



4th Virtual Conference for Women Archaeologists and Paleontologists

The Virtual Conference for Women Archaeologists and Paleontologists (VCWAP) will be back for its fourth edition on **March 6-8, 2024**! During these three days, we will be shining a spotlight on early-career women researchers and women paleoartists, by presenting their work.

We want to emphasize that everyone, regardless of gender, employment stage, gender identity, or expression, is warmly welcome to attend and participate in the discussions. We believe in the power of mentorship and networking to foster growth, diversity, and inclusivity within the academic community. We are not just about showcasing scientific excellence; we are here to build a supportive community for women in science. Join us to be part of this empowering experience.

[Registration and Submission Form](#)

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Reasons for VCWAP: The issues faced by women in science.

While women's participation in Archaeology and Paleontology has increased in the last decades, challenges to gender equality persist. Several recent studies have shed light on the obstacles that women scientists face, including issues related to academic promotion, funding opportunities, and recognition of their contributions. These issues are not limited to the academic sphere but also consist of field-related obstacles, including working conditions and safety concerns, which can vary significantly based on gender ('Gender issues on the fieldwork' Round Table of VCWAP 2023). This gender imbalance can lead to an increased institutional service burden for women, and this especially impacts women of color (Domingo et al., 2022).

The struggle to balance parental responsibilities with societal expectations in academia contributes to the 'leaky pipeline effect' for women (Pell, 1996; Sebastián-González et al., 2023). Achieving a balance between academic pursuits and family responsibilities remains a significant concern, and academia must adapt to accommodate the needs of these scientists by offering for instance paid parental leaves, flexible work schedules, and mental health support while involving various stakeholders and promoting a more inclusive academic environment.

Sugimoto and Larivière (2023), Vallan (2023), and Warnock et al. (2020) explored the extent of the gender gap in science. Their shocking data illustrates the true scope of the problem, which encompasses

aspects such as research funding, representation in leadership roles, and publication and citation rates with this effect compounded by increasing journal impact factor.

These recent studies demonstrate that while progress has been made, there is still work to be done to create an equitable and inclusive environment for women in paleontology and archaeology. Addressing these issues will have a beneficial effect not just for women in science, but for everyone involved with science. The VCWAP aims to contribute to this discussion by providing a platform to address these challenges and promote diversity and inclusion in these fields.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Domingo CR, et al. (2022). More service or more advancement: Institutional barriers to academic success for women and women of color faculty at a large public comprehensive minority-serving state university. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*. 15(3): 365-379.
Pell AN. (1996). Fixing the Leaky Pipeline: Women Scientists in Academia. *Journal of Animal Science*. 74: 2843-2848.
Sebastián-González E, et al. (2023). Ten simple rules for a mom-friendly Academia. *PLOS Computational Biology*. 19(8): e1011284.
Sugimoto CR, & Larivière V. (2023). *Equity for women in science: Dismantling systemic barriers to advancement*. Harvard University Press.
Vallan V. (2023). Science's gender gap: the shocking data that reveal its true extent. *Nature*: 619: 244-246.
Warnock R, et al. (2020). Special Report: Are we reaching gender parity among Palaeontology authors? *The Palaeontological Association*, Newsletter 103.

Conference's Format

The 4th VCWAP will take place on **March 6-8th, 2024**. It will be held **online** (via Zoom, Discord, and Gather Town) and **free of charge**, as we recognize the difficulties in accessing scientific events for early career researchers around the world. If you **wish to help us finance the awards and workshop for the 4th VCWAP, you can join, for 2-10€**, the [Association for early-career Women Archaeologists and Paleontologists](#).

During the VCWAP, **early-career women researchers and women paleoartists** can present their work in three engaging formats: 10 min Talks (Zoom); Posters and Paleoartistic Reconstructions (Gather Town). Gather Town provides a virtual space that facilitates dynamic and real-time discussions, enhancing the interaction between presenters and attendees.

In addition to our scientific sessions, we will continue our tradition of hosting a **Round Table Discussion**, focusing on gender-related issues and ways to address them in both Archaeology and Paleontology.

Once again, everyone, regardless of career stage, gender identity or expression, is invited to participate in our inclusive event, where we aim to foster mentorship, diversity, and community support for women in science.

