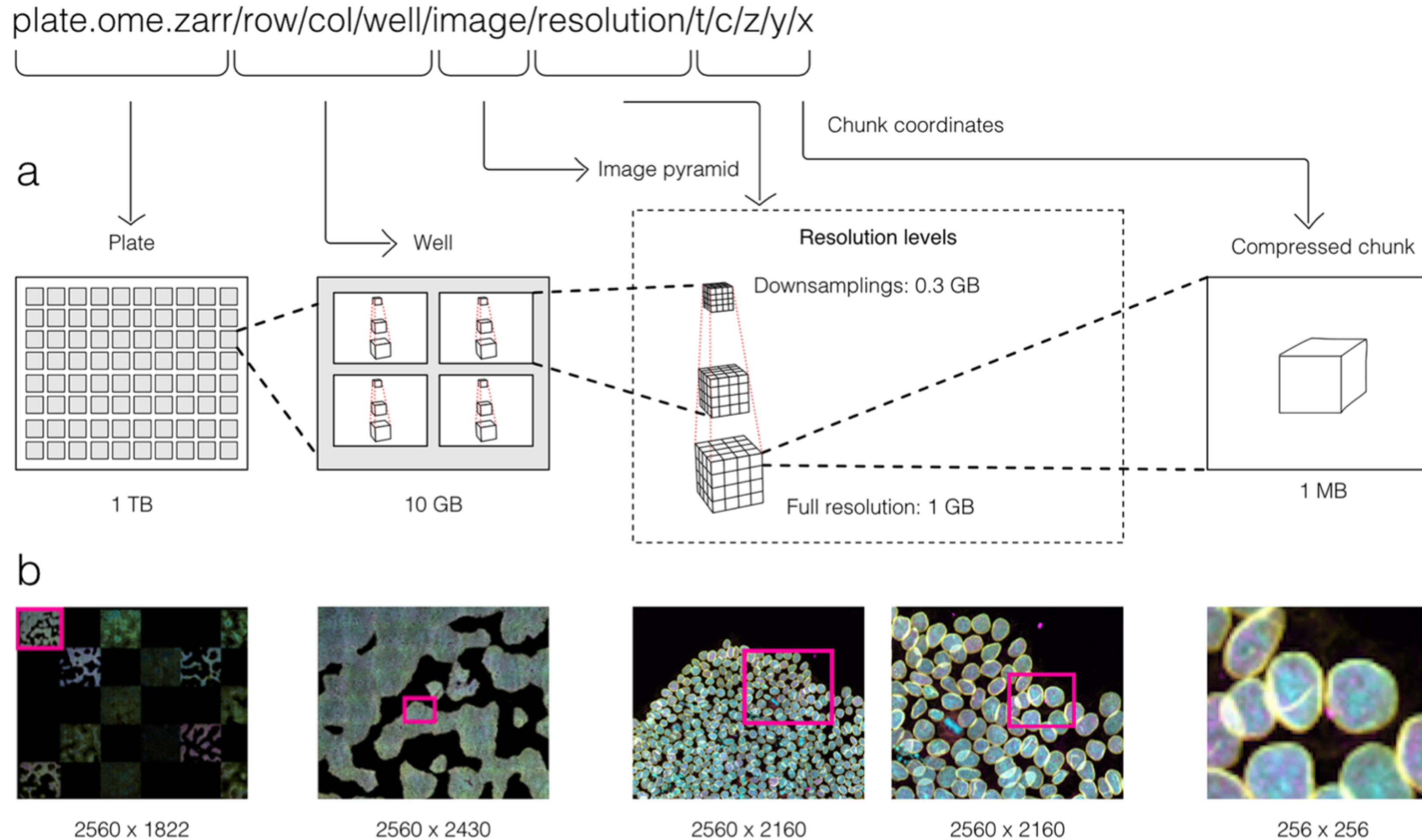
```
{ "multiscales": [  
  { "datasets": [  
    {"path": "0"}, {"path": "1"}, {"path": "2"}  
  ]  
}]
```

<https://github.com/zarr-developers/zarr-specs/issues/50>

<https://ngff.openmicroscopy.org/0.4/#multiscale-md>



# Multi-resolution, 5D+ image data



Moore et. al: Histochemistry and Cell Biology (2023)



# For more information...

OPEN



## OME-NGFF: a next-generation file format for expanding bioimaging data-access strategies

Josh Moore<sup>1</sup>, Chris Allan<sup>2</sup>, Sébastien Besson<sup>1</sup>, Jean-Marie Burel<sup>1</sup>, Erin Diel<sup>2</sup>, David Gault<sup>1</sup>, Kevin Kozlowski<sup>2</sup>, Dominik Lindner<sup>1</sup>, Melissa Linkert<sup>2</sup>, Trevor Manz<sup>3</sup>, Will Moore<sup>1</sup>, Constantin Pape<sup>4</sup>, Christian Tischer<sup>4</sup> and Jason R. Swedlow<sup>1,2</sup>✉

**The rapid pace of innovation in biological imaging and the diversity of its applications have prevented the establishment of a community-agreed standardized data format. We propose that complementing established open formats such as OME-TIFF and HDF5 with a next-generation file format such as Zarr will satisfy the majority of use cases in bioimaging. Critically, a common metadata format used in all these vessels can deliver truly findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable bioimaging data.**

Biological imaging is one of the most innovative fields in the modern biological sciences. New imaging modalities, probes and analysis tools appear every few months and often prove decisive for enabling new directions in scientific discovery. One feature of this dynamic field is the need to capture new types of data and data structures. While there is a strong drive to make scientific data find-

Together these formats provide a flexible set of choices for bioimaging data storage and access at scale over the next decade and, potentially, a common, FAIR solution for all members of the biological imaging community (academic and industrial researchers, imaging scientists, and academic and commercial technology developers).

### Next-generation file formats

We use the term next-generation file formats (NGFFs) to denote file formats that can be hosted natively in an object (or cloud) storage for direct access by a large number of users. Our current work, which we refer to as OME-NGFF, is built upon the Zarr format<sup>5</sup> but heavily informed and connected to both TIFF and HDF5. We have compared the characteristics of these three open formats in Supplementary Table 1.

To date, the development of OME-NGFF has focused on pixel

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41592-021-01326-w>

Histochemistry and Cell Biology (2023) 160:223–251  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s00418-023-02209-1>

