



CIFA2021 ONLINE: ANNUAL CONFERENCE

ONLINE 2021

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SESSION TITLE

It's not FAIR... but what is? Defining digital accessibility in archaeological projects

SESSION ABSTRACT

This session explores why we are failing to achieve data re-usability, how we can improve documentation and provides training in the creation of digital archaeological archives. This workshop session is linked to the new Archaeological Archives Forum guidance for managing digital data in archaeological projects – Dig Digital – produced by DigVentures in partnership with Cifa and supported by Historic England.

You can explore further here: <https://www.archaeologists.net/digdigital>

The word 'accessible' is synonymous with archaeological archives and, at the heart of the Cifa archives guidance and completion, lies our professional obligation to work for public benefit. Despite this, deposition rates remain low (Donnelly-Symes 2019) and reusing data can be difficult, requiring people to 'make do' (Faniel et al 2013), or 'wrangle' the data (Huggett 2018).

This workshop will help attendees discover how using FAIR principles can help archaeologists fully understand what it means to make our data accessible. Initially, we'll look at projects from various sectors which have been managed and archived according to FAIR principles asking what do these principles mean and what does it look like when they are utilised. Enlightened and inspired, we'll then tackle the archaeological dataset – how do we make our work findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable (eg FAIR)? An end of session closing discussion will help bring the session back to everyday practice and standards – how does making our work accessible help us meet our professional obligation to deliver public benefit? And how can we better equip ourselves with skills needed to meet those standards?

SESSION PROGRAMME

13:30 – 14:00	SESSION 1 - FINDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE (13.30 – 15:00) An introduction to FAIR principles, and why we think we should all be trying our best to Go Fair <i>Manda Forster, DigVentures</i>
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14:00 – 14:30	FAIRifying the archaeological dataset: making data Findable and Accessible <i>Katie Green, Archaeology Data Service</i>
14:30 – 15:00	Discussion 1 What can I do to make things findable and accessible?
15:00 – 15:15	Break
15:15 – 15:20	SESSION 2 – INTEROPERABLE AND REUSABLE (15:15 – 16:45) Introduction – what do we mean by interoperability and reuse? <i>Manda Forster, DigVentures</i>
15:20 - 15:45	Aspiring to FAIRness: Reflections on Big Data on the Roman Table <i>Jane Evans, Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service</i>
15:45 – 16:00	Discussion Group 2 – How do we make data interoperability What data do you use regularly that could be interoperable? How do we ensure data is interoperable?
16:00 – 16:25	Enlightened and inspired? Tackling the archaeological dataset <i>Jane Evans, Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service</i>
16:25 – 16:40	Discussion Group 3 What information do you produce which could be reusable? How do we ensure data is reusable? Are there any datasets which you would like to access and be able to easily reuse?
16:40 - 16:45	Had your FAIR share? <i>Manda Forster, DigVentures</i>

SPEAKER ABSTRACTS

An introduction to FAIR principles, and why we think we should all be trying our best to Go Fair *Manda Forster, DigVentures*

Making research accessible is not a new idea to archaeologists, and the ClfA Standard for Archaeological Archives is built on the idea that any project must result in a stable, ordered and accessible archive. In 2016, the 'FAIR Guiding Principles for scientific data management and stewardship', were first published in *Scientific Data*, responding to an 'an urgent need to improve the infrastructure supporting the reuse of scholarly data' (Wilkinson et al 2016). The authors outlined guidelines to improve the findability, accessibility, interoperability, and reuse of digital assets – FAIR. These combined principles underpin knowledge discovery and innovation, supporting data integration and reuse by research communities after the project archive has been published. This introductory session will review FAIR principles and highlight what they mean for data management and archives within archaeological projects. We'll clarify what it is we are trying to achieve and take a whistle-stop tour through a Data Management Plan to discuss how use of the plan underpins data management from start to finish, embedding FAIRness throughout the process. A good look up for what we'll be talking about is this: <https://www.go-fair.org/fair-principles/>

During the session, we will also explore how others have addressed the challenge of FAIRification, and the application of FAIR principles in a systematic way. Using a couple of case studies, we will look at what being FAIR means in practise, what it means, who needs to be involved and on board, and what benefits does it have? We'll investigate experiences from outside the world of archaeology, providing insights into the journey from data wrangling to data access. Who are the stakeholders, what does it really mean, and what does a FAIR sector look like?

FAIRifying the archaeological dataset: making data Findable and Accessible

Katie Green, Archaeology Data Service

Katie Green talks about FAIRification being an archaeological reality. In maintaining the only currently accredited digital archive for archaeological datasets, the ADS has long been developing the necessary tools to fulfil requirements. Katie will introduce the tools and templates which are making our data Findable and Accessible, and which are readily available to archaeologists. We'll hear how indices, identifiers and metadata combine to make our projects researcher and user friendly and have a brief look at what's on the horizon with developments planned for OASIS.

Aspiring to FAIRness: Reflections on Big Data on the Roman Table

Jane Evans, Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service

The 'Big Data on the Roman Table' (BDRT) research network was established to promote collaborative research into Roman socio-cultural practices by studying ceramic tablewares associated with eating, drinking and serving food. An important BDRT aim was to promote research into how such tablewares and their assemblages were used and the possible social, cultural and symbolic value of such use. Many BDRT studies involved large-scale intra- and inter-site analyses of vessel forms and functions, quantitative methods and digital data visualisation. Being able to quickly understand and correlate datasets from different sites was an important part of the project.

The research network highlighted key issues in developing and implementing 'standards' of various kinds, demonstrating how communication and collaboration between all sectors is essential to progressing research and how that approach could be beneficial to all. Archaeological working in all spheres their data to be used and benefit from the new understanding that research produces, and for that to happen, data has to be easily accessed. Jane will share how she feels issues highlighted could be considered in future developments of 'big data' approaches to Roman pottery and how we can apply recommendations more widely to our archaeological data.

Enlightened and inspired? Tackling the archaeological dataset

Jane Evans, Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service

Jane will review a range of projects that are attempting to make finds information findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable. These will range from the most basic level, raising the profile

of unpublished archives and the potential of the information they contain, to establishing standards guidance and consistent terminology.

REFERENCES

Donnelly-Symes, B, 2019, Planning for Archives: Opportunities & Omissions, End of Project Report, ALGAO: Cambridge. <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/planning-for-archives/planning-for-archives/>

Faniel, I, Kansa, E, Whitcher Kansa, S, Barrera-Gomez, J and Yakel E. 2013. "The Challenges of Digging Data: A Study of Context in Archaeological Data Reuse." JCDL 2013 Proceedings of the 13th ACM/IEEE-CS Joint Conference on Digital Libraries, 295-304. New York, NY: ACM. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1145/2467696.2467712>

Huggett, J. (2018). Reuse Remix Recycle: Repurposing Archaeological Digital Data. *Advances in Archaeological Practice*, 6(2), 93-104. <https://doi.org/10.1017/aap.2018.1>

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