

## Rewriting World Archaeology: Africa 2023-25: About the Programme

### Overview

International scholarly publishing is characterised by significant inequalities in terms of authorship and research content. In response, in 2021-22, the British Academy-funded “Rewriting World Archaeology programme” launched an 18-month workshop programme of virtual mentoring events for early career researchers (ECRs) from low- and middle- income countries in Africa, the Middle East and South Asia. This was 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. Following up that programme, we are now organising a new round of workshops focused on ECRs based in Africa. The programme seeks to significantly advance the careers of a new cohort of ECRs, strengthening their ability to (re)write the archaeology and heritage of Africa 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 Africa 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 Africa.

**Capacities.** We will help build academic and professional capacity in countries across Africa, by equipping our female and male 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 developing countries across Africa, 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 developing countries in Africa to journal editors and academics based nationally and internationally;

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

## Africa workshop 2023-25 team

The Rewriting World Archaeology: Africa programme team will set the example, ethos and agenda for the whole programme and will monitor progress. It comprises:

Dr Rui Coelho (Durham)

Dr Elgidius Ichumbaki (Dar es Salaam)

Dr Abigail Moffett (UEA)

Prof. Innocent Pikirayi (Pretoria)

Dr Nancy Rushohora (Dar es Salaam)

Prof. Sarah Semple (Durham)

Prof. Robin Skeates (Durham)

Dr Robert Witcher (Durham; Programme Leader)

In dialogue, we will: 1. construct the workshop agenda. 2. draw in additional editorial experience, regional professional knowledge and complementary skills. 3. help advertise and select the competitive call for ECRs. 4. construct the regional digital learning resources. 5. deliver the online and in-person workshops. 6. take responsibility for mentoring assigned ECRs by communicating regularly with them and by managing and monitoring their progress throughout the year. 7. evaluate the process. In addition, we will draw on the experience and guidance of a range of professional participants (as journal editors and as mentors) including: Dr Wazi Apoh, Dr Kate Grillo, Dr Jane Humphris, Prof. Timothy Insoll, Prof. Susan McIntosh, Prof. Peter Mitchell, and others.

## ECRs

We define ECR broadly, given variability in academic structures in different contexts. As well 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 and protected characteristics, balancing academic and professional ECR experience. We will also look to ensure the wide geographical representation of countries in different parts of Africa. We will obtain confirmation that candidates have the support of their institutions to ensure full participation.