ORIGINAL PAPER



## OME-Zarr: a cloud-optimized bioimaging file format with international community support

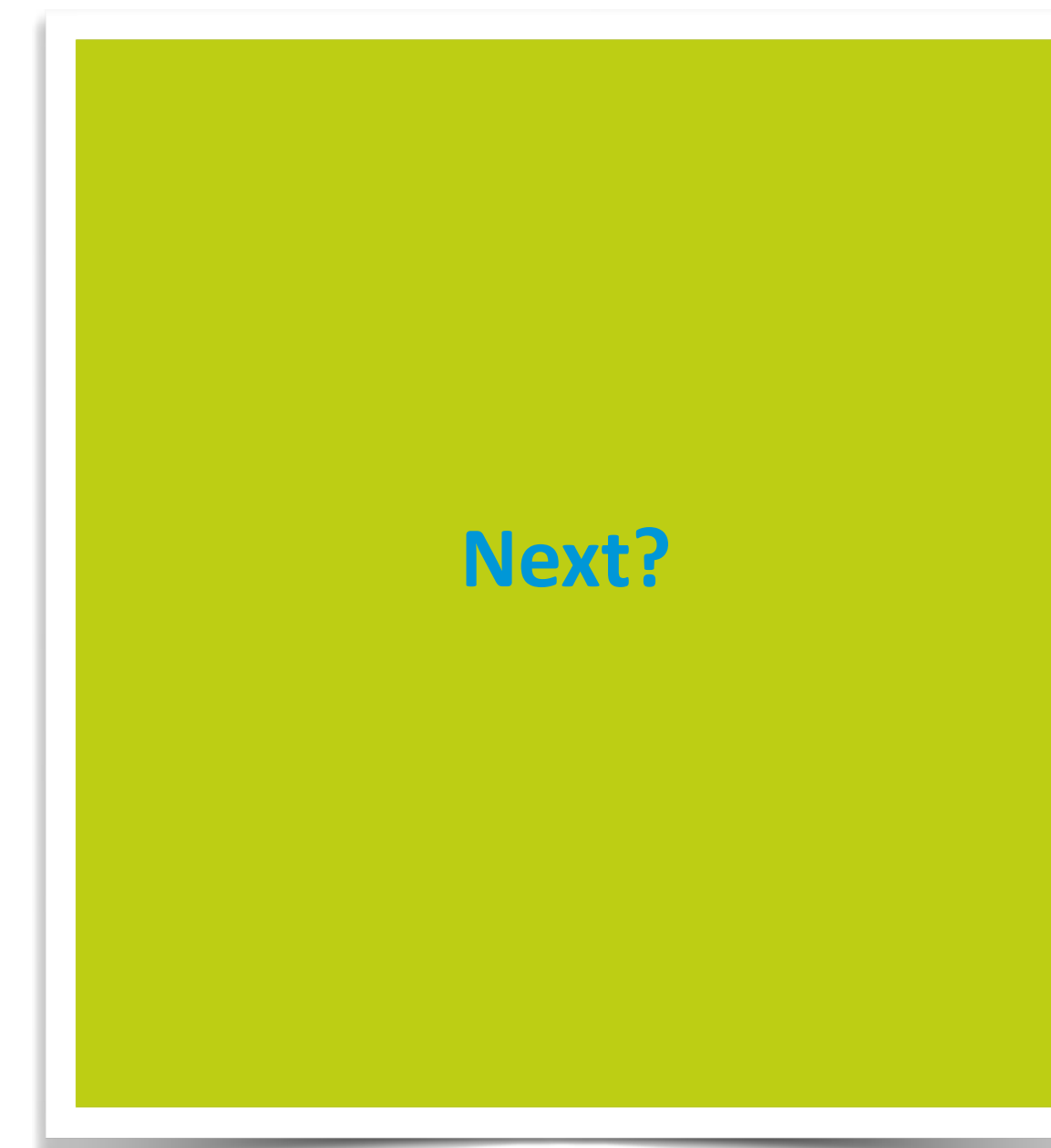
Josh Moore<sup>1</sup>, Daniela Basurto-Lozada<sup>2</sup>, Sébastien Besson<sup>3</sup>, John Bogovic<sup>4</sup>, Jordão Bragantini<sup>5</sup>, Eva M. Brown<sup>6</sup>, Jean-Marie Burel<sup>3</sup>, Xavier Casas Moreno<sup>7</sup>, Gustavo de Medeiros<sup>8</sup>, Erin E. Diel<sup>9</sup>, David Gault<sup>3</sup>, Satrajit S. Ghosh<sup>10</sup>, Ilan Gold<sup>11</sup>, Yaroslav O. Halchenko<sup>12</sup>, Matthew Hartley<sup>13</sup>, Dave Horsfall<sup>2</sup>, Mark S. Keller<sup>11</sup>, Mark Kittisopikul<sup>4</sup>, Gabor Kovacs<sup>14</sup>, Aybüke Küpcü Yoldaş<sup>13</sup>, Koji Kyoda<sup>15</sup>, Albane le Tournoux de la Villegeorges<sup>16</sup>, Tong Li<sup>17</sup>, Prisca Liberali<sup>8</sup>, Dominik Lindner<sup>3</sup>, Melissa Linkert<sup>9</sup>, Joel Lüthi<sup>8</sup>, Jeremy Maitin-Shepard<sup>18</sup>, Trevor Manz<sup>11</sup>, Luca Marconato<sup>19</sup>, Matthew McCormick<sup>20</sup>, Merlin Lange<sup>3</sup>, Khaled Mohamed<sup>3</sup>, William Moore<sup>3</sup>, Nils Norlin<sup>21</sup>, Wei Ouyang<sup>7</sup>, Bugra Özdemir<sup>22</sup>, Giovanni Palla<sup>23</sup>, Constantin Pape<sup>24</sup>, Lucas Pelkmans<sup>25</sup>, Tobias Pietzsch<sup>4</sup>, Stephan Preibisch<sup>4</sup>, Martin Prete<sup>17</sup>, Norman Rzepka<sup>16</sup>, Sameel Samee<sup>26</sup>, Nicholas Schaub<sup>27</sup>, Hythem Sidky<sup>26</sup>, Ahmet Can Solak<sup>5</sup>, David R. Stirling<sup>9</sup>, Jonathan Striebel<sup>16</sup>, Christian Tischer<sup>28</sup>, Daniel Toloudis<sup>6</sup>, Isaac Virshup<sup>23</sup>, Petr Walczysko<sup>3</sup>, Alan M. Watson<sup>29</sup>, Erin Weisbart<sup>30</sup>, Frances Wong<sup>3</sup>, Kevin A. Yamauchi<sup>31</sup>, Omer Bayraktar<sup>17</sup>, Beth A. Cimini<sup>30</sup>, Nils Gehlenborg<sup>11</sup>, Muzlifah Haniffa<sup>17</sup>, Nathan Hotaling<sup>27</sup>, Shuichi Onami<sup>15</sup>, Loïc A. Royer<sup>5</sup>, Stephan Saalfeld<sup>4</sup>, Oliver Stegle<sup>19</sup>, Fabian J. Theis<sup>23</sup>, Jason R. Swedlow<sup>3</sup>

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### Abstract

A growing community is constructing a next-generation file format (NGFF) for bioimaging to overcome problems of scalability and heterogeneity. Organized by the Open Microscopy Environment (OME), individuals and institutes across diverse modalities facing these problems have designed a format specification process (OME-NGFF) to address these needs. This paper brings together a wide range of those community members to describe the cloud-optimized format itself—OME-Zarr—along with tools and data resources available today to increase FAIR access and remove barriers in the scientific process. The current momentum offers an opportunity to unify a key component of the bioimaging domain—the file format that underlies so many personal, institutional, and global data management and analysis tasks.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s00418-023-02209-1>







NFDI4  
BIOIMAGE

National Research Data Initiative (2023-2028; Germany)

DFG Deutsche  
Forschungsgemeinschaft  
German Research Foundation

Illustration by Henning Falk,  
licensed under CC-BY 4.0

# Realizing the FAIR principles even for the largest images

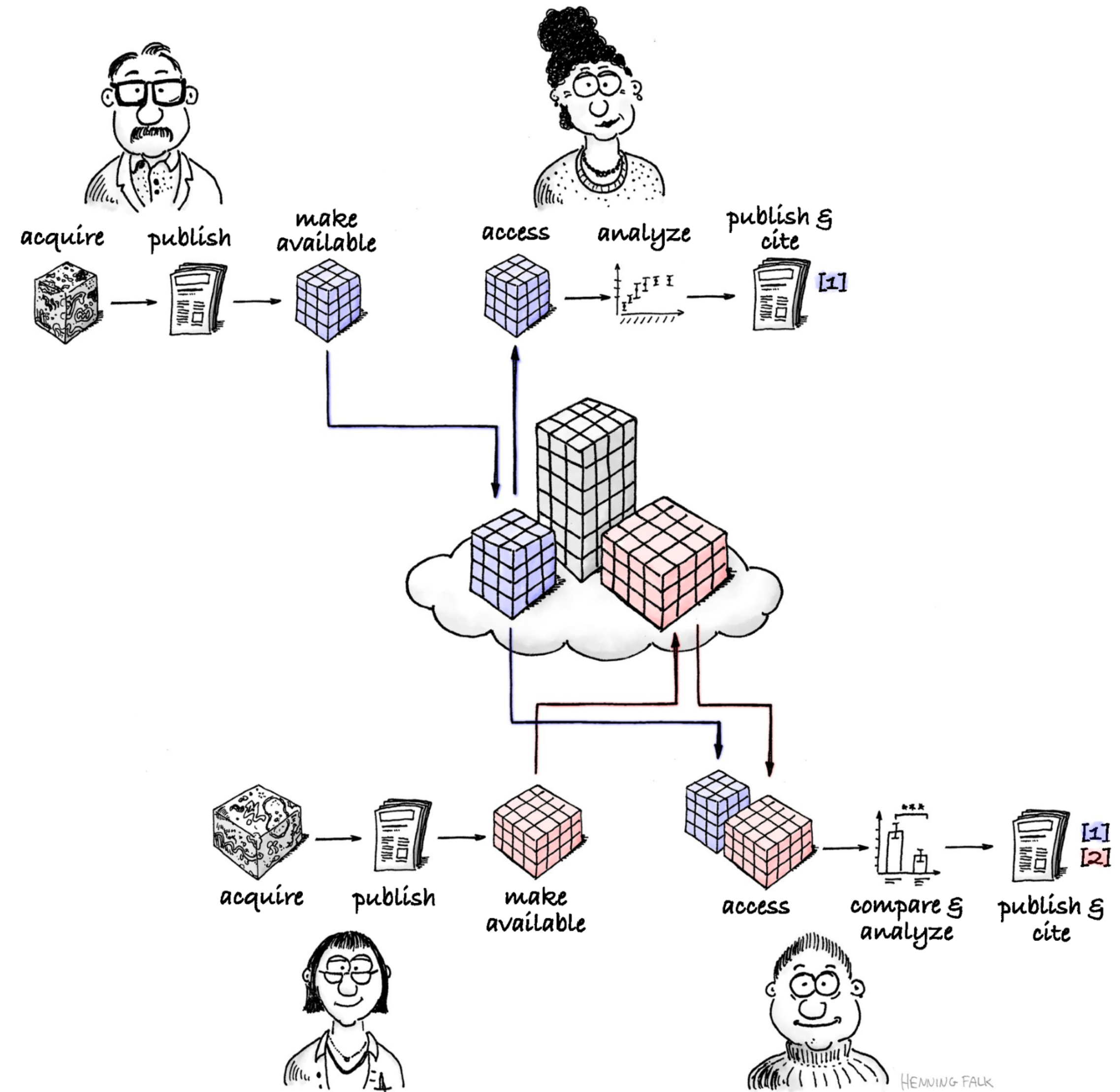



Image "FAIR re-use" by Henning Falk ©2022 NumFOCUS (CC BY 4.0 license)

<https://github.com/zarr-developers/zarr-illustrations-falk-2022>

HENNING FALK




# ome2024-ngff-challenge


►  Community Partners

## OME2024 NGFF Challenge

■ Data Management ome-ngff, ome, ome-zarr, challenge

---

 **Josh Moore**  Community Forum Team member 3  Jun 6

 @ngff community –

At the [2024 OME Community Meeting](#) <sup>13</sup>, there was much discussion around OME-Zarr, both to date and moving forward. Multiple teams described their pipelines for converting either significant portions of their repositories to OME-Zarr or doing so wholesale! (slides available under [Downloads/](#) <sup>24</sup>)

From this, a plan was hatched to attempt together: **converting** some significant corpus of day (e.g., 1 PB) using what we think the **next version of OME-Zarr** (e.g., including sharding, collections, etc.) will be by the end of **September**.

