

SCOTTISH ARCHAEOLOGICAL FORUM



CONFERENCE: 28TH - 29TH OCTOBER 2023
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

WHOSE PAST IS IT ANYWAY?

Rethinking 'insiders' and 'outsiders' in Scottish Archaeology

Deadline for abstract submissions: 31st July 2023

Notification of acceptance: 31st August 2023

Deadline for final posters: 25th September 2023

Call for Papers


Through the theme of 'insiders' and 'outsiders' we are looking to highlight efforts to address the under-representation of certain groups within archaeology, both in representations of Scotland's heritage and in current archaeological practice. While archaeological evidence shows Scotland's past to have always been one of multiple communities, there is an increasing awareness of inequality remaining within modern archaeological discourse. This year's conference welcomes spoken and poster presentations on initiatives which challenge pre-conceptions, spotlight marginalised voices and aim to make Scottish archaeology more accessible to the wider community.

Our 2023 conference subcommittee comprises members from several higher education institutions, alongside members working in commercial archaeology, who come from a range of backgrounds both within and outwith Scotland. We are aiming for this mix of institutions, professions and backgrounds to be reflected in the speakers and audiences we engage with at our upcoming conference. We would also like to acknowledge and address the gaps in representation within the Forum itself and hope to engage new members and communities through the focus of this year's conference.

We would like to invite contributors from across the Scottish archaeological community who are involved in all aspects of researching, curating or presenting the archaeological record. A conflict between 'insiders' and 'outsiders' is seen not only in the record itself but in the centralisation of academia; in the lingering divides between academic, community and commercial sectors; and in the marginalisation and under-representation of certain groups or communities.



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Subject to any restrictions, we hope to have a hybrid conference, with attendees and presenters participating online and in person at the University of Aberdeen. The conference will comprise 20-minute papers sorted into thematic panels. We are also welcoming poster submissions to feature on the SAF social media accounts and an online gallery, and to be displayed throughout the duration of the conference.

We invite papers and posters that explore the following topics:

- **Crossing physical and conceptual borders**
 - What has archaeology shown us about the movements of people both into, out of and within Scotland from prehistory to the present day? This includes archaeology of Scotland abroad (colonialism or otherwise).
 - What is our understanding of the interactions between communities which might be considered 'insiders' and 'outsiders'? And what do these concepts mean when thinking about Scotland's past?
- **Under-represented histories**
 - Have you been involved in a project which has focused on groups, people, or even sites, which have not always been 'seen' in the archaeological narrative?
 - How has the representation of Scotland's past changed over the years and where does it still fall short?
- **The archaeological community today**
 - Have you experienced working with or within a community that is not your own, whether in Scotland or abroad?
 - What are the main issues surrounding inclusion within archaeological practice, and how might these be best overcome?
- **Reimagining archaeological method**
 - Has your research involved innovative methods or approaches? Or applying old methods in new ways?
 - Do you work within a specialism that has not always been seen as a part of 'traditional' archaeology, or perhaps taken a multi-disciplinary approach?
- **Breaking down barriers**
 - We are keen to spotlight innovative approaches to community engagement and efforts to break down potential barriers - have you tried presenting archaeological information in different formats and do you have suggestions for best practice when it comes to making archaeological content both inclusive and accessible?
 - Have you been involved in the curation of exhibitions which present different cultures to a Scottish audience (or perhaps Scottish material to audiences elsewhere)? What are the various factors that need to be taken into consideration?
 - Have the unexpected challenges of the last few years required you to adopt new approaches when it comes to engaging volunteers? What lessons can be learned?
 - Through understanding and involvement in the study of archaeological remains, people can gain a deeper connection to the historic environment. We encourage discussions around archaeology's potential for contributing to community building and well-being, as well as suggesting strategies for better practice in the future.

The approaches listed for these topics are not exhaustive. We also welcome papers and posters adjacent to our descriptions.

Submission guidelines

Please submit an abstract of no more than 250 words along with a short biography to <https://app.oxfordabstracts.com/stages/6230/submitter> by 31st July 2023. If you have any questions, please contact cpdservices@abdn.ac.uk.

