

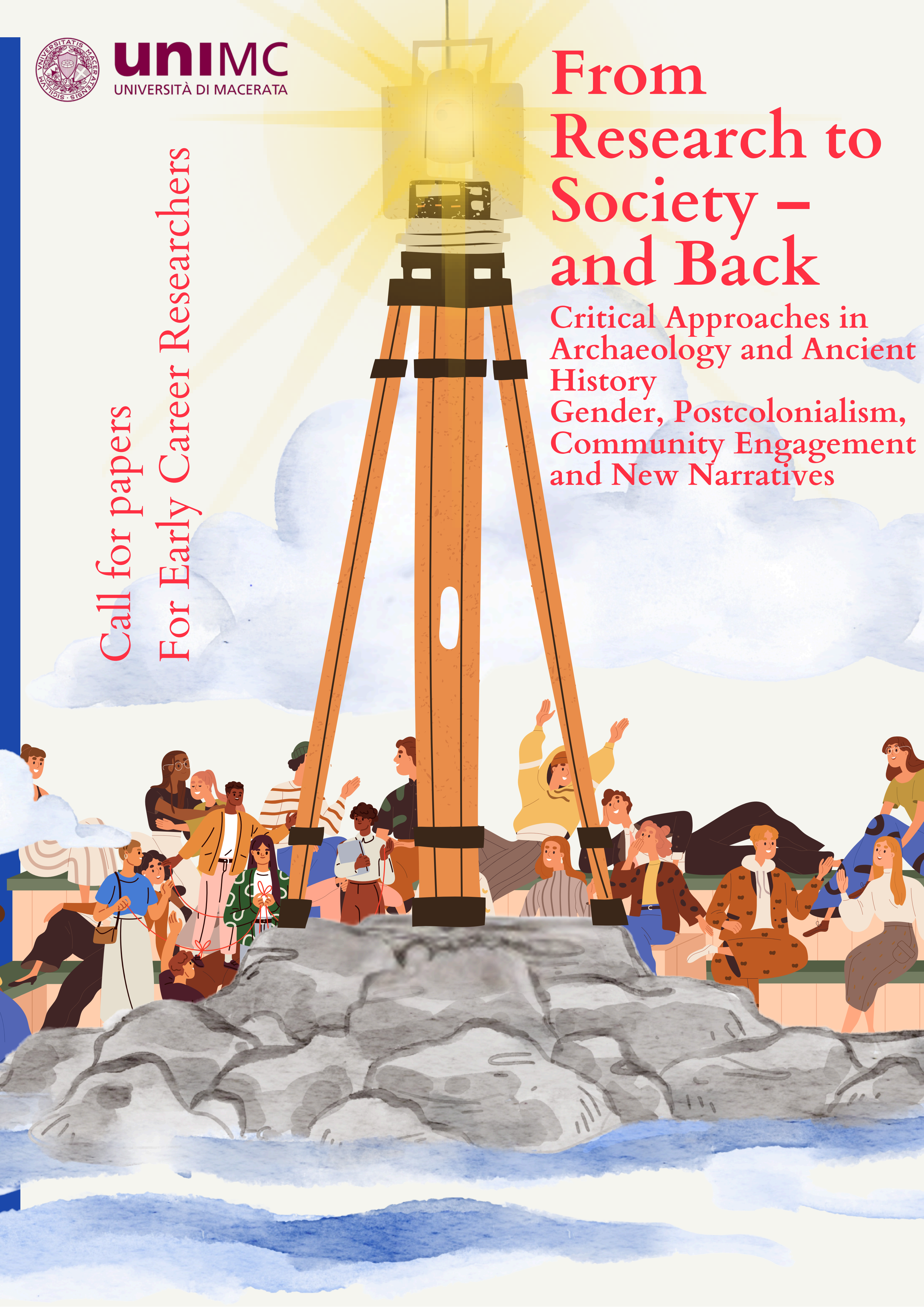


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UNIVERSITÀ DI MACERATA

Call for papers
For Early Career Researchers

From Research to Society – and Back

Critical Approaches in
Archaeology and Ancient
History
Gender, Postcolonialism,
Community Engagement
and New Narratives





University of Macerata

First week of November 2026 | Macerata, Italy

Submission deadline: 17th August 2026

About the Workshop:

Research in gender, postcolonial, public, and community archaeology does not stop at interpretation of the past — it actively reshapes teaching practices, public narratives, heritage management, and community relations, and is itself transformed through these interactions. **This workshop takes that dynamic as its starting point, asking how research, teaching, public engagement, and communities constantly reshape one another — and what happens at every point of contact.**

The workshop is structured around four thematic sessions, each opened by an invited keynote and followed by contributed papers, with ample space for discussion. A strong emphasis is placed on feedback loops: how communities reshape research questions, how new methods influence teaching, and how teaching practice in turn informs scholarly agendas.