An inexhaustive list of the value that participants saw in such an undertaking included:

- Demonstrate the viability of large-scale conversions in general (and record how much it costs, etc.)
- Validate the current RFCs together (Zarr v3, fewer axis restrictions, collections with RO-Crate, etc.)
- Motivate fast(er) development of some (though not all) code paths (conversion, GUIs, etc.)

The exact definition of what is in and what is out for the challenge, or “prototype” as it was often called, is still open for discussion. However, what we *don't* want to do is spend too much of our time going back and forth on the specs. (See the timeline below) Therefore, the focus would be on **what is of value for those who will be running the conversion themselves**. If you are interested in taking part, then see the Getting Involved section below.

- ▶ 1PB
- ▶ “bring your own bucket”
- ▶ proposed next version
- ▶ drive development

<https://forum.image.sc/t/ome2024-ngff-challenge/97363>



# Specification (1/2) Adopting Zarr v3

The screenshot shows the Zarr specifications website. The main heading is "Sharding codec (version 1.0)". Below it, the "Specification URI" is listed as <https://zarr-specs.readthedocs.io/en/latest/v3/codecs/sharding-indexed/v1.0.html>. The "Editors" section lists Jonathan Strickland, Norman Rzepka, and Jeremy Maitin. The "Corresponding ZEP" is ZEP0002 — Sharding. The "Issue tracking" section points to GitHub issues. The "Suggest an edit for this" section points to the GitHub editor. The page also shows a "Section Navigation" sidebar on the left with categories like v3, Core, Data Types, Codecs, Stores, and Array Storage Transformers.

The screenshot shows the NGFF documentation website. The main heading is "Sharding". Below it, the text explains that sharding is a feature available through the adoption of Zarr v3, where multiple chunks can be stored in a single file/object. The sharding mechanism of Zarr v3 is specified in the [sharding RFC](#). A diagram illustrates the sharding mechanism, showing an "array" containing "shard" and "chunk" boxes, and a "storage unit" containing "compressible unit" boxes. Below the diagram, the text states: "Each shard contains an index that contains references to the inner chunks. Inner chunks are compressed individually, if such a codec is supported. Depending on the choice of codecs and the storage backend, it is possible to write inner chunks individually. However, in the general case, the entire array is written to a single storage unit."

The screenshot shows a GitHub pull request titled "Changes to the spec and schemata for RFC-2 #242". The pull request is open and was created by normanz. It includes 5 commits, 8 checks, and 31 files changed. A comment from normanz, dated May 31, explains that this is the companion PR for RFC-2, adding changes to the spec document, json schemata, examples, and test files. The comment also provides a brief summary of the main changes:

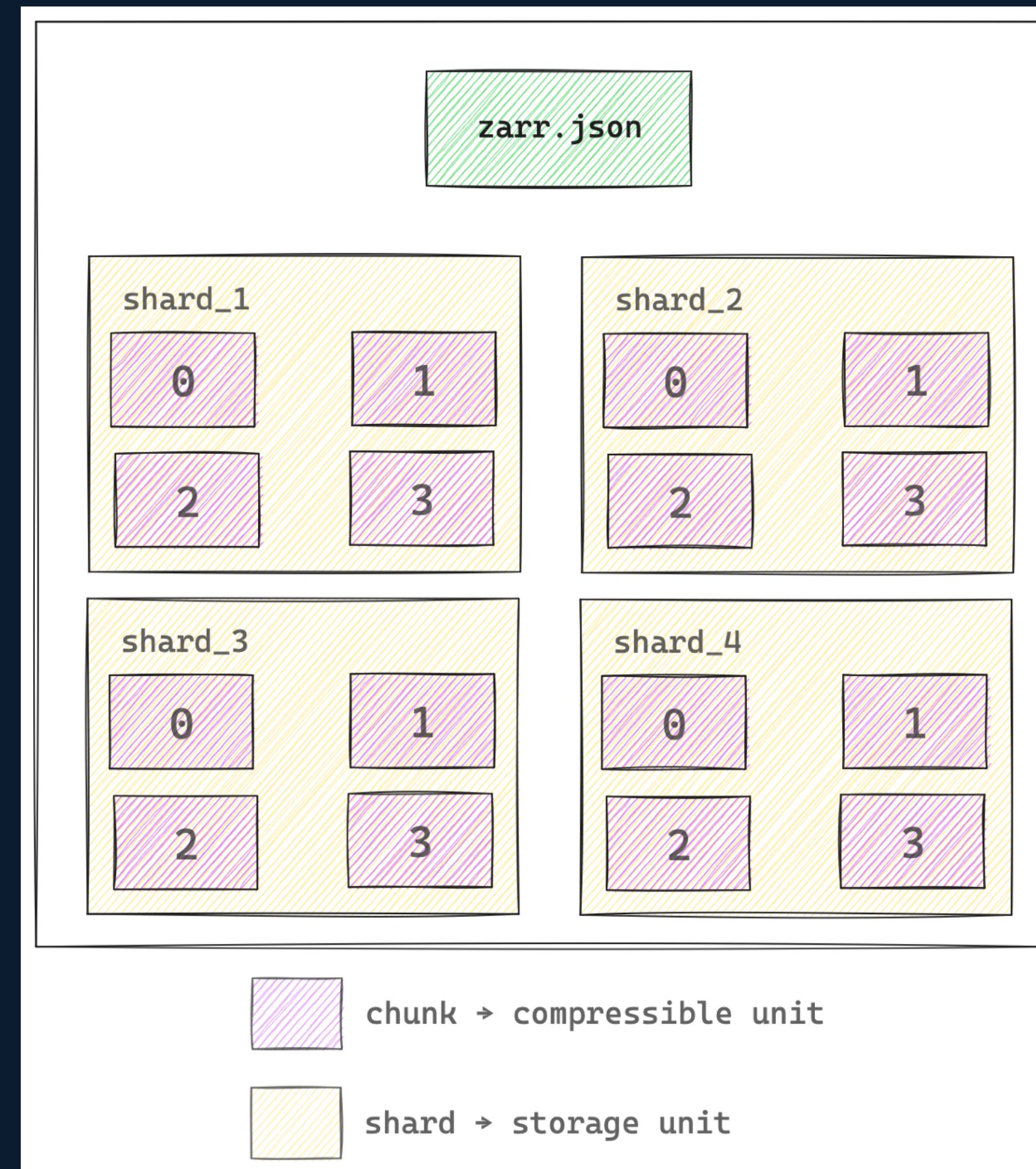
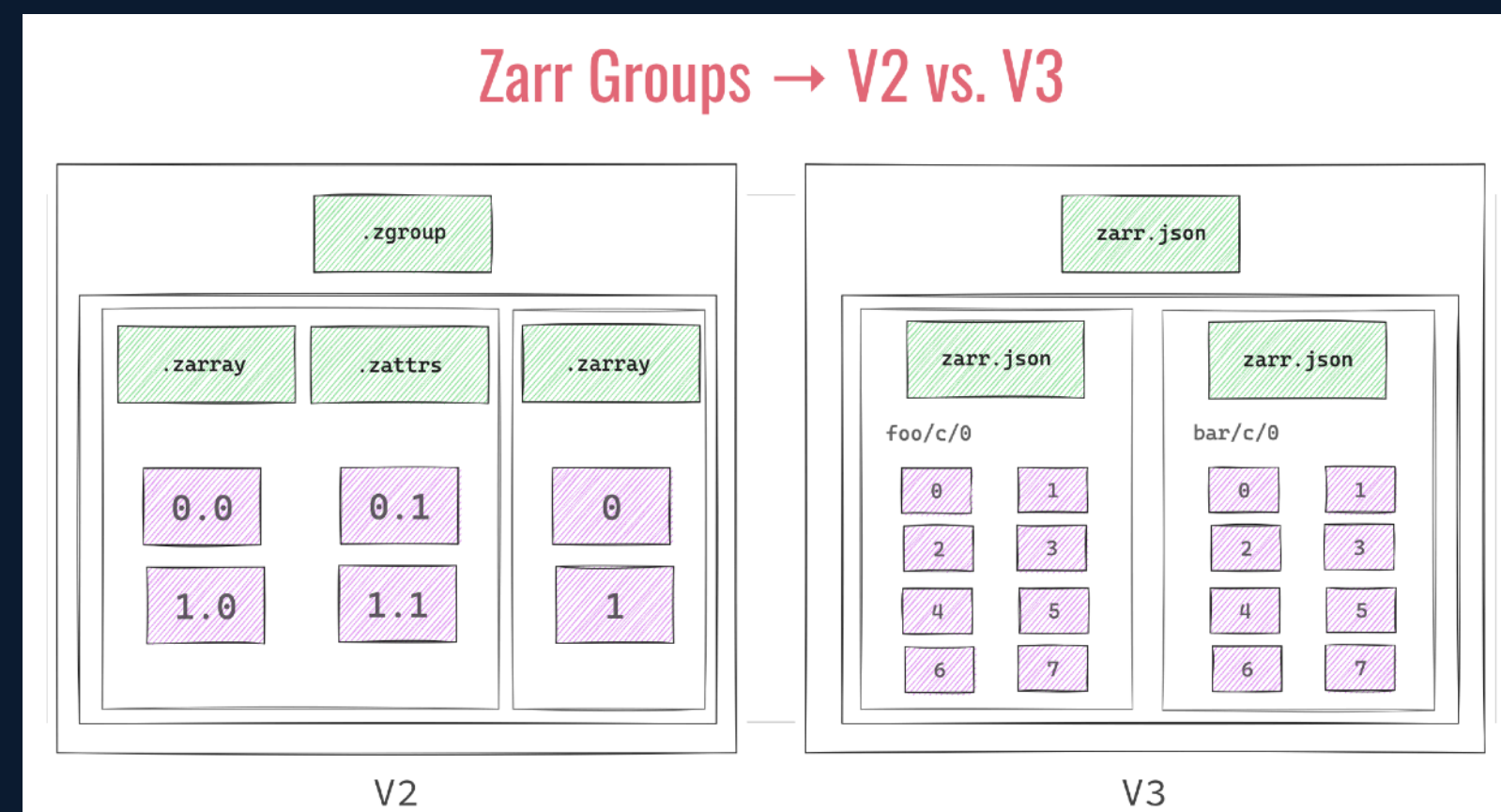
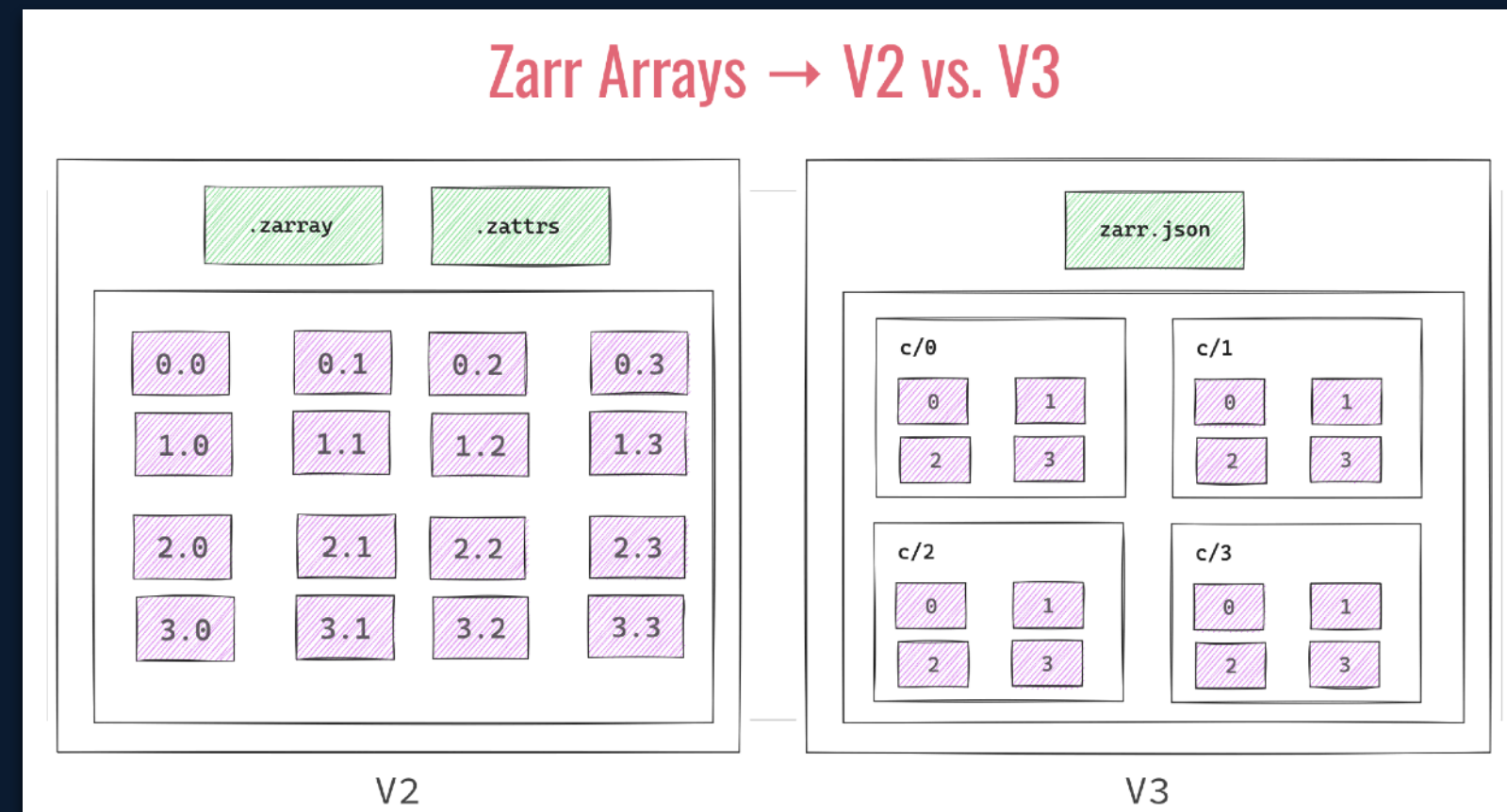
- Zarr v3 is used for OME-Zarr that includes that all metadata moves from `.zattrs` to `zarr.json`
- The OME-Zarr metadata will live under the `ome` key in the `attributes` of the `zarr.json` files
- Renaming the spec doc to OME-Zarr

