SciCatCon 2024

Face-2-Face meeting
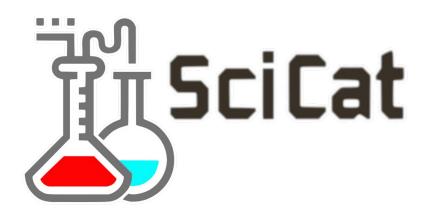

Hosting facility:	Paul Scherrer Institut (PSI)
Dates:	July 2-4, 2024
Event Page:	https://indico.psi.ch/event/15861/overview
Registration:	https://indico.psi.ch/event/15861/registrations/2210/

Don't forget to register.
See you in July

The organizing committee

Meeting Notes
2nd of April 2024

- SciCatCon 2024: SciCat In-Person Meeting 2024
  - Dates: 2-4 July 2024
  - Location: on-site at PSI, Switzerland
  - The agenda is finilized.
  - Carlo has contacted the ICAT community. The response has been positive. Most likely one iCAT representative will attend the meeting
  - Carlo has emailed potential users for presenting at the user day. He is waiting from responses.
  - Regina reported that the DESY use case might not required as much time as she thought. She will share more info as soon as she has a better idea of the time needed.

- Releases
  - Release jobs
    - Additional meeting and discussion about authentication and permissions between Spencer, Despina and Max.
    - Spencer will start collect examples of workflow soon. He will contact Laura and Marco. Please reach out to him if you have a relevant job workflow use case.
    - MVP will contain only URL job action.
    - PSI will need to add rabbitmq job action to be able to deploy and upgrade
    - Kafka job action will be implemented last of the three.
    - Question raised during the meeting: should include the library to interact with rabbitmq and kafka in the core or find an alternative solution?
    - At the moment, we will include them. The course of action will be adjusted as needed.
    - Despina asked for volunteers to review her PR for the job release. Max will review. Other reviewers are welcome.
  - Release SciCatLive
    - Attila is working on integrating BE v3.x with rabbitmq
    - The PSI job workflow will be tested with BE v3.x
    - The new release will have a modular approach regarding the services started
    - Carlo mentioned that at the moment they are using the latest image from the github image repository. He does not know if that's the best choice. He asked to provide feedback about which image to use in SciCatLive
    - Fredric is working on integrating BE v4.x
    - MVP should be ready soon. MVP equal the minimum set of services including FE and BE.
    - Nice to have services will be worked on next

- Testing is scheduled to be the last thing to be worked on
- The workgroup is exploring and trying to implement the use of flags to control how SciCatLive is started and which services will be started.
- The first flag will be responsible to select which BE will be started: v3.x or v4.x
- It is plan as a nice-to-have a flag to start a dev environment, instead of the production one
- Future discussion: what should we do when a new version of any container is releases? We should established a procedure to follow so this tool does not fall behind
- Question regarding SciCat BE image and if it is created when a new release is created. Please see dedicated section in appendix
  - Search UI
    - "Search" button added.
    - Request to change filter box label from "**Search**" to "**Filter By**"
    - Dylan: express concerns that the search box is using too much real estate
    - Spencer proposed to implement a google like experience
    - Carlo brought booking.com as an example
    - Marco proposed to keep Search and Filter by together and add a second second search button at the bottom of the filter by box
    - Regina appreciate the dynamic search (auto submit)
    - Dylan mention that there are multiple use cases and each use case might need its own design. He brought two examples:
      - Beamline user searching for hers latest datasets
      - Researchers trying to find specific datasets
    - Laura explained that the reason behind the decision of creating a "apply/search" button is that the search in mongo is not always responsive and with auto submit the user gets confused and frustrated
    - Marco suggested to keep a single datasets page and not implement a google like experience with an initial page with only the search box and a results page
    - Carlo reminded us that some users will only use **filter by** and not **text search**, specifically if they know keywords or metadata they are looking for
    - Igor suggested ot implement and deploy real user monitoring, although it requires some investment in the IT infrastructure.
    - Max asked if there are guidelines on how to design search pages
      - Laura mentioned the tool Balsamic, but it is licensed
      - we should work with wireframes.
    - The workgroup should decide how to move forward. Please see in appendix for more info

- Grants
  - CZI
    - our proposal was rejected, although we got decent score.

- We will look for new opportunities and apply to new grants
- Please share any lead for new opportunities
  - OSCARS
    - Majid suggested to apply for OSCARS funding

Appendix

- Backend V4.x image
  - The official image repository for the backend V4.x is:
    https://github.com/SciCatProject/scicat-backend-next/pkgs/container/backend-next
  - Images are created every time a PR is merged to master and every time master is tagged with a tag in the format of v4.x
  - The latest release is v4.4 and the matching image can be found at this URL:
    https://github.com/SciCatProject/scicat-backend-next/pkgs/container/backend-next/155672304?tag=v4.4.0
  - The latest release is also named **stable** and can be can be found at this URL:
    https://github.com/SciCatProject/scicat-backend-next/pkgs/container/backend-next/155672304?tag=stable
  - Image repository named scicat-backend-next has been discontinued.
    Its URL is:
    https://github.com/SciCatProject/scicat-backend-next/pkgs/container/scicat-backend-next
  - Now scicat-backend-next repository is linked only with package repository backend-next

- Release Search UI
  - We will merge the design presented yesterday as the PR is ready.
  - The following changes will be added in a new PR:
    - Change the label to the search button to "Apply" or "Apply selection" or, even better, if we can have it configurable. Configuration entry can be something like: DatasetSearchButtonLabel
    - Change the top label in the filters box from Search to Filter by
    - Add the same "Apply" button at the bottom of the Filter By box. This button will duplicate the exact functionalities as the one that you have close to the text search box
  - in the immediate future, we will work on the following:
    - optimize the layout of the datasets page
    - collect feedback about the search and its functionalities
    - discuss such findings in one of the next meeting
    - prioritize UI changes
    - allocate some effort to implement such changes

Open discussions for future features

currently not scheduled on any release

- Proposed types for Scientific Metadata, Issue #984
  - https://github.com/SciCatProject/scicat-backend-next/issues/984

- Metadata entry schema
  - The overall metadata schema is free for the user to design their own structure
  - SciCat will impose a schema at the entry level to be able to interpret and visualize the values reducing uncertainty and wrong interpretation
  - https://github.com/SciCatProject/scicat-backend-next/issues/939#issuecomment-1874033672

- Dataset hierarchy
  - Proposed solution:
    - unify the dataset schema
    - add dataset type: collection (specialized type of derived dataset)
    - add relationships and leverage them to build a hierarchy
  - https://github.com/SciCatProject/scicat-backend-next/issues/805

- Independent endpoint for datasets scientific metadata management
  - https://github.com/SciCatProject/scicat-backend-next/issues/954
  - As we use SciCat as our platform to curate our dataset, it is becoming more important to be able to add, update or delete individual scientific metadata entries
  - High priority

- Dataset history and update history
  - should we create a stand alone collection for update history?
  - should we track any changes made to datasets?
  - should we track changes made to other objects?