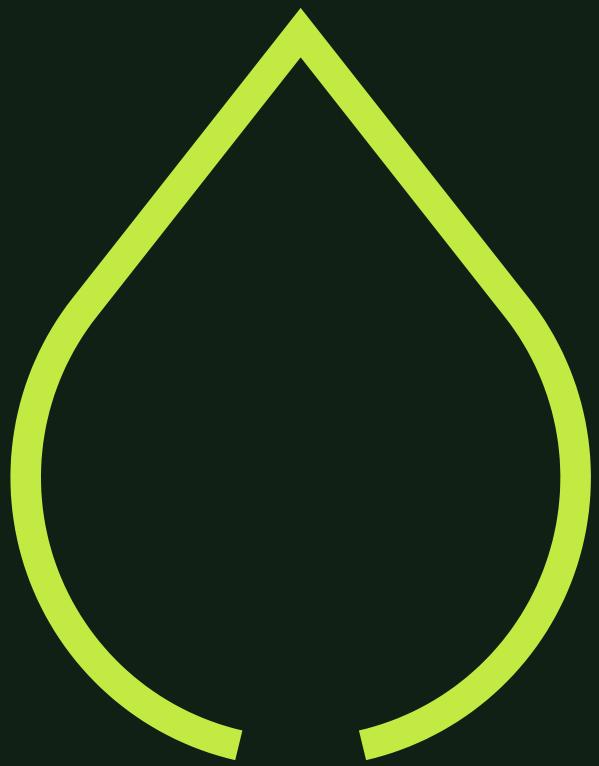
IDENTITY SYSTEM

Anther

A seed archive, and the design system that keeps its promise across time.

Twenty plates. Brand strategy, mark construction, colour science, typography, grid, packaging, information design, signage, editorial and digital application.



Primary mark · aperture 26°

THE SINGLE IDEA

Held, not stored.

A seed bank is not a warehouse. It is a promise made to a future nobody in the building will see.

Storage implies things sitting still. What actually happens inside a seed archive is suspension: living material held at the edge of dormancy, catalogued precisely enough that it can be woken decades later and still grow. The institution's real product is not space. It is custody.

Every decision in this system follows from that. The mark is a seal that exists in order to be broken. The numbering is built to outlive its authors. One colour, and only one, is permitted to say *alive*.

POSITIONING

CATEGORY	Seed conservation and plant-genetic archive
AUDIENCE	Research institutions, agricultural ministries, botanical gardens, and the public who fund them
COMPETITIVE TIC	The category defaults to green, leaf marks and stock photography of hands holding soil
OUR MOVE	Treat it as an archive first and a garden second — the language of custody, accession and record
TONE	Precise, unhurried, quietly optimistic. Never pastoral.
TEST	If an element cannot answer “what does this hold, and how would we find it again?”, it does not ship

AUDIENCE PSYCHOLOGY

Funders give to institutions that look like they will still exist in eighty years. Permanence is the emotional job of this identity, and permanence is communicated by restraint, system and evident care — not by warmth alone.

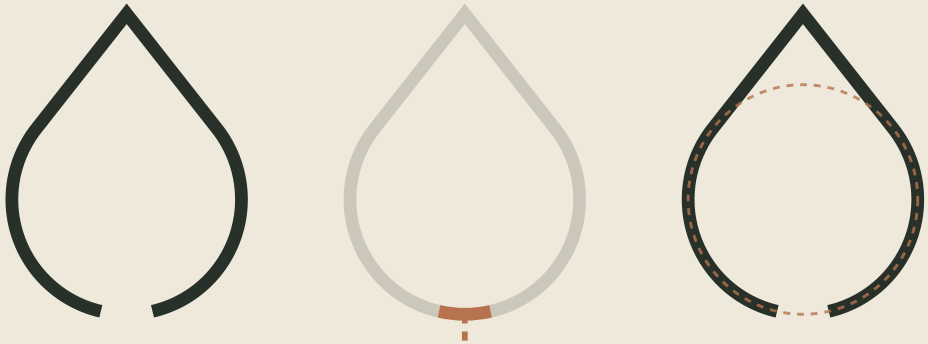
THE NAME

Anther

Anther — the part of a stamen that holds pollen until the moment it is released. The word already contains the institution's entire function: hold, then release. It is botanical without being floral, technical without being cold, and short enough to set at any size.