<https://ngff.openmicroscopy.org/rfc/2/>

Norman Rzepka (Scalable Minds)



# Specification (1/2) Adopting Zarr v3



[https://bit.ly/explore\\_zarr\\_v3](https://bit.ly/explore_zarr_v3)

Sanket Verma (Zarr/NumFOCUS)



# Specification (2/2) RO-Crate metadata



image.zarr / ro-crate-metadata.json

```
@type: Dataset
name
description
license
resultOf
```

```
@type: image_acquisition
fbbi_id: {"@id": "obo:FBbi_00000369"}
specimen
```

```
@type: specimen
biosample
```

```
@type: biosample
organism_classification: {"@id": "NCBI:txid10090"}
```

Francois Sherwood (EBI)

# 🪄 Hocus Pocus

```
$ pip install ome2024-ngff-challenge
```

```
$ ome2024-ngff-challenge resave input.zarr output.zarr
```



# Svelte.js viewer

## samples1.csv

```
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/76-45.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/65-12.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/34-30.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/124-44.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/47-35.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/155-45.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/20-29.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/16-45.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/33-46.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/131-20.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/74-26.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/14-35.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/108-24.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/48-29.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/63-27.ome.zarr
```

## samples2.csv

```
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/76-45.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/65-12.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/34-30.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/124-44.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/47-35.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/155-45.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/20-29.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/16-45.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/33-46.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/131-20.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/74-26.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/14-35.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/108-24.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/48-29.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/63-27.ome.zarr
```

## samples3.csv

```
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/76-45.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/65-12.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/34-30.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/124-44.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/47-35.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/155-45.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/20-29.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/16-45.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/33-46.ome.zarr
https://uk1s3.embassy.ebi.ac.uk/idr/idr0010/131-20.ome.zarr
```

samples-viewer--ome2024-ngff-challenge.netlify.app/?csv=https://raw.githubusercontent.com/will-moore/ome2024-ngff-challenge/samples\_viewer/s...

## OME 2024 NGFF Challenge

Totals:

Zarr Samples (URLs)	Images	Bytes written	Organisms
2747	268269	18.81 TB	17

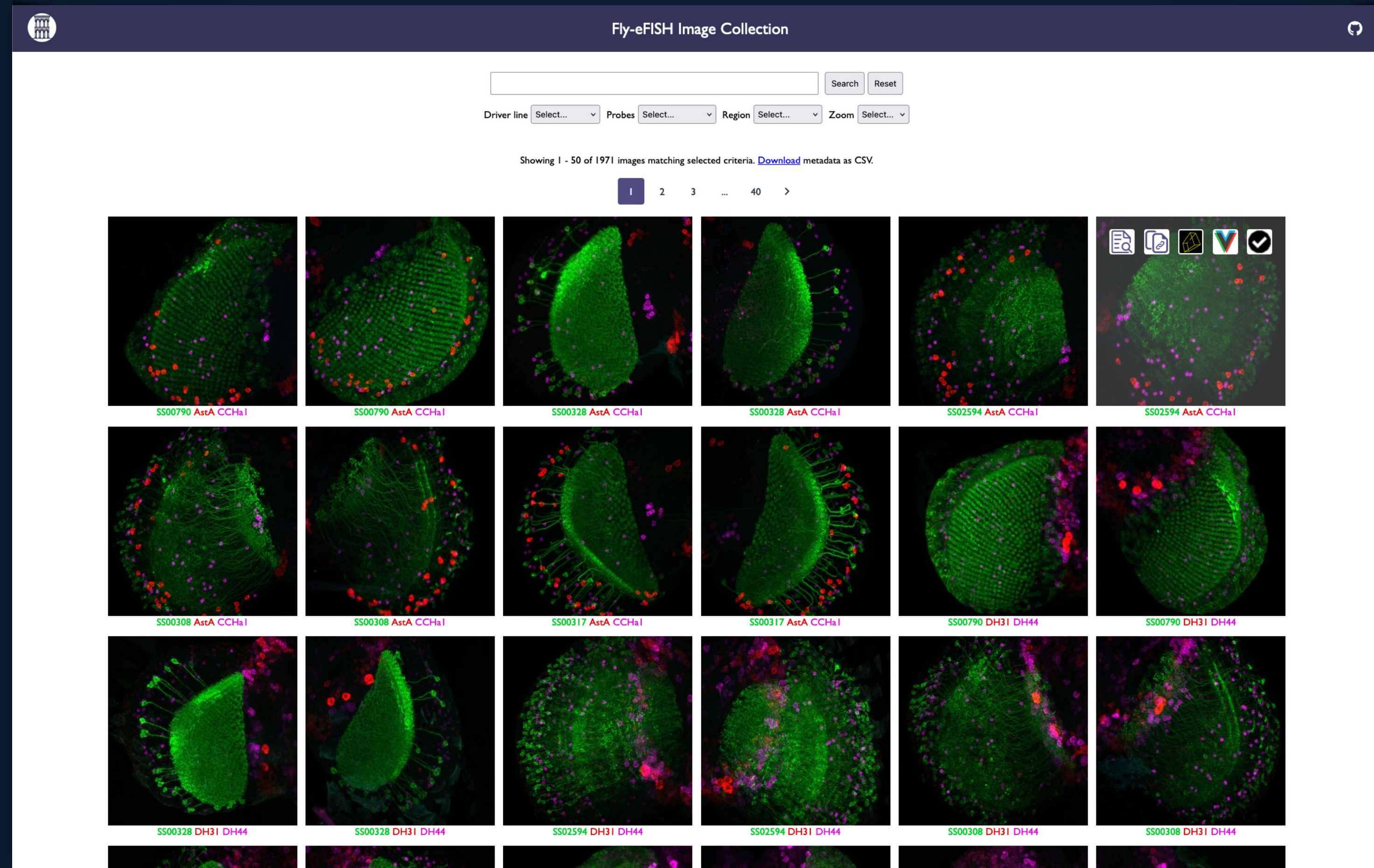
Url <input type="text" value="sort"/>	Source	Shape	Wells <input type="text" value="sort"/>	Images	Image size <input type="text" value="sort"/>	Total size <input type="text" value="sort ^"/>	Organism	Imaging
<a href="#">idr0010/76-45.ome.zarr</a>	IDR	1,2,1,520,696	384	384	680.59 KB	255.22 MB	Homo sapiens	fluorescence microscopy
<a href="#">idr0010/38-21.ome.zarr</a>	IDR	1,2,1,520,696	384	384	677.28 KB	253.98 MB	Homo sapiens	fluorescence microscopy
<a href="#">idr0157/Riccia caver...osa stature.ome.zarr</a>	IDR	1,3,1,5464,8192			252.60 MB	252.60 MB	Riccia cavernosa	
<a href="#">idr0010/62-01.ome.zarr</a>	IDR	1,2,1,520,696	384	384	671.20 KB	251.70 MB	Homo sapiens	fluorescence microscopy
<a href="#">idr0157/Riccia caver...osa stature.ome.zarr</a>	IDR	1,3,1,5464,8192			251.67 MB	251.67 MB	Riccia cavernosa	
<a href="#">idr0157/Riccia caver...osa stature.ome.zarr</a>	IDR	1,3,1,5464,8192			250.63 MB	250.63 MB	Riccia cavernosa	

