

Novice and Early Career Researchers in Prehistory & Protohistoric Archaeology

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Abstract

Prehistoric and protohistoric archaeology is currently undergoing a significant transition, marked by rapid shifts in knowledge systems by incorporating high-resolution data from natural sciences and digital humanities. The technical requirements for future archaeologists have grown dramatically. Early career researchers and /novice researchers are at the forefront of this transition, often bridging the traditional typological approaches with the incorporation of advancing scientific methodologies. Unrestricted by long standing theoretical constraints, they play a pivotal role in integrating advanced analytical techniques into mainstream archaeological research and practice. From the micro-scale of residue analysis to the macro-scale of landscape phenomenology and large-data synthesis, it is often at the doctoral and post-doctoral level that the most significant risks are taken, and the methodological bridges are built and learnt. However, this intellectual output cannot be analysed in isolation from the socio-academic infrastructure that produces it. The professional landscape of these scholars inhabit is markedly different from that which shaped previous generations. In this context, this session invites papers on the pedagogical frameworks of archaeology which currently shape its workforce, questioning whether existing didactic models adequately prepare scholars for the interdisciplinary demands of the 21st century; critical discourse on resource asymmetries, examining how global disparities in funding and laboratory access stratify knowledge production; ethical dimensions of early career praxis and the structural opacity of opportunity, analysing how information asymmetries and institutional gatekeeping differentially impact professional viability. By juxtaposing the high-level scientific inquiry with the critique of the conditions of academic reproduction, this session aims to foster a holistic dialogue on disciplinary stewardship across the world. Therefore, this session posits that the novice experience in archaeology is crucial, where the discipline's future theoretical and analytical frameworks are currently being forged and to be heard.

Keywords: Early Career Researchers, Novice Research, Archaeological Pedagogy, Resource Asymmetries