It also avoids the category's two exhausted routes — *Vault* and *Ark* — both of which frame conservation as a response to catastrophe. Anther frames it as reproduction: ordinary, continuous, and slightly hopeful.

READING THE FORM

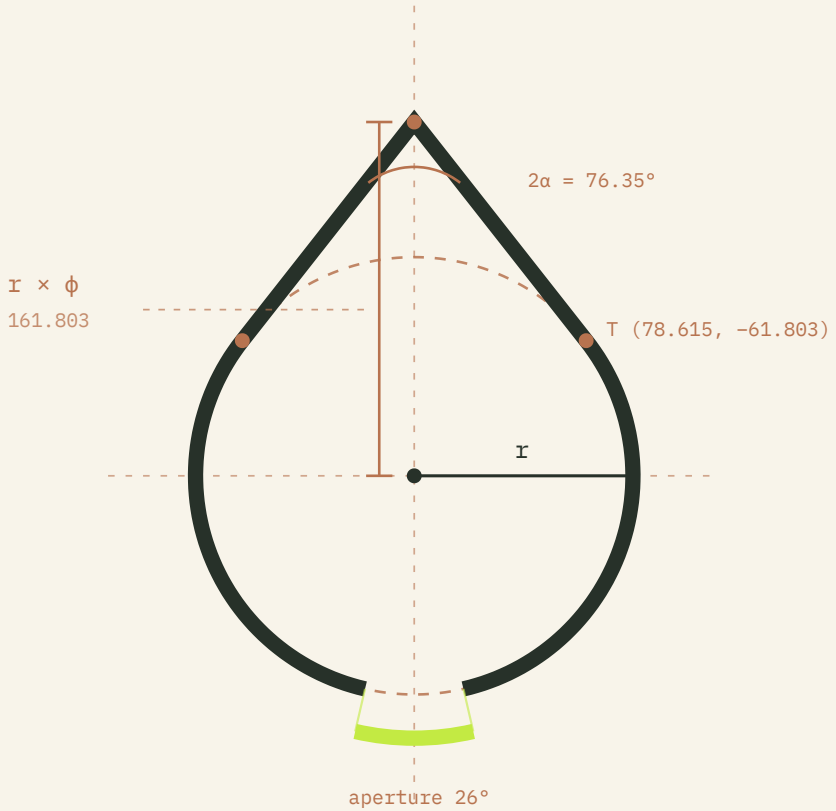


The seed. Points to the shoot.

The aperture. Where the radicle leaves.

The vault. A circle, closed but for one way out.

The mark carries three readings at once and contradicts none of them: a seed, an aperture, and a sealed room. The gap is not a stylistic flourish — it is the only part of the drawing that states the institution's purpose.



CONSTRUCTION

TANGENT, NOT FREEHAND

The silhouette is generated, not drawn. A circle of radius *r* forms the base; the apex sits at *r* × *φ* directly above its centre; the flanks are the true tangent lines from that apex to the circle. Because the join is a genuine tangency, the curve meets the straight at a continuous slope — the soft kink that gives away a hand-pulled bezier cannot occur.

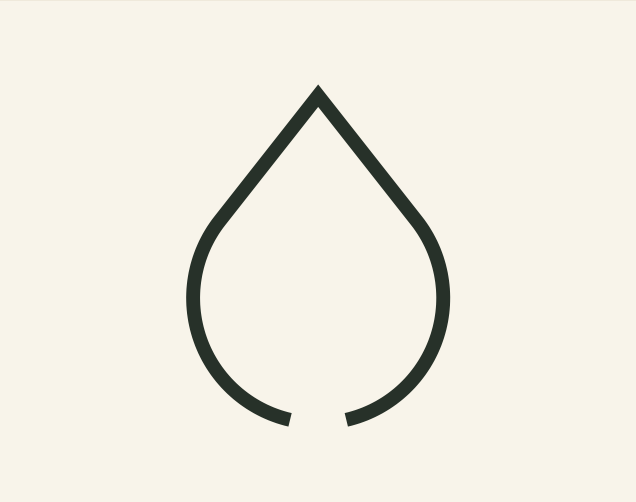
φ is load-bearing rather than mystical: it is the single input that sets how far the form leans toward the shoot. Change it and every other figure below follows.