<https://ome.github.io/ome2024-ngff-challenge/>

Will Moore (University of Dundee)



# and another



<https://github.com/JaneliaSciComp/zarrcade>

Konrad Rokicki (Janelia)



# and yet another

The screenshot shows the BioFile Finder website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the Allen Institute for Cell Science logo, the text 'BioFile Finder', and links for 'Open-source datasets', 'Learn', 'Help', and a 'GET STARTED' button. The main content area is titled 'Why BioFile Finder?' and describes the tool's purpose: 'Explore the data without any coding through the standardized metadata, using filters and hierarchies of folders to search for the data needed to answer a specific question. Example...'

Below this, four key features are listed:

- Find.** Find all images corresponding to a list of criteria provided by annotation and tags.
- View.** Visualize each file before uploading them ensuring you extracted the right data for your research.
- Share.** Provide the URL address to your collaborator in just one click for analysis and further exploration of your exact query.
- Publish.** By storing the .csv file in a public cloud storage, you can include the URL address in your publication for others to access your data in just one click.

The next section is titled 'How does it work?' and explains the workflow: 'BioFile Finder is a web application that allows users to interact with their data in a more efficient and effective way. Users upload a .csv file with metadata and a link to their data. The .csv file is used to create a query that can be shared with others. The URL contains the query that can be shared with others to view the same data and metadata that the user is currently looking at. The receiver of the URL will need access to the datasource (.csv).'

A diagram illustrates this workflow in three stages:

- .csv File:** A table with three columns: 'File Path', 'Example Column 1', and 'Example Column 2'. It contains two rows of example data.
- Biofile Finder:** A screenshot of the web application interface showing a search bar and a list of results.
- Image Viewer:** A screenshot of a 3D visualization of a biological sample, likely a cell or tissue, with a color-coded surface.

<https://biofile-finder.allencell.org/>

Allen Institute of Cell Science



# ome2024-ngff-challenge

- ▶ 4 months
- ▶ ~9 conf. calls
- ▶ several PRs
- ▶ few Ks (\$£¥€)
- ▶ 50% of goal

“most exciting thing about this challenge was **big-picture vision of federated image repositories** that speak common language”

# ome2024-ngff-challenge

The screenshot shows the OME 2024 NGFF Challenge website. At the top, it says "OME 2024 NGFF Challenge" and "About". Below that, a banner states: "In the summer of 2024, the OME-NGFF project generated 507.40 TB of data in Zarr v3 format. Showing Collection: ngff\_samples.csv". There is a search bar "Filter by Name or Description". Below the search bar, there are several collection icons: IDR (23.84 TB), BioImage Archive (40.40 GB), JAX (166.04 TB), Webknossos (315.47 TB), Crick (10.05 GB), and NFDI4BIOIMAGE (2.00 TB). On the left, there are filters for "Dimension Count", "Organism", and "Imaging Modality", and a "Sort by" dropdown. The main content area shows a list of image collections with thumbnails and descriptions:

- HT22.ome.zarr**  
Fuchs: Clustering phenotype populations by genome-wide RNAi and multiparametric imaging: idr0012/HT22.ome.zarr  
Data from collection idr0012\_samples provided by IDR.  
Open in OME-Validator. Browse Original data.  
Image size: T:1 C:3 Z:1 Y:1024 X:1344
- IMG\_3171-3270 Asterella gracilis (Mannia gracilis) thallus with air pore cross section (40x DIC).ome.zarr**  
idr0157 Peters Bryophytes: IMG\_3171-3270 Asterella gracilis (Mannia gracilis) thallus with air pore cross section (40x DIC).ome.zarr  
Data from collection idr0157\_samples provided by IDR.  
Open in OME-Validator.  
Image size: T:1 C:3 Z:100 Y:4160 X:6240
- 20630.ome.zarr**  
Gustafsdottir: Multiplex cytological profiling assay to measure diverse cellular states.: idr0036/20630.ome.zarr  
Data from collection idr0036\_samples provided by IDR.  
Open in OME-Validator. Browse Original data.  
Image size: C:5 Y:520 X:696

“most exciting thing about this challenge was big-picture vision of federated image repositories that speak common language”

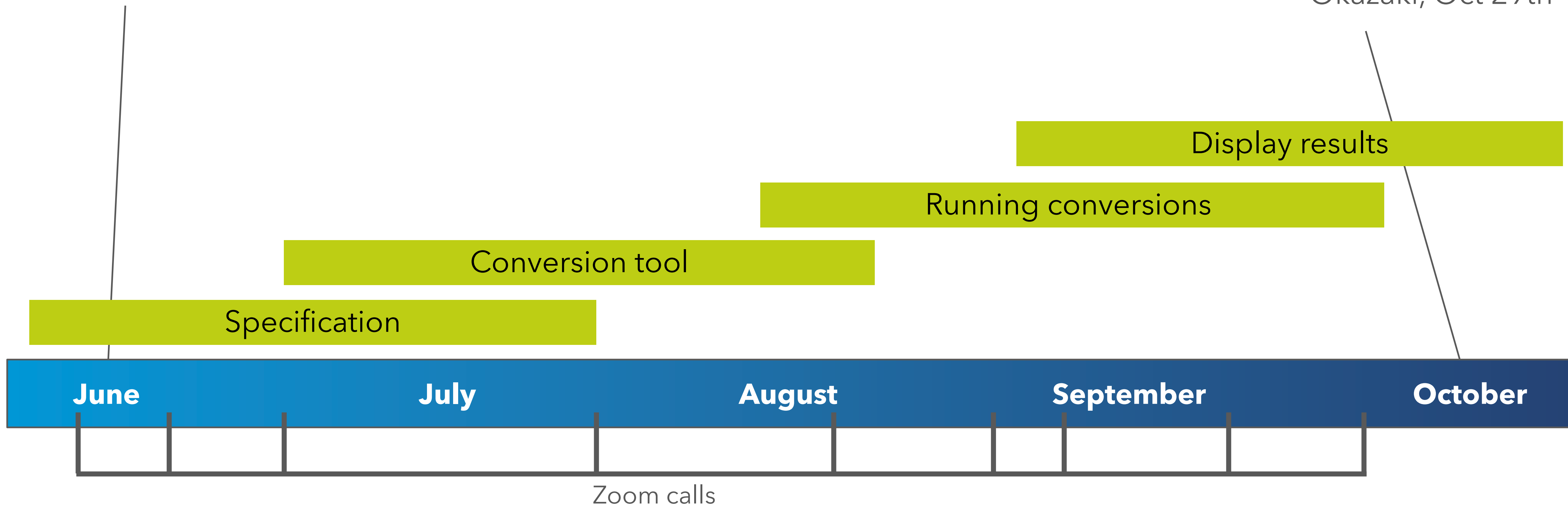
<https://ome.github.io/ome2024-ngff-challenge/>



