

# NSCF NEWS

Communication from the Natural Science Collections Facility Hub Team

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## NSCF Exhibiting at #IBSFSA2019



The NSCF Hub Team will be one of about 46 exhibitors at the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI)'s [Innovation Bridge Technology Showcasing and Match-making Event and Science Forum South Africa](#) on 4-6 December 2019 at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research International Convention Centre (CSIR ICC), Pretoria.

The Hub Team will be at **stand number 3**, next to the reception desk. We would like to invite the entire NSCF network to support us by attending the event and visiting our stand and sharing our presence at the event on your social media pages using [@NSCF](#), [@bridge\\_portal](#), [@dsigovza](#), [@ScienceForumSA](#) and [#IBSFSA2019](#). It is completely free to attend the event, and you can register your attendance [here](#).

Science Forum South Africa (SFA) and Innovation Bridge (IB), previously separate events, have joined forces to serve the South African innovation ecosystem. The 2019 joint event's theme is '*Igniting Conversations About Science For Innovation With Impact*'.

The SFA provides Africa with an "open science" event and aims to ignite conversations about science, which has been held over 4 successful events to date with over 3000 delegates attending each year. The key objectives of the 5th SFA are to create a platform for a vibrant debate on the role of science, technology and innovation in society; to promote international science, technology and innovation partnerships; and to create a network platform for key science, technology and innovation actors, including senior government leaders, academics, scientists, industry, civil society, and students.

## NRF-SAIAB turns 50!



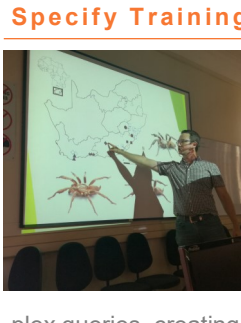
Representing the entire NSCF network, we would like to congratulate our SAIAB family on their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a research institute. The institute was established in 1969, after JLB Smith's widow, Margaret Mary Smith persuaded Rhodes University and CSIR to establish the JLB Smith Institute of Ichthyology (JLBSI), with Margaret as the first Director.

The first collection database, containing 26 000 records came into use in 1986, with the first edition of Smiths' Sea Fishes published. JLBSI became a research facility of the National Research Foundation (NRF) in 1999, under the directorship of Prof Paul Skelton, who took over in 1994, after Margaret passed in 1987.

The institute was renamed from JLBSI to the South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity (SAIAB) in 2001. In 2007, the state-of-the-art SAIAB Collection Facility was officially opened and the entire collection was moved into the new facility by 2009. In 2010, the Margaret Smith Library was opened, which has the biggest ichthyology literature collection in Africa and is known as the "[ichthyology bible](#)". The library contains a diverse collection of printed material – books, reprints, journals, maps, antiquarian works and a large collection of unpublished literature.

In 2011, Prof Paul Skelton retired, handing over his duties to Dr Angus Paterson as Managing Director.

## Specify Training Course—Introduction to Specify



Specify level one and two training was facilitated by Dr Ian Engelbrecht on 29 and 30 October at the University of Pretoria. Staff members of NSCF partner institutions, and some members of the NSCF Hub attended the training.

The training covered opening Specify, overview of the Specify interface, using Simple Search to find records, capturing specimen records using forms, searching for data with more complex queries, creating and managing loans, creating specimen labels, data quality control, and getting help.

As ice-breakers, Ian gave the participants a task on each day: a typing test on [typingtest.com](#) and [typingstudy.com](#), and a clicking test on [mouseaccuracy.com](#).

At the end of the course, each participant wrote a test. Should they pass, they receive a certificate of completion.



## Coordinating Committee Meeting

Hosted by Iziko Museums of South Africa

The NSCF Coordinating Committee meeting was held from 12 to 14 November 2019, with a tour on the 11<sup>th</sup>, at the Iziko Museums of South Africa. We are proud that at this meeting, all the institutions were represented, and we are grateful for this.