BASE RADIUS	r = 100
APEX DISTANCE	r × ϕ = 161.803
APEX HALF-ANGLE A	38.173°
FLANK LENGTH	127.202
BASE ARC RETAINED	256.345°
APERTURE	26.000°
STROKE WEIGHT	r ÷ 9 = 11.111

Computed in source/foundation.py; the path data in this document is emitted by that script, never retyped.

TWO DRAWINGS, ONE MARK

The aperture is the idea, so the aperture must survive every size. Below 24px it does not — a hairline gap fills in on press and disappears on screen. So the small size is a different drawing, not the same drawing reduced.



PRIMARY · 24PX AND ABOVE

Open contour. Stroke r ÷ 9. The aperture reads.



MICRO · BELOW 24PX

Solid mass, aperture cut as a notch to depth 0.42r.



CLEAR SPACE · ½R ON EVERY SIDE

Derived from the mark itself, so it scales with it.

MINIMUM SIZES	Primary · **8 mm** print, **24 px** screen	Micro · **3 mm** print, **12 px** screen	Below 12px, set the wordmark alone — no mark

WHAT BREAKS IT

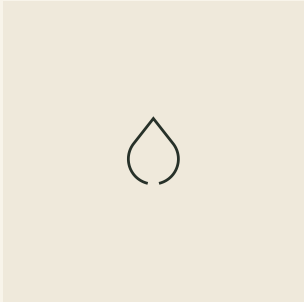
Six ways to lose the idea



Never rotate. The shoot points up; the radicle points down.



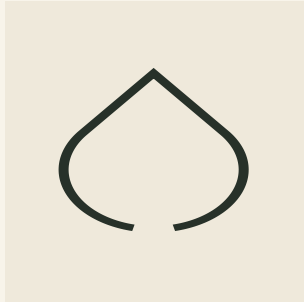
Never close the aperture. It is the only part that means anything.



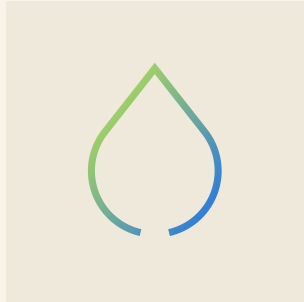
Never use the primary below 24px. Use the micro drawing.



Never recolour outside the palette. Chartreuse is reserved.



Never distort. The proportion is ϕ and it is not negotiable.



Never apply gradients, shadows or glow. The system has no gradients.

LOGOTYPE

ANTHER

Newsreader · opsz 72 · weight 300 · tracking +0.16 em · all caps. Tracking is set by the counters of the N and the H, not by eye: at display size the default fitting leaves the word looking loose in the middle and tight at the ends.

HORIZONTAL



Default. Mark height = cap height × 2.

STACKED



Signage, packaging, square formats.

ACCESSION LOCKUP



For labels and specimen cards. Micro mark only.

COLOUR SYSTEM

Specified in OKLCH, so the steps are real.

Hex is a storage format, not a design space — equal hex steps are not equal perceptual steps. Every colour here is authored in OKLCH and converted once, which is why the tonal ramp holds together in print and on screen without being re-tuned twice.

Paper
oklch(0.968 0.014 88)
#F8F4EA

Paper deep
oklch(0.935 0.020 86)
#EFE9DB

Vault
oklch(0.225 0.032 152)
#102014

Vault soft
oklch(0.330 0.030 152)
#2A3A2E

Viable
oklch(0.880 0.190 122)
#C3EA43

Clay
oklch(0.620 0.100 48)
#B7734F

Ink
oklch(0.300 0.020 150)
#273129

Ink soft
oklch(0.480 0.016 150)
#586059

THE ONE RULE

Chartreuse means *viable*. It marks living material, a passed germination test, an open collection. It is never a highlight, never a button, never decoration. Used this way it stays legible as language; used freely it would become noise within one season.

PROPORTION

Roughly 60 paper · 25 vault · 10 clay · 5 viable. The accent earns its force from scarcity: on a typical page it appears once.

NO GRADIENTS

The system contains none, anywhere. Flat fields keep the press predictable, survive photocopying and cold-store labelling, and age better than any blend.