# Challenge Timeline

OME 2024

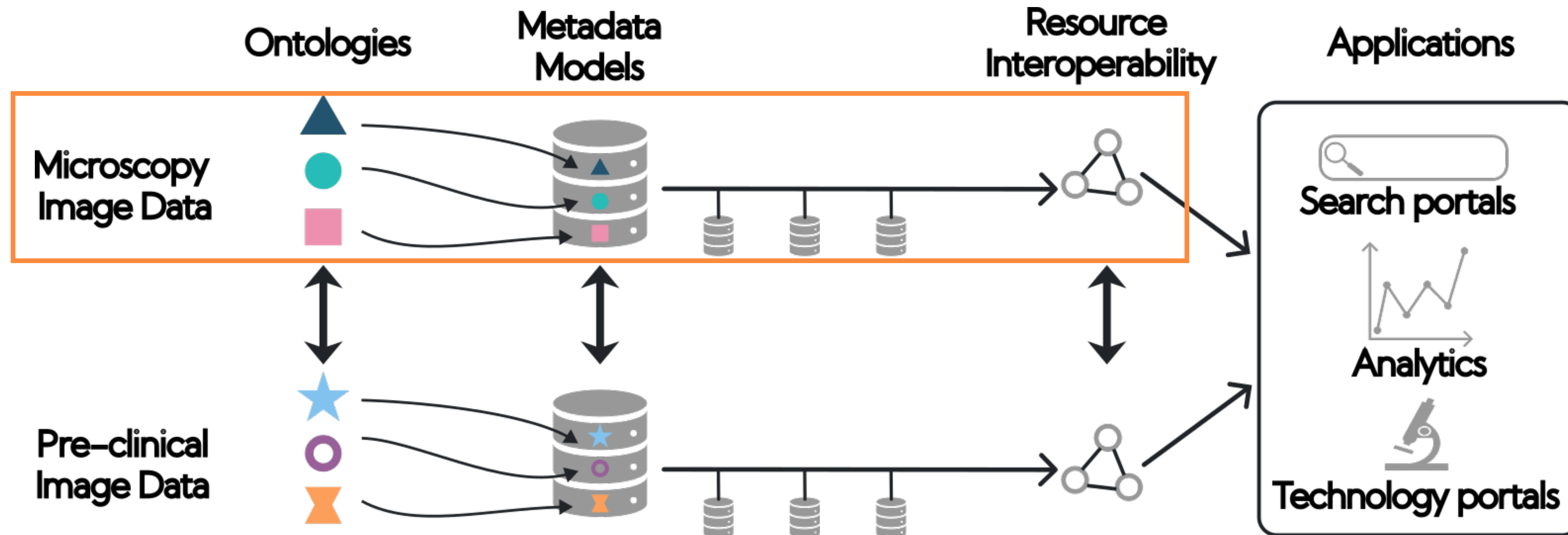
Global Bio-Imaging,  
Okazaki, Oct 29th





# foundingGIDE

## Global Image Data Ecosystem (2024-2026)



foundingGIDE is a Horizon Europe-funded project coordinated by **Euro-BioImaging ERIC** that will build strong foundations of a **Global Image Data Ecosystem (GIDE)** for image data exchange based on global coordination of technical developments among infrastructures and communities.

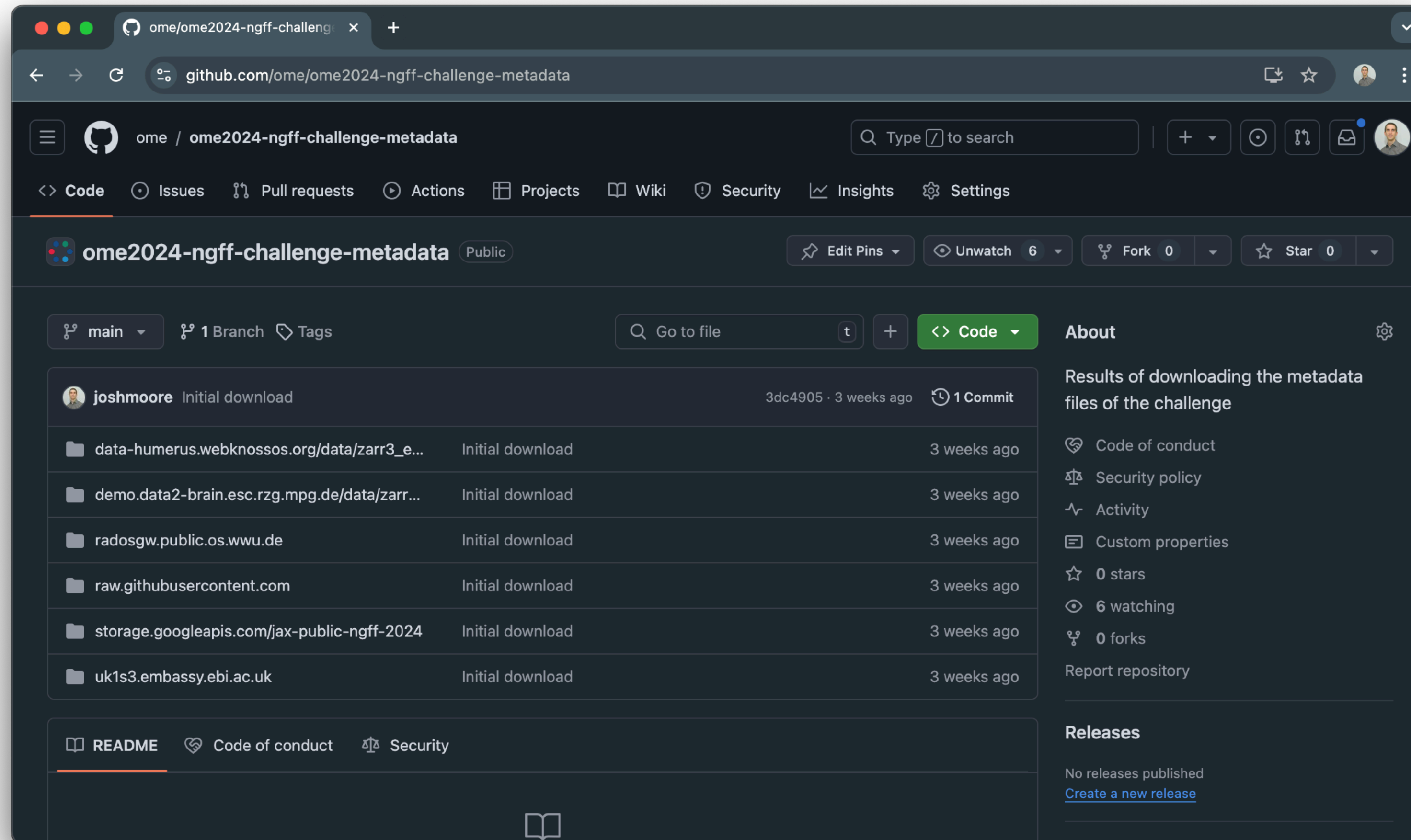


Matthew Hartley



Shuichi Onami





## Challenge metadata

- ▶ 10K files
- ▶ 100 MBs
- ▶ Missing newer files etc.
- ▶ "Hackathon ready"

<https://github.com/ome/ome2024-ngff-challenge-metadata>





### What are we trying to do (long term)?

“Show me images of how mitochondria in marine organisms respond to differing climate conditions”

- Need to understand the terms
- Need to link across domains
- One repository will not have all of the information!



Choose your own adventure (**20min**)  
^ metadata



# Metadata Matters 2010

## Metadata matters: access to image data in the real world

Melissa Linkert,<sup>1,2,4</sup> Curtis T. Rueden,<sup>1,2</sup> Chris Allan,<sup>3,4</sup> Jean-Marie Burel,<sup>3</sup> Will Moore,<sup>3</sup> Andrew Patterson,<sup>3</sup> Brian Loranger,<sup>3</sup> Josh Moore,<sup>4</sup> Carlos Neves,<sup>4</sup> Donald MacDonald,<sup>3</sup> Aleksandra Tarkowska,<sup>3</sup> Caitlin Sticco,<sup>1,2</sup> Emma Hill,<sup>5</sup> Mike Rossner,<sup>3</sup> Kevin W. Eliceiri,<sup>1,2</sup> and Jason R. Swedlow<sup>3,4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Laboratory for Optical and Computational Instrumentation, Department of Molecular Biology and <sup>2</sup>Department of Biomedical Engineering, Graduate School, University of Wisconsin at Madison, Madison, WI 53711  
<sup>3</sup>Wisconsin Trust Center for Gene Regulation and Expression, College of Life Sciences, University of Dundee, Dundee DD1 5EH, Scotland, UK  
<sup>4</sup>Glencoe Software, Inc., Seattle, WA 98101  
<sup>5</sup>The Rockefeller University Press, New York, NY 10065

Data sharing is important in the biological sciences to prevent duplication of effort, to promote scientific integrity, and to facilitate and disseminate scientific discovery. Sharing requires centralized repositories, and submission to and utility of these resources require common data formats. This is particularly challenging for multidimensional microscopy image data, which are acquired from a variety of platforms with a myriad of proprietary file formats (PFFs). In this paper, we describe an open standard format that we have developed for microscopy image data. We call on the community to use open image data standards and to insist that all imaging platforms support these file formats. This will build the foundation for an open image data repository.

Recent letters and editorials have highlighted the importance of open access to the large datasets now being collected by biologists in laboratories around the world (COSEUP, 2009; Field et al., 2009; Schofield et al., 2009). Researchers, universities, and funding bodies all agree that scientific data produced from public- and charity-funded research (not just the results, but complete workflows including raw data) should be shared and accessible. The arguments in favor of open access data are now well established, and protocols and principles for data sharing are emerging (<http://sciencemcommons.org/projects/publishing/open-access-data-protocol>). However, access to and sharing of scientific data require substantial effort and investment to define specifications and build resources to support them. For the successful sharing of DNA sequence data, the genome communities built, maintained, and in some cases fought for the standards and resources that were ultimately accepted by the whole community. This effort laid the foundation for the release of genomic data and the development of online resources, accessible by anyone, for any purpose, that now underpin all modern biomedical research.

