

Geoarchaeological approaches are key to understanding ancient settlements, being used in all research phases from locating and mapping sites, to reconstructing their environments and conducting detailed studies of communal life. The scale of settlement geoarchaeology extends from microns to hectares, with an immense variety of techniques employed: from non-invasive remote sensing methods and 3-D geophysical prospection to soil micromorphology, geochemistry and geochronology, potentially integrated with the study of micro-particles, organic residues and sediment aDNA, utilising palaeoenvironmental contextual data.

A wide array of research questions is addressed in settlement archaeology, most common and recurring. Intra-site settlement studies focus on the construction and organisation of buildings and open areas, and the use of these spaces for domestic and craft activities, storage, waste disposal, and access ways. These aspects are set within the reconstruction of site landscape settings, which provide site context about the nature of landscape change and land-use through time. Extracting maximal evidence from soils and sediments frequently requires utilising a multi-scalar approach incorporating macro- and micro-scale data and integrating different methods, both geoarchaeological and from other palaeoenvironmental and scientific archaeological disciplines.

Confronted with the rapidly expanding array of techniques applied in geoarchaeological studies of settlements, and a recurring list of research questions, this workshop is designed to provide a platform for discussing the most effective geoarchaeology-based strategies for investigating prehistoric settled life. Enriched with case studies from diverse time periods and geographic locations, we will address two main topics: 1) establishing the footprint of prehistoric settlements and their landscape impacts; and 2) reconstructing ways of life and the use of space within settlements. Throughout, we will consider current challenges and future prospects for utilisation and integration of methods, and how to achieve an effective multi-scalar analytical approach.

ORGANIZERS

Dr. Lyndelle Webster, Austrian Archaeological Institute (ÖAI)
 Dr. Aleksander Milekić, University of East Sarajevo
 Dr. Evita Kalogiropoulou, Foundation for Research & Technology - Hellas
 Prof. Dr. Charles French, University of Cambridge

CONTACT

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REGISTRATION

Registration until 11.05.2026: www.oeaw.ac.at/en/oeai/events/

WITH SUPPORT FROM

International Workshop

Deciphering prehistoric settlements with geoarchaeology

In pursuit of a multi-scalar approach



18.05.2026 –
19.05.2026

Austrian Academy of Sciences
 5th floor, Meeting Rooms 8-9
 Postsparkasse Building
 Dominikanerbastei 16
 1010 Vienna

Program

Monday, 18.05.2026

09:00 - 09:15

Welcome

Barbara Horejs, ÖAI Scientific Director

09:15 - 09:30

Introduction

Lyndelle Webster, Charles French, Aleksandar Milekić & Evita Kalogiropoulou, ÖAI, University of Cambridge, University of East Sarajevo, Foundation for Research & Technology - Hellas

Session 1: Establishing the footprint of settlements and their landscape impact

Chairs: Charles French & Aleksandar Milekić

09:30 - 09:50

Charles French, Aleksandar Milekić, Philippe De Smedt & Tonko Rajkovača, University of Cambridge, University of East Sarajevo & Ghent University

Investigating and modelling the deeply buried settled landscape at Neolithic Drenovac (Serbia).

09:50 - 10:10

Philippe de Smedt, Ghent University
Multiscale geophysics for archaeological prospection in challenging environments.

10:10 - 10:30

John Wainwright & Gianna Ayala, Durham University & Sheffield University
Modelling landscape settings and change during transitions to agriculture.

10:30 - 11:00

Discussion

11:00 - 11:20

Coffee Break

11:20 - 11:40

Franziska Waldhart & Darko Stojanovski, ÖAI
Subsurface insights: Geophysical survey of the Neolithic settlement Amzabegovo.

11:40 - 12:00

Hrvoje Kalafatic & Rajna Klindžić, University of Zagreb
Remote sensing for Neolithic settlement detection (Croatia).

12:00 - 12:20

Kerstin Kowarik & Valentina Laaha, ÖAI
From soils and sediments to lived landscapes: A multi-scalar geoarchaeology of mountain environments.

12:20 - 12:50

Discussion

12:50 - 14:00

Lunch Break

14:00 - 14:20

Immo Trinks, University of Vienna
High-resolution geophysical archaeological prospection - on land and under water.

14:20 - 14:40

Roderick Salisbury, Comenius University Bratislava

Geochemistry in site prospection and activity area mapping at unexcavated sites.

14:40 - 15:00

Michaela Schauer, Natural History Museum Vienna

Characterising archaeological sediments and deposits using pXRF.

15:00 - 15:30

Discussion

15:30 - 15:50

Coffee Break

Session 2: Reconstructing ways of life & use of space within settlements

Chair: Lyndelle Webster

15:50 - 16:10

Aroa García Suárez, University of Granada
Integrating macro- and micro- settlement geoarchaeology, experiences from Neolithic Central Anatolian sites.

16:10 - 16:30

Evita Kalogiropoulou & Dimitri Roussos, Wiener Laboratory for Archaeological Science & Foundation for Research & Technology - Hellas
Integrating micromorphology to the study of pyrotechnological features. Discussing examples from the Greek Neolithic.

16:30 - 16:50

Gabriella Kovács, Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences

Material choices and building traditions: analyzing Middle Bronze Age architecture at Százhalombatta-Földvár tell settlement, Hungary.

16:50 - 17:20

Discussion

19:30

Conference Dinner

Tuesday, 19.05.2026

Session 2 (cont.)

Chair: Evita Kalogiropoulou

09:00 - 09:20

Katarina Gerometta, University of Pula
Micromorphology study of a Neolithic settlement with minimal archaeological excavation.

09:20 - 09:40

Mareike Stahlschmidt, University of Vienna
Craftmanship reflected in floor constructions at Teotihuacan.

09:40 - 10:00

Lyndelle Webster, ÖAI
A sediment-based approach to early Neolithic settled life in the central Balkans: the NEOSOL project.

10:00 - 10:30

Discussion

10:30 - 10:50

Coffee Break

10:50 - 11:10

Laura Tomé, University of La Laguna
Applying sedimentary lipid analysis to settlement geoarchaeology: A microcontextual perspective from Cerro de San Vicente.

11:10 - 11:30

Benjamin Vernot, University of Vienna
Sediment aDNA in settlement deposits.

11:30 - 11:50

Katerina Douka, University of Vienna
Towards better integration of radiocarbon with geoarchaeology.

11:50 - 12:20

Discussion

12:20 - 13:00

Response & conclusion

Charles French, University of Cambridge
Barbara Horejs, ÖAI

13:00 - 14:15

Lunch

14:15 - 14:45

Tour of the ÖAI laboratories

14:45

Archaeological tour in Vienna
organised by Stadtarchäologie Wien

Venues

Workshop

5th floor, Meeting Rooms 8 and 9
Austrian Archaeological Institute (ÖAI)
Austrian Academy of Sciences (ÖAW)
Postsparkasse Building
Dominikanerbastei 16, 1010 Vienna

Restaurant, conference dinner

Zwölf-Apostelkeller
Sonnenfelsgasse 3, 1010 Vienna