MEASURED, NOT ASSUMED

Every pairing has a number.

Contrast is computed from the palette by foundation.py and reported as WCAG 2 ratios, the same measure the studio gates its own site on.

The measurement changed the system rather than ratifying it. Clay was drafted as a text colour; at **3.43:1** it fails body copy and clears only the large-text threshold. It is therefore a field colour — packets, tape, bands — and never running text. That rule was found, not chosen.

VIABLE · PASSES AAA CLAY · FIELD ONLY

FOREGROUND	GROUND	RATIO	PERMITTED USE
Vault	Paper	15.43 : 1	Display and body
Paper	Vault	15.43 : 1	Display and body
Ink	Paper	12.27 : 1	Body
Viable	Vault	12.25 : 1	Signal, display
Vault	Viable	12.25 : 1	Signal, display
Ink	Paper deep	11.14 : 1	Body
Ink soft	Paper	5.92 : 1	Caption, accession code
Clay	Paper	3.43 : 1	Large text only — not body
Paper	Clay	3.43 : 1	Large text only — not body

AAA body ≥ 7.0 · AA body ≥ 4.5 · large text ≥ 3.0. APCA would model this better and informed the palette by hand, but its licence bars commercial use, so it is not computed in this pipeline.

TWO VOICES AND AN INSTRUMENT

A serif for language, a grotesque for apparatus, a mono for record.

Aa

NEWSREADER

SIL OFL · variable · opsz 6–72 · wght 200–800 · italic

Carries everything written for a reader. Its optical-size axis is real — the display cut genuinely redraws for large settings — which is the same principle the mark uses at its two sizes. That rhyme is the reason it was chosen over warmer alternatives.

Aa

ARCHIVO

SIL OFL · variable · wdth 62–125 · wght 100–900

The apparatus: labels, tables, wayfinding, interface. Its width axis lets one family hold a 9px cold-store label and a 60px door number without a second typeface entering the system.

Aa

IBM PLEX MONO

SIL OFL · wght 300–600

Reserved for accession codes, dates, coordinates and measurements. Fixed advance means a column of codes aligns without tabular figures, and a transposed character is visible at a glance.

Three families, but two roles — language and apparatus. The mono is an instrument, not a third voice, and is never used for prose. All three are open-licence, so the archive can set its own material in perpetuity without a foundry agreement. For an institution planning in decades, that is a functional requirement, not a cost saving.

SPECIMEN

Dormancy

Viability testing

Accessions are re-tested every ten years, or sooner if a collection is flagged.

Body copy sits at 13 px on a 20 px line — exactly one baseline row — with the measure capped at 46 characters. Both numbers are chosen for the same reason: at a longer measure the eye loses the return sweep, and at a tighter leading the ascenders of one line begin to interfere with the descenders above.

AN·2026·0417·C — caption and code, 9 px / 14 px, tracked +0.06 em.

VALUES

ROLE	SIZE / LINE	TRACK
Display	92 / 88	−0.028
Title	44 / 48	−0.018
Lede	21 / 30	−0.006
Body	13 / 20	+0.002
Label	11 / 16	+0.110
Caption	9 / 14	+0.060
Eyebrow	9.5 / 20	+0.180

Tracking runs negative as size rises and positive as it falls. A typeface fitted for reading is always too loose at display size and too tight at caption size; correcting it is the difference between set type and placed type.

Measure · 46 ch body · 40 ch lede · 62 ch maximum anywhere.

GRID

Twelve columns, thirty-three rows.

The page is A4 landscape, 1123 × 794 at 96 dpi. Margins are 64 horizontal and 67 vertical — not matched, because the vertical figure is derived: 794 less two 67 s leaves 660, which is exactly 33 baseline rows of 20. Every element in this document sits on that grid.

Twelve columns divide cleanly into halves, thirds, quarters and sixths, which is what a system needs when the same grid has to hold a specimen table, a two-column essay and a full-bleed photograph.

PAGE	1123 × 794 px · A4 landscape
MARGIN, HORIZONTAL	64
MARGIN, VERTICAL	67
COLUMNS	12 × 64.583
GUTTER	20
MEASURE	995
BASELINE	20 · 33 rows

The tint and rules on this plate are the live grid, not an illustration of one — they are drawn from the same CSS variables the layout uses.