Who Should Apply:

We invite early-career researchers whose work engages with the themes of the workshop to submit a paper proposal. The call is open to:

- PhD students (at any stage)
- Post-doctoral researchers
- Fixed-term and untenured researchers

Contributions addressing the workshop's themes from interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary perspectives are especially encouraged.



Submission Guidelines:

Applicants are invited to submit an abstract of no more than 300 words for a paper of 15 minutes, to be assigned to one of the four sessions listed below. Abstracts should clearly indicate:

- Name and institutional affiliation
- Title of the contribution
- The session to which the contribution is directed (see the four sessions below)
- The research question or problem addressed
- The theoretical and/or methodological framework
- The main argument or findings
- The broader relevance to the workshop's themes
- 5 keywords

Abstracts should be submitted in English. A short biographical note (max. 100 words) should be included separately.

The proceedings of the workshop will be published in open access, subject to peer review.

Submission deadline: **17th August 2026**

Notification of acceptance: **15th September 2026**

Submissions to: **researchsociety@gmail.com**



Session 1 — Decolonising and Gendering the Past: Theoretical and Methodological Challenges

How do critical perspectives transform archaeological and historical knowledge production? This session interrogates the theoretical foundations of gender archaeology and postcolonial approaches to the ancient world. Contributions are invited to explore how these frameworks challenge existing periodisations, canonical narratives, and disciplinary hierarchies, and how they open new avenues for interdisciplinary enquiry.

Topics may include, but are not limited to: feminist and queer approaches to archaeological record and material culture; decolonial readings of ancient “imperialism” and concepts like hellenisation and romanisation; intersectional approaches in the history and archaeology of ancient societies; the politics and practices of heritage and museum representation; epistemological critiques of history and archaeology of past societies.

Keynote Speaker: Astrid Van Oyen (Radboud University, Nijmegen)

Session 2 — Critical Archaeology and History: Educating New Generations to Rethink the Past

How do critical research approaches reshape how archaeology and history are taught — and who feels included? This session explores the relationship between scholarly innovation and pedagogical practice. It addresses the challenge of translating cutting-edge research into curricula and learning environments that are genuinely inclusive, reflexive, and responsive to contemporary social questions.

Topics may include, but are not limited to: decolonising the archaeology and history curriculum; student-centred pedagogies; the role of positionality in teaching; experiential and community-based learning; assessment and inclusion strategies; the relationship between research and teaching in early-career academic paths; the role of museums and archaeological parks in establishing or strengthening collaborations with research institutions that shape archaeological research and teaching.

Keynote Speaker: Francesco Ripanti (University of Birmingham)



Session 3 — Beyond Academia: Public Engagement, Citizen Science, and Public Archaeology

How can the relationship between academic research and the public become genuinely bidirectional? This session focuses on Citizen Science as a paradigm in which non-specialist participants are engaged not only as audiences but as active contributors to research design, data collection, and interpretation. It asks how community archaeology projects, participatory heritage initiatives, and crowdsourced enquiry reshape research questions and methodologies, while transforming the communities involved through co-produced knowledge.

Topics may include, but are not limited to: methodologies and case studies in citizen science for archaeology and ancient history; co-production of research questions, data collection, and interpretation; digital crowdsourcing platforms and participatory mapping; ethics, power, and consent in community-based research; collaborative work with descendant and local communities; memory, identity, and the politics of the past as negotiated with heritage communities; the role of cultural institutions (museums, archaeological parks...) as facilitators of bidirectional research–public relationships; impact assessment of participatory projects on both scholarship and the communities involved.

Keynote Speaker: Chiara Bonacchi (University of Edinburgh)

Session 4 — Telling the Past Today: Digital Tools, Storytelling, and New Archaeological Narratives

How can archaeological and historical research be communicated to broader audiences in ways that are both engaging and rigorous? This session focuses on the effective communication of scholarly content, examining the strategies, formats, and tools that translate complex research into accessible public narratives. It investigates how storytelling techniques, digital media, and editorial choices shape public understanding of the past, and how communicators can balance narrative impact with scholarly accuracy and ethical responsibility.

Topics may include, but are not limited to: principles and strategies of effective science communication; storytelling and narrative techniques for archaeology and ancient history; digital tools and immersive media (3D reconstruction, virtual and augmented reality); documentary, broadcast, and journalistic approaches to the past; social media as a channel for public outreach; podcasts, video games, and popular formats; narrative ethics and the representation of marginalised communities; balancing scholarly accuracy with public accessibility and engagement.

Keynote Speaker: Eugenio Farioli Vecchioli (RAI)



Scientific Committee

Simona Antolini – University of Macerata

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Maria Stella Busana – University of Padova

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Organisers

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