

Rewriting World Archaeology: South America 2026 - About the Programme

Overview

Since 2021, the British Academy- and *Antiquity*-funded “Rewriting World Archaeology programme” has run a series of 9-12-month workshop programmes of virtual and in-person mentoring events for early career researchers (ECRs) from countries in Africa, the Middle East and South Asia. These are designed to equip participants with the necessary knowledge and skills to access and publish in academic journals, develop and lead bold research agendas, and share their results with the public. We are now organising a new round of workshops focused on ECRs based in South America. The programme, funded by the Trustees of *Antiquity* journal, seeks to significantly advance the careers of a new cohort of ECRs, strengthening their ability to (re)write the archaeology and heritage of South America to have a major and lasting impact on world archaeology.

Background

Our project is committed to tackling global inequalities of power, wealth and access to professional networks and academic journals, and to sharing in the benefits of collaborating in new international research networks and agendas. The Nairobi process, developed by the British Academy and Association of Commonwealth Universities, expressly informs the necessity and timeliness of this project. The continued critique of the colonial and racist history of archaeology gives added impetus. This has obliged the editors and boards of prominent international archaeology journals to rethink their representativeness and responsibilities. The Society for American Archaeology has led in this direction by regularly updating its statements on diversity and ethics.

Programme outcomes and impact

The intended outcomes and beneficial impacts of our writing workshop programme are:

Networks. We will build on the international partnerships established in the previous round of workshops and work with a new cohort of ECRs drawn from countries in South America alongside archaeology journal editors, academics and professionals based in that region and in the UK. This coalition, working together to collectively rewrite world archaeology through dialogue, will benefit all participants—intellectually, professionally and personally—by reshaping their perceptions and practices of archaeological research in and around South America.

Capacities. We will help build academic and professional capacity in countries across South America, by equipping our diverse ECRs with knowledge, skills and experience to access and publish in high-impact academic journals, in order to contribute towards research agendas and to advance their career prospects as future leaders in academic archaeology and in heritage management. The ECRs will benefit directly; their voices will be heard, nationally and internationally. Their universities and heritage agencies will also benefit, with strengthened capacity to mobilise their research for public benefit. We will enhance efforts to protect and valorise local cultural heritage in countries across South America, by helping our ECRs recognise and release the scholarly potential of their research. The beneficiaries of this will be the local communities with which they work, as well as national-level decision makers and tourists, who will increasingly recognise the value of the local archaeological heritage and its potential for cultural tourism and to contribute to sustainable inclusive economic growth.

Core principles

Our approach rests on three core principles:

Partnerships. Creating an equitable international partnership of mentors, marked by mutual respect, balanced distribution of responsibilities, gender balance, and recognition of diverse interests;

Network building. Establishing strong and sustainable networks of mentors and ECRs, benefitting all participants, ranging from ECRs from a variety of countries in South America to journal editors and academics based nationally and internationally;

Promoting ECR research. Promoting the uptake and visibility of research by ECRs in the Global South in high-impact journals, helping to reshape journal editors' and readers' perceptions and understandings of global citizenship, research agendas and world archaeology.

RWA South America workshop 2026 team

The Rewriting World Archaeology: South America team will set the example, ethos and agenda for the whole programme and will monitor progress. It is led by:

Prof Robin Skeates (Editor of *Antiquity*, Durham University)

Dr Rennan Lemos (Assistant Professor, Durham University)

ECRs

We define ECR broadly, given variability in academic structures in different contexts. As well as participants currently studying for a PhD and at post-doctoral level and those in new academic roles (up to five years from PhD), we welcome applications from early career professionals working in heritage organisations (up to five years from appointment).

We intend to recruit a total of 8 ECRs. Candidates will be selected with due diligence given to inclusivity, including ethnic diversity and protected characteristics, balancing academic and professional ECR experience. We will also look to ensure the representation of countries across South America. We will need to obtain confirmation that candidates have the support of their institutions to ensure full participation.