INFORMATION DESIGN

A number that still works in 2140.

AN · 2026 · 0417 · C

INSTITUTION

Fixed. Two letters, so a label can be read at arm's length in a cold room.

YEAR OF DEPOSIT

Four digits, never two. The archive outlives the century shortcut.

SEQUENCE

Zero-padded to four. Sorts correctly as text, which is how it will be handled by systems not yet written.

VIABILITY CLASS

A–E, the only part that changes. Re-tested on a ten-year cycle.

VIABILITY CLASSES

CLASS	GERMINATION	STATUS
A	95–100 %	Distributable
B	85–94 %	Distributable
C	70–84 %	Hold · regeneration scheduled
D	50–69 %	Regeneration required
E	Below 50 %	Closed to distribution

Illustrative thresholds — a real archive would set these against its own species protocols.

WHY IT IS BUILT THIS WAY

An accession number is the one piece of design in an archive guaranteed to be read by someone who has never met its authors. So it is middle-endian by deliberate choice — institution, then time, then item — because that is the order a person searches in, and it carries its own sort order so no external index is required to put a drawer back in sequence.

Only the final character mutates. Everything to the left of it is permanent, which means a label printed today remains valid after a re-test changes the collection's status.

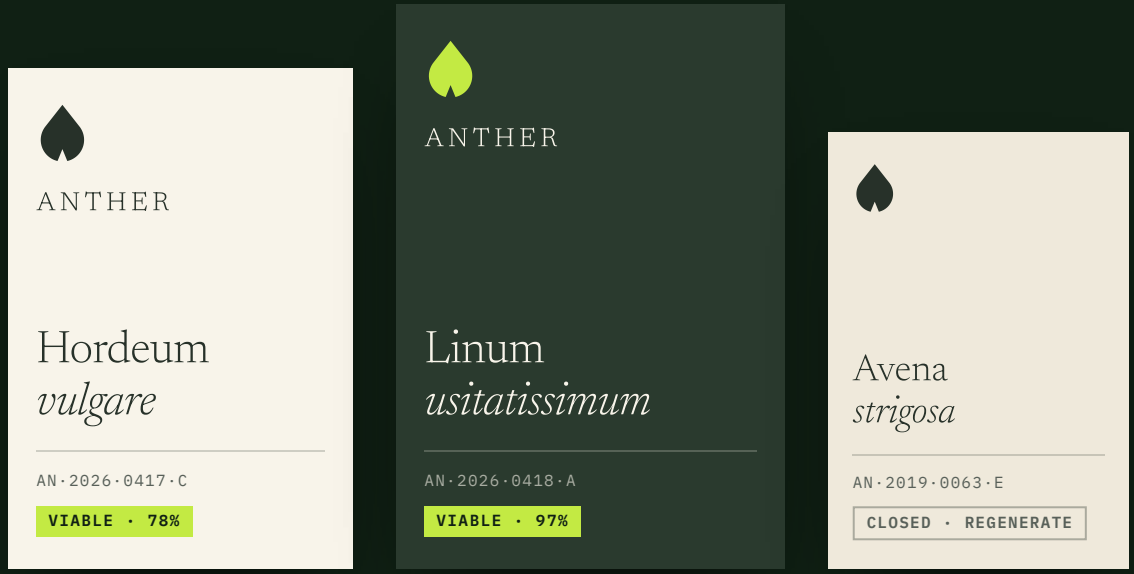
PACKAGING

The packet is the archive's only public object.

Most people will never see the vault. They will see a paper packet, posted to a research station or handed out at a seed library. It therefore carries the whole system in miniature: mark, accession, viability class, and nothing else.

Printed one colour on uncoated kraft, so it can be produced anywhere in the world the archive operates, and written on with a pencil.

