

CRMARCHAEO WORKSHOP: A STEPPING STONE TO FAIR PRACTICE

Workshop

In this workshop we will explore how to use CRMarchaeo, part of the CIDOC Conceptual Reference Model, to link a wide range of existing archaeological documentation. When working with data deposited in archives in different eras and by different organisations using ever-evolving recording methodologies, a recurrent problem is being able to systematically access elements of the record without immersing oneself in the recording milieu of the original deposits. This high intellectual cost must be paid by each scholar wishing to work on the records of a particular archaeological investigation and so effectively creates a barrier to extensive reuse of archived data. The FAIR data principles require "that all research objects should be Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable (FAIR) both for machines and for people" (Wilkinson et al. 2016). One approach to making data FAIRly accessible while reducing the effort to a single "intellectual act" is to map to a "lingua franca", such as CRMarchaeo.

The CRMarchaeo extension has been created to promote a shared understanding of how to formalise the knowledge extracted from the observations made by archaeologists. It provides a set of concepts and properties that allow clear explanation (and separation) of the observations and interpretations made, both in the field and in post-excavation. Attendees will work through a series of case studies that reflect different excavation documentation practices: from 1950s style day books through to context recording sheets. Followed by database/CAD combos and on to modern integrated object oriented database/GIS systems, like Intrasis.

The aim is to explore archetypical solutions and provide attendees with hands-on experience of mapping actual documentation practice to CRMarchaeo. This can then be applied to their own or archive documentation, both current and historical, in their own institutions or archives and lead to integrated reusable composites being available for both internal and external use.

Motivation

The motivation is to enable the integration of a wide range of archaeological excavation archive materials. This means we need a body of proficient professional and amateur practitioners able to harness CRMarchaeo to describe and encapsulate the semantic meaning of archaeological archives of all eras.

This could include historic daybook or narrative text descriptions of archaeological excavations or chance encounters as well as more modern context sheet paper records of systematic excavations.

It is also intended to make electronic excavation databases of all flavours and vintages interoperable without the need to harmonise away the unique qualities and flavours of chosen excavation methodologies.

Target Audience

The target audience is professional and amateur cultural heritage practitioners who need to enable access to archaeological excavation archives. These could include archaeologists about to deposit

new excavation archives or researchers attempting to provide access to existing archives to a wider professional and lay audience. Curators of museum deposits of archaeological excavation archives may also benefit from the opportunity to experience how to provide access to the content of archives in their care. This could also apply to archivists who have similar historic excavation archive material in their collections.

Keywords

Archives #Integration #CRMarchaeo #FAIR