As a way of re-introducing institutions to each other and to share the overlaps and alignments of the institutions with the NSCF's purpose, vision and strategies, institutions were given an opportunity to deliver a [Pecha Kucha](#) presentation. We are grateful for the effort that went into preparing and presenting your presentations. It was exciting to see what everyone is busy with and how it can contribute to the NSCF Business Plan.

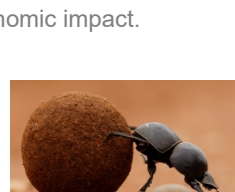
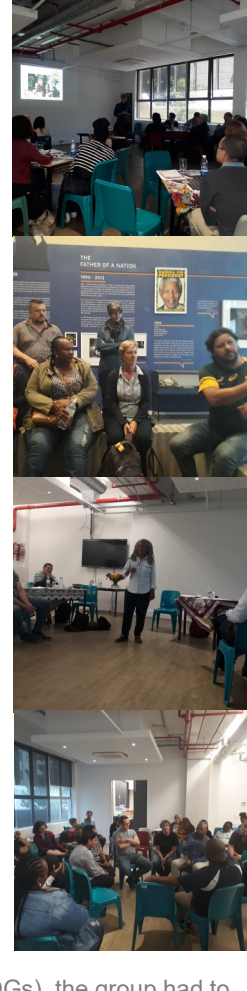
The group enjoyed an eye-opening, thought-provoking and intense talk by Lucelle Campbell, a social history activist running the [Transcending History Tours](#) in Cape Town. Lucelle has worked in museums and her work deals with the idea of decolonizing museums and here are some points she made:

- Links with communities make museums relevant
- Museums have a history of racism
- Museums are catalysts for change
- Human remains must be honourably buried
- How do we become agents of change as museums? We must first make the change in ourselves as museum professionals
- There are crimes against humanity that are not being told at museums
- Museums are too academic
- Story-telling is key.

With the Department of Science and Innovation requesting new strategic objectives that align with the National Development Plan (NDP) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the group had to address this and come up with a plan, and perhaps change our thinking towards making the NSCF and all the institutions relevant. This meant making clear our translational research (research that translates into socio-economic impact).

From the meeting, Michelle Hamer was re-introduced:

I present to you, Prof Michelle Hamer!



## NSTF-South32 Awards

Nominate your researchers...

Nominations are open for the 2019/2020 round of the NSTF-South32 Awards. You can register nominations online by **9 December 2019**. See the criteria [here](#), and register a nomination [here](#). This is another way we can make our collections relevant and worthy of funding. Visit the NSTF website for more information: [www.nstf.org.za](#)

## Join us on Social Media

Like/follow, share/retweet and comment

**"We don't have a choice on whether we do social media, the question is how well we do it."**

– Erik Qualman



[@NSCFSA](#)—aimed at the public audience

'Natural Science Collections Facility' Facebook group—aimed at communicating to institutions, and not the public.



[@NSCF\\_SA](#)—aimed at the public audience



[@nscf\\_sa](#)—aimed at the public audience

[@nscf\\_sa](#)—aimed at the public audience

**Let's connect!**

Follow each link and **like/follow** the NSCF pages on social media, we will like/follow you back.

## Send us your news...

to feature in the NSCF newsletter!

- What exciting activities took place at your institution?
  - Anything happening with the collections?
  - Any new species?
  - Any collections-related research?
  - Any job opportunities?
  - Any new staff members?
  - Any moving of collections?
  - Any data related work happening?
  - Any visiting scientist you are hosting?
  - Any staff members traveling/attending a conference/attending a training?
  - Did you recently receive items from the NSCF grant?
  - Was your institution featured in the media?
- ... Guess what? That needs to be on this newsletter!

**Send your news to:**

Fulufhelo Gelebe, [f.gelebe@sanbi.org.za](mailto:f.gelebe@sanbi.org.za)

The NSCF is a virtual Facility, comprised of a network of institutions that hold natural science collections that are accessible to external researchers. The NSCF was established as part of the Department of Science and Technology's Research Infrastructure Roadmap and co-ordinated by the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI).

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