110 × 160 mm · kraft 120 gsm · one-colour flexo



Hordeum vulgare

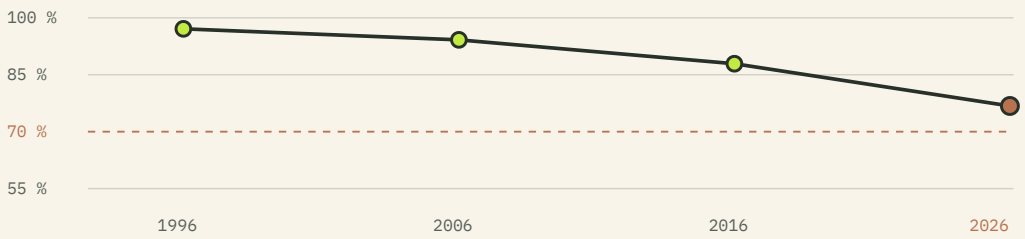
AN·2026·0417·C

Deposited 2026·04·17

Six-row barley · landrace · northern highland

ORIGIN	Highland smallholding, 2 140 m
MOISTURE AT SEALING	6.2 %
STORAGE	−18 °C · chamber 3 · drawer 214
QUANTITY	11 400 seeds · 4 packets
LAST GERMINATION TEST	2026·08·02 · 78 % · class C
NEXT SCHEDULED TEST	2036·08

GERMINATION ACROSS SUCCESSIVE TESTS



Illustrative — depends on the archive's own germination records. The dashed rule is the class C threshold; crossing it schedules regeneration.

INFORMATION DESIGN

THE CHART ANSWERS ONE QUESTION

Not “what is the germination rate” but “when does this collection need saving”. So the threshold is the loudest element on the chart, the trend line is plain, and the most recent test is the only point drawn in clay — because it is the one that has crossed.

There is no legend. A legend would mean the chart had failed to explain itself.

SHEET SPECIFICATION

A4 portrait · 90 gsm uncoated · one-colour body with chartreuse applied only where a viability state is reported · printable on any office device in any field station.



SIGNAGE

Read at four metres, in a coat, in a hurry.

Wayfinding inside the archive is set in Archivo at width 88 — condensed enough to hold a two-digit chamber number at full height on a narrow door, wide enough to stay legible at distance.

Numerals dominate; words support. Someone crossing a cold room is looking for a number, and everything else on the sign is there to confirm they found the right one.

CHAMBER NUMERAL	84 px · wdth 88 · wght 600
DESCRIPTOR	13 px · +0.16 em · caps
SUBSTRATE	Anodised aluminium, etched
CONTRAST	15.43 : 1

THE VIABILITY REPORT · 2026

Nine thousand futures.

Every ten years the archive asks the same question of everything it holds: are you still alive?

Annual report · 210 × 280 mm · 64 pp

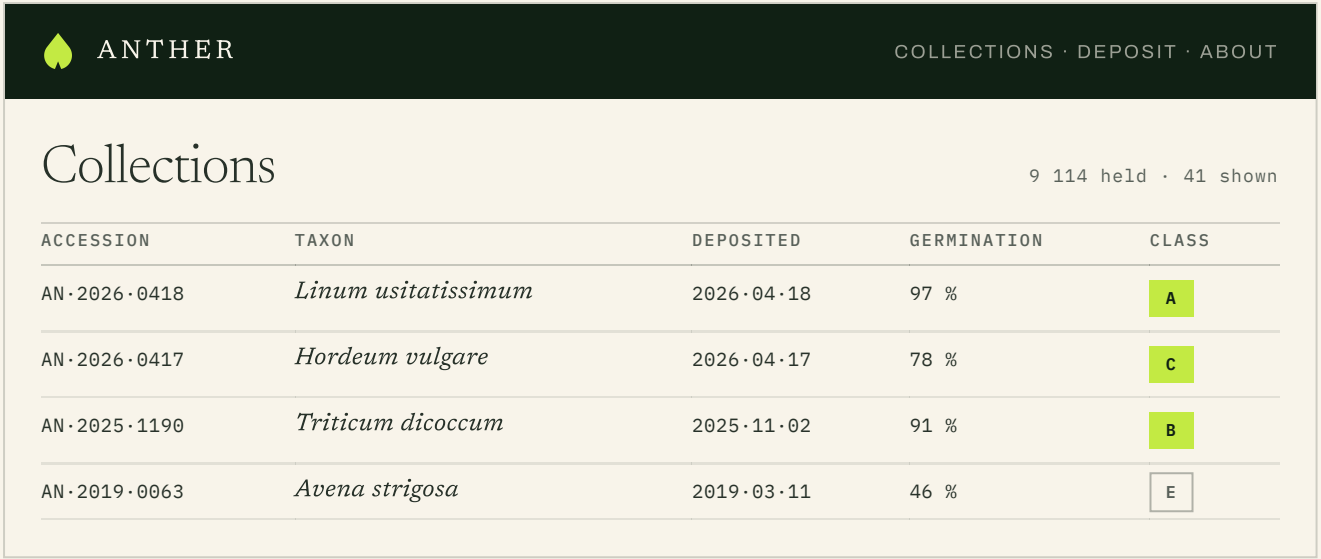
The test is unglamorous. A hundred seeds are drawn from a collection, laid on moist paper, and watched. Ten days later somebody counts what germinated, writes a percentage on a card, and the collection's last character changes or it does not.