Correspondence to Kevin W. Eliceiri: [eliceiri@wisc.edu](mailto:eliceiri@wisc.edu); or Jason R. Swedlow: [jason@lifesci.dundee.ac.uk](mailto:jason@lifesci.dundee.ac.uk)

The Rockefeller University Press \$30.00  
J. Cell Biol. Vol. 189 No. 5 777-782  
[www.jcb.org/cgi/doi/10.1083/jcb.201004104](http://www.jcb.org/cgi/doi/10.1083/jcb.201004104)

We believe the imaging community can achieve the same success for digital image data. In this paper, we review the current status of online biological image repositories and provide a set of recommendations to drive the use of open standardized data formats in biological microscopy as a prerequisite for creating a global image data repository.

### Scientific image data repositories for the life sciences

In December 2008, the *Journal of Cell Biology* (JCB) launched the *JCB DataViewer*, an online repository for original image data in the life sciences (Fig. 1). To our knowledge, this system is the first open repository that enables routine archiving and sharing of original image datasets supporting published scientific articles. One key attribute of the *JCB DataViewer* that distinguishes it from past and current data repositories is that the original binary data and metadata, additional information captured by acquisition software about an image, such as the instruments used, acquisition settings, image size, and resolution, are preserved and accessible by the community. As of this writing, the *JCB DataViewer* contains 6,446 multidimensional (5D) including space, channel, and time) images in support of 186 published articles. The *JCB DataViewer* is a customized application based on the open source and open development Open Microscopy Environment (OME) Remote Objects (OMERO) and Bio-Formats projects, released by the OME Consortium (<http://openmicroscopy.org>).

One goal of the *JCB DataViewer* was to initiate the development of a functional, scientifically valuable online image repository. The first step was to make original data available alongside a publication, available for examination by reviewers and readers of a submitted or published manuscript. Currently, the *JCB DataViewer* allows access to original data for viewing, simple measurement, and review, but users cannot download

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Downloaded from <http://www.jcb.org/cgi/doi/10.1083/jcb.201004104.pdf> by guest on 22 May 2024

JCB 777

Image	Description
AcquiredDate	Describes the actual image and its metadata
Description	The acquisition date of the image
Name	A multi-line description for the image
ImagingEnvironment	A short description for the image; this would be used to, for example, select the image from a list
AirPressure	Describes the environment that the biological sample was in during the experiment
CO2Percent	AirPressure in millibars (mbar)
Humidity	CO <sub>2</sub> as a fraction from 0.0 to 1.0
Temperature	Humidity as a fraction from 0.0 to 1.0
Temperature	Temperature (°C)
ObjectiveSettings	Describes any settings on or around the objective
CorrectionCollar	An adjustable ring on the objective that corrects for changes in immersion medium refractive index; arbitrary scale and unitless
Medium	A description of a medium used for the lens, e.g., Oil, Water, WaterDipping, Air, Multi, Glycerol, Other
RefractiveIndex	Refractive index is that of the immersion medium
Pixel	Defines the location and parameters of the Pixels; the actual binary image data
DimensionOrder	The order in which the individual planes of data are interleaved, e.g., XYZCT, XYZTC, XYCTZ, XYTCZ, XYTCZ
PhysicalSizeX	Physical size in x, y, and z of a pixel in micrometers (µm)
PhysicalSizeY	
PhysicalSizeZ	
SizeC	Dimensional size x, y, z, c, and t of pixel data array
SizeT	
SizeX	
SizeY	
SizeZ	
TimeIncrement	Used for time series that have a global timing specification instead of per-timepoint timing info, e.g., a video stream (s)
Type	The variable type used to represent each pixel in the image, e.g., int8, int16, int32, uint8, uint16, uint32, float, bit, double, complex, double-complex
BinData	If the pixel data is stored directly in the XML, it is enclosed in BinData Elements
TiffData	If the pixel data is stored in an OME-TIFF file it is described by TiffData Elements
FirstC	The TiffData element describes how the Tiff IFD numbers are mapped to the Pixels
FirstT	
IFD	
PlaneCount	
UUID	The TiffData UUID and Filename are used for multi-file datasets to maintain connections between the files
Channel	
AcquisitionMode	AcquisitionMode describes the type of microscopy performed, e.g., WideField, LaserScanningMicroscopy, LaserScanningConfocal, SpinningDiskConfocal, SiltScanConfocal, MultiPhotonMicroscopy, StructuredIllumination, SingleMoleculeImaging, TotalInternalReflection, FluorescenceLifetime, SpectralImaging, FluorescenceCorrelationSpectroscopy, NearFieldScanningOpticalMicroscopy, SecondHarmonicGenerationImaging, Other
Color	A color used to render this channel
ContrastMethod	The technique used to achieve contrast, e.g., Brightfield, Phase, DIC, HoffmanModulation, ObliqueIllumination, PolarizedLight, Darkfield, Fluorescence, Other
EmissionWavelength	Emission wavelength of excitation for a particular channel, in nanometers (nm)
ExcitationWavelength	Excitation wavelength of excitation for a particular channel, in nanometers (nm)
Fluor	The name of the fluorophore used to produce this channel
IlluminationType	The method of illumination used to capture the channel, e.g., Transmitted, Epifluorescence, Oblique, NonLinear, Other
Name	A short name for the channel, used to, for example, identify the channel from a list
NDFilter	Specifies the combined effect of any neutral density filters used (% transmittance)
PinholeSize	Specifies adjustable pin hole diameters for confocal microscopes (micrometers (µm))
PixelCellSetting	Amount the polarization of the beam introduced by Pockel Cell, if any
SamplesPerPixel	The number of samples the detector takes to form each pixel value
Binning	Represents the number of pixels that are combined to form larger pixels, e.g., 1 × 1 × 2 × 2 × 4 × 4 × 8 × 8, Other
Gain	The gain of the detector
Offset	The offset of the detector
ReadOutRate	Detector read speed (MHz)
Voltage	The voltage of the detector (volts (V))
Attenuation	The attenuation of the light source (%)
Wavelength	The wavelength of the light source (nm)
Plane	
DeltaT	Elapsed time since the beginning of the experiment (s)
ExposureTime	Elapsed time during image recording (s)
PositionX	The x, y, and z position of the stage (µm)
PositionY	
PositionZ	
StageLabel	
Name	Short name for this stage location; this would be used to, for example, identify the channel from a list
X	The labeled x, y, and z position of the stage (µm)
Y	
Z	

**Recommendations for OME Compliant image metadata.** The Image and Instrument Elements from the OME Data Model, with attributes and hierarchies shown in diagrammatic form. The Image Element contains core metadata that can be used for display and processing of the associated binary image data. Currently, an OME Compliant image completes all of the metadata in the Image Element. By the end of 2010, we aim to include the Instrument Element in the OME Compliant specification. The Bio-Formats library provides support for writing OME-XML either as a stand-alone file or within the header of an OME-TIFF file. The full XML Schema version of the OME Data Model is available at <http://ome-xml.org/browser/Schemas/OME/2010-04/ome.xsd>. Updates to the OME Data Model are announced on the project's roadmap site (<http://ome-xml.org/roadmap>).

## Box 1. Recommendations for use of PFFs

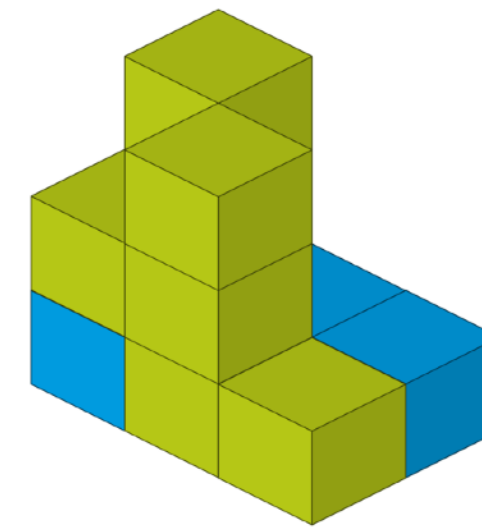
1. Image metadata must be associated with the binary image data, preferably as a single file.
2. Microscope systems must not store metadata in proprietary databases that are available only on the data acquisition system.
3. Metadata must be readable by third party software using a common, openly accessible software package or library. PFF developers must work with developers of open translation libraries to ensure their format is correctly interpreted.
4. Scientists must use image processing and analysis tools that preserve image metadata.
5. Image data must reflect the original measurement. If compression is supported, the user must be given the option of saving uncompressed or losslessly compressed images (which allows the exact original data to be reconstructed after compression). If compression or encryption is used, the algorithm and parameters must be stated and stored in the metadata.
6. Commercial software programs must provide data export to an open metadata specification. To ensure that commercial software writes these formats correctly, open, freely available libraries and format validators must be available to enable compliance.
7. Public and charity funding for imaging systems must include a requirement that the system writes data in an open, accessible format, wherever possible.
8. All file formats must use versioning to reflect any changes in the data model.
9. When PFFs must be used, new versions must be announced to the scientific community, and users and funding bodies must predicate their purchases on this type of support for the scientific community.
10. Once a standardized repository is available, journals must require deposition of original data supporting scientific manuscripts.



