Harvard Conference Explores Critical Perspectives on the Practice of Digital Archaeology

Speakers from the Harvard Community, The Alexandria Archive Institute and Institutions across North America

San Francisco, CA (PRWEB) January 23, 2017 -- The Alexandria Archive Institute (https://alexandriaarchive.org) announced today that registration is open for the conference, “Critical Perspectives on the Practice of Digital Archaeology” to be held on February 3-4, 2017 in Cambridge, MA. The conference is hosted by Harvard University’s Standing Committee on Archaeology and will cover topics related to digital technologies and how they are transforming archaeological practice.

Organizers of the conference, Eric Kansa (Technology Director for The Alexandria Archive Institute; AAI) and Rowan Flad (Professor of Anthropology and Chair of the Standing Committee on Archaeology, Harvard University), ask participants to consider how current research data management and curation practices can better support new scholarship, instruction and engagement in archaeology. Speakers herald from the Harvard community and from institutions across North America.

An overarching theme of the conference is the need for new skills, professional roles, and professional incentives to make data more meaningful to scholarship. Attendees will hear presentations and panel discussions on the first day discussing the impact of digital technologies on the entire life-cycle of archaeological data, from the process of data capture and creation to the challenges of data curation and reuse.

The second morning of discussions in a workshop format, led by Anne Austin (Stanford University) and Eric Kansa, will introduce archaeologists to the fundamentals of good data practices, open source software tools for data cleanup, and practice to better share and preserve research data.

Kansa, who for more than a decade has led programs to preserve and share archaeology’s digital record through AAI’s Open Context data publishing service, explains that the industry is at a crossroads with most archaeologists, historians, and other social scientists uninformed about how to make their research accessible.

“There is an urgent need for this conference to improve the application and integrity of stored research data,” comments Kansa. “We have a tremendous responsibility to the public to share our understanding about what’s factual, what’s uncertain, and do so in a way that builds more trust and confidence in research. That’s why data skills are so critical in the 21st century.”

Visit the conference webpage to view the full program and panelist bios: http://archaeology.harvard.edu/critical-perspectives-practice-digital-archaeology. The conference is free and open to all, but attendees are requested to register on the website by January 25.

For media inquiries, contact Eric Kansa at (415) 425-7380 or ekansa(at)alexandriaarchive(dot)org.

About The Alexandria Archive Institute
The Alexandria Archive Institute is a non-profit technology organization that preserves and shares archaeological and related data on the web. Our work is targeted at promoting greater breadth and depth of understanding and discovery through advocacy, education, research and technology programs like Open
Context ([https://opencontext.org](https://opencontext.org)) which enables the sharing and preservation of archaeological and related data on the web free of charge.

Headquartered in San Francisco, CA, Alexandria Archive Institute is a non-profit organization. Please visit [https://alexandriaarchive.org](https://alexandriaarchive.org) for additional information.

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