That percentage is the only honest measure an archive has. Volume means nothing: a vault holding nine thousand collections that will not grow is a very expensive cupboard. Viability is the difference between conservation and storage, and it is the reason this report leads with the number that fell rather than the number that rose.

Fourteen collections crossed into class D this year. Each is now scheduled for regeneration — grown out in a field, allowed to set seed, and returned to the vault as a new accession with a new number and the same name.

9 114	14	31
collections held	entered class D	regenerated

Illustrative figures — a real report would carry the archive's audited record.



Collection browser · 1440 × 900 · the table is the product, so it is the page.

DIGITAL

CHARTREUSE SURVIVES THE MOVE

On screen the viability rule does the work it was designed for: the only saturated element on the page is the one that says a collection is alive and distributable. A closed collection is drawn as an outline, not a red alert — the archive is not in crisis, it has a queue.

INHERITED, NOT REDESIGNED

Type scale, grid, colour and the micro mark are the print system unchanged. Nothing here is a web-only decision, which is what keeps a printed packet and a database row recognisably the same institution.

PRODUCTION

Built to be made anywhere.

An archive with field stations cannot specify a press. Every artefact in this system is therefore one or two flat colours on uncoated stock, with no varnish, no foil, no lamination and no blend — reproducible on a flexo line, a laser printer or a photocopier without the identity degrading into something else.

The chartreuse is the only colour with a tight tolerance, because it carries meaning. Everywhere it appears it must be the same chartreuse, which is why it is specified as a spot rather than built from process.

COLOUR	PROCESS	SPOT EQUIVALENT	TOLERANCE
Vault	C78 M52 Y72 K72	Match to #102014	ΔE ≤ 3
Viable	—	Spot, match to #C3EA43	ΔE ≤ 1.5
Clay	C22 M62 Y72 K06	Match to #B7734F	ΔE ≤ 3
Paper	Unprinted stock — never printed as a tint		—

Process values are illustrative conversions — a real job would be profiled to the press and stock, ideally against PSOcoated_v3.

ARTEFACT	STOCK	SIZE	FINISH
Seed packet	Kraft 120 gsm	110 × 160 mm	None
Specimen sheet	Uncoated 90 gsm	A4 portrait	None
Viability Report	Munken 120 gsm	210 × 280 mm	Sewn, uncovered spine
Drawer label	Polypropylene	70 × 24 mm	Cold-rated adhesive
Chamber sign	Anodised aluminium	300 × 390 mm	Etched, unpainted

COLOPHON

Anther is a self-initiated concept.

There is no client. Anther does not exist, and no part of this document records a real institution, a real collection or a real result. It was made by Studio Helper to demonstrate how we build an identity system: one idea, carried through every artefact, with the reasoning visible.

Figures marked *illustrative* are exactly that. Where a real engagement would carry audited data, this carries a placeholder and says so.

Studio Helper
Founder, Sulman Ahmad Cheema
https://studio-helpers.com/
@studio_helpers
WhatsApp +92 346 6616118

MADE WITH

TYPEFACES	Newsreader, Archivo, IBM Plex Mono — all SIL Open Font License 1.1
COLOUR	Authored in OKLCH, converted to sRGB in Python
CONTRAST	WCAG 2 ratios, computed from the palette
GEOMETRY	Tangent construction, computed — not drawn
ARTWORK	Inline SVG throughout; no raster, no stock imagery
OUTPUT	HTML master → PDF via headless Chrome

Every asset used here is open-licence and cleared for commercial use. Nothing in this document is derived from another studio's work.