[Registration and Submission Form](#)

Guidelines for Contributions

Abstracts for Talks and Posters

The VCWAP welcomes contributions from **early-career women (cis and trans) researchers in Archaeology and Paleontology, without permanent positions** (from master students to postdoctoral stages included). It covers various aspects of ancient life (plants, fungi, invertebrates, vertebrates including humans), their interactions, and the study of materials, environments, and climates, and must involve methodologies used in Archaeology and/or Paleontology.

Your contribution must fit into at least one of these **five scientific sessions**:

- Heritage and gender studies.
- Characterization and dynamics of populations and their environments.
- Actualistic and experimental frameworks.
- Tracking functional and behavioral responses to environmental constraints.
- Exploitation of natural resources and raw materials.

You can submit your abstract with the [Registration and Submission Form](#). Your abstract should be a minimum of 250 words and not exceed one page, following our provided [Template](#). We encourage you to follow the [Tutorial](#) for tips on how to write a good abstract. All text submissions should be in English, with correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Technical terms and jargon should be explained for clarity and accessible to a general scientific audience.

After the submission deadline on **December 1st, 2023**, the Scientific Committee will review each submission and select up to 45 Talks and 40 Posters. You can choose your preferred format and session; however, the organizing team reserves the right to make adjustments. The Poster format will be preferred for preliminary studies. Submitting authors will receive a notification by mid-January 2024 confirming whether their abstract has been accepted for the VCWAP (with or without modifications) or declined, along with further information once the program has been finalized.

Live talks are the preferred mode of presentation; however, we understand that certain circumstances (e.g., internet connectivity issues or special conditions) may make it challenging for you to give a live presentation. In such cases, you have the option to send us a pre-recorded presentation in advance. However, as far as possible, we invite you to be present during the session so that you can take part in the live discussions that will take place after your presentation.

Contributions to the Virtual Paleoart Gallery

Paleoartistic reconstruction is one of the most effective way to visualize scientific hypotheses about past life and to make paleontological and archaeological research accessible and attractive to the public. The VCWAP aims to highlight the work of women paleoartists by opening its second edition of the **Virtual Paleoart Gallery**, on Gather Town.

The Virtual Paleoart Gallery (VPG) welcomes contributions from **all women paleoartists** (cis and trans), regardless of their background (academic or non-academic) and their professional status (professional or non-professional). We invite your creative works aimed at **bringing past humans and/or non-human fauna and flora back to life**. Your paleoartistic reconstruction may take various forms and must be accompanied by a short commentary in English (150-400 words). In this commentary, you will provide insights into the scientific assumptions, artistic choices, references, and/or specimens that form the basis of your reconstruction. You will find more details in our [Tutorial](#) to build the perfect contribution for the VPG.

You can submit your application to the VPG with the [Registration and Submission Form](#). Please upload the commentary by completing and respecting this [Template](#). If selected, your contribution will be published in the VCWAP's Abstract Book. All text submissions should be in English, with correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Technical terms and jargon should be explained for clarity and accessible to a general scientific audience.

After the submission deadline on **December 1st, 2023**, the VPG committee will review each submission and select up to 25 of them. Submitting authors will receive a notification by mid-January 2024

confirming whether their artwork has been accepted for the exhibition (with or without modifications) or declined, along with further information once the program has been finalized.

Awards

- **Best Regular Talk Award:** a free course, of the laureate's choice, by our sponsor Transmitting Science (in the case of the in-person course, the registration fee is covered but travel accommodation and meal expenses are the responsibility of the participant).
- **Best Poster Award:** €100
- **Best Paleoartistic Reconstruction:** €100

The three laureates will be honored on the website of the Association for early-career Women Archaeologists and Paleontologists (awap-science.org/en).

Deadlines

- Submission of abstracts (regular talk, poster, paleoart): **December 1st, 2023**;
- Registration for the public: **February 29th, 2024**.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at vcwap@awap-science.org. Follow us on the social networks [Twitter/X](#), [Instagram](#), and [Facebook](#) as well as on our [website](#).

The VCWAP is the flagship event organized by the
Association for early-career Women Archaeologists and Paleontologists



and is sponsored by