# "6. Data export to an open metadata specification"



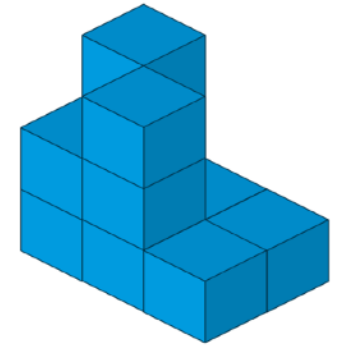
Complex internal state



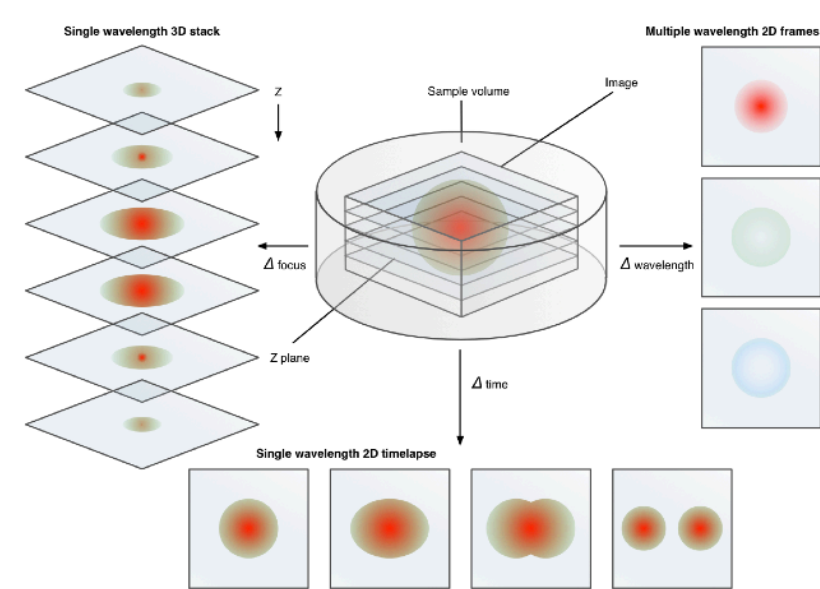
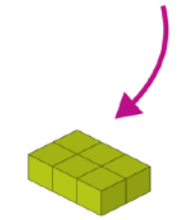
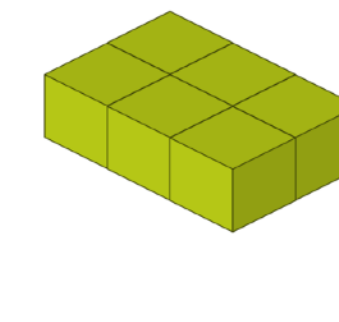
Current Bio-Formats parsing



Overall goal



Uninterpretable information



OME-XML

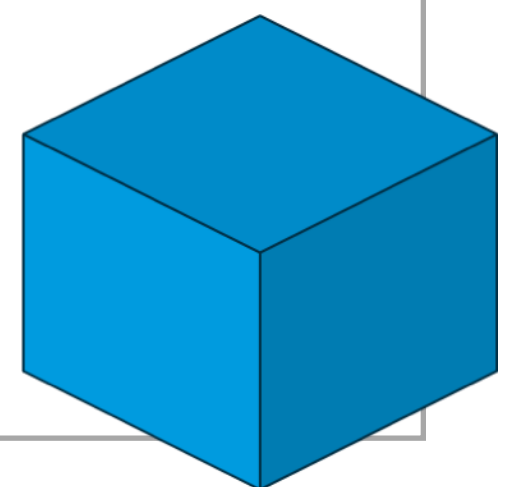
```
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|AcquisitionModeSetup|RtFrameHeight #1=512
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|AcquisitionModeSetup|RtFrameWidth #1=512
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|AcquisitionModeSetup|RtLinePeriod #1=3.0000000000000001e-005
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|AcquisitionModeSetup|RtOffsetX #1=0
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|AcquisitionModeSetup|RtOffsetY #1=0
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|AcquisitionModeSetup|RtRegionHeight #1=512
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|AcquisitionModeSetup|RtRegionWidth #1=512
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|AcquisitionModeSetup|RtSuperSampling #1=1
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|AcquisitionModeSetup|RtZoom #1=1
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|AcquisitionModeSetup|ScalingX #1=4.1513291872589499e-007
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|AcquisitionModeSetup|ScalingY #1=4.1513291872589499e-007
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|AcquisitionModeSetup|ScalingZ #1=9.9999999999999995e-007
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|AcquisitionModeSetup|SimRotations #1=3
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|AcquisitionModeSetup|TimeSeries #1=false
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|AcquisitionModeSetup|TrackMultiplexType #1=zStack
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|AcquisitionModeSetup|UseRois #1=false
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|AcquisitionModeSetup|ZoomX #1=1
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|AcquisitionModeSetup|ZoomY #1=1
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|Laser|LaserName #1=HeNe633
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|Laser|LaserName #2=Diode 405-30
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|Laser|LaserName #3=Argon
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|Laser|LaserName #4=HeNe594
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|Laser|LaserPower #1=0.0050000000000000001
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|Laser|LaserPower #2=0.029999999999999999
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|Laser|LaserPower #3=0.025000000000000000
Experiment|AcquisitionBlock|Laser|LaserPower #4=0.002
```

Uninterpretable metadata



```
{ "@context": { "ROC": "https://w3id.org/ro/crate/1.1/context",
  "OME": "https://openmicroscopy.org/context",
  "QL": "https://quarep.org/context",
  "EG": "https://vendor.com/context" },
  "@graph": [
    {
      "@type": "ROC:CreativeWork",
      "@id": "ro-crate-metadata.json",
      "conformsTo": { "@id": "https://w3id.org/ro/crate/1.1" },
      "about": { "@id": "." }
    },
    {
      "@id": ".",
      "@type": [
        "Dataset", "OME:Image",
        "EG:acquisitionModeSetup": [
          "EG:UseRois": false
        ], ...
      ]
    }
  ]
}
```

Critical to have complete metadata if we are ever to have a unified format.



**Creating metadata representations is **easy**.**  
**The **hard** part is building a common one.**

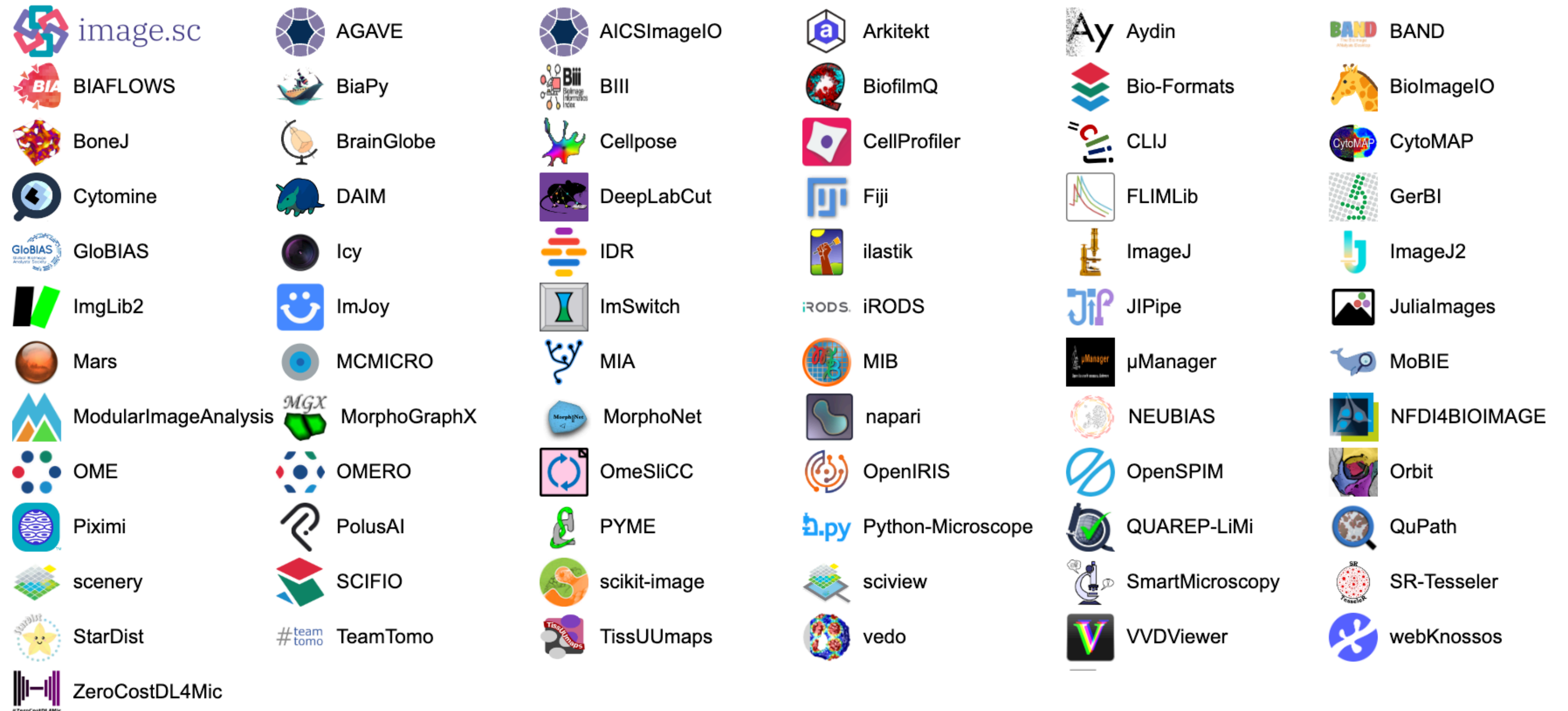


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[openmicroscopy.org/about/#consortium](https://openmicroscopy.org/about/#consortium)  
NGFF community

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In cooperation with



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