



## Theme & Session Format

Archaeologists and Archaeology Here and Now

Regular session # 397

## Title & Abstract

### Title:

**Archaeological Prospection and Field Evaluation Practice from Bologna Process to Convention of La Valetta. Do We Practice What We Preach? [Archaeological Prospection]**

### Abstract:

Over the past decades, prospection approaches using well-established techniques have been complemented by less invasive technologies according to the Valetta recommendations. Nowadays, integrating various complementary prospection methods are applied in academic research projects and often taught as such to archaeology students. However, the application of these methods in development-led archaeology is often challenging due to the differing finality. Development-led archaeology is usually required to investigate all archaeology of a place due to the threat of destruction, while academic archaeological prospection or unthreatened archaeological resource management aims to resolve more targeted research questions. In addition, development-led archaeological prospection often does not focus on non-destructiveness, because in-situ preservation is not compatible with the expected endpoint (archaeological site destruction and new building construction), despite the Valetta convention's preference for non-destructive methods of investigation (article 3.I.b) and in situ preservation (article 4.II). Therefore, many European countries rely on e.g. systematic trial trenching and, to a lesser extent, less invasive techniques ahead of developments. Merging both approaches requires tailored approaches and is irregular depending on the local legislation.

This session aims to address topics such as:

- Teaching practices in archaeological prospection/field evaluation
- Relationships between academic and development-led archaeological prospection practices
- Differences in the implementation of less destructive methods of investigation. Is this related to legislation, the environmental context, research traditions, recent developments?
- The under- or over-application of less destructive methods in these contexts. What are the ensuing risks and opportunities for archaeological resource management?
- Novel research in invasive sampling designs and prospection strategies across Europe. Why are these (not) preferred to non-invasive methods?
- How do we deal with the unavoidable uncertainty of archaeological prospection methods, especially in development-led site evaluations?

We invite national, regional, landscape- or site- specific overviews or case studies in academic research; teaching and archaeological resource management, and particularly development-led archaeology.

### Keywords:

*archaeological prospection, development-led archaeology, (non-)invasive field evaluation methods, archaeological resource management*

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