Linnæus University

Progress Report

UNESCO Chair on Heritage Futures

Period: 09/2024 – 08/2025

unesco
Chair on Heritage Futures

About the UNESCO Chair

The UNESCO Chair Programme addresses pressing challenges in society. The Chairs serve as think tanks and bridge-builders between the academic world, civil society, local communities, research and policy-making, generating innovation through research, informing policy decisions, and establishing new teaching initiatives. The UNESCO Chair on Heritage Futures at Linnaeus University is one of eight UNESCO Chairs in Sweden and the only one in Sweden in the area of culture.

The concept of 'Heritage Futures' stands at the intersection of past legacies and tomorrow's possibilities. How can our present-day conservation practices shape the world of tomorrow? It's not just about safeguarding relics of the past, but about making them resonate in an evolving world full of challenges. How can futures literacy and foresight help us design the heritage of tomorrow? We develop strategies that can enhance how heritage shapes the future and build global capacity for futures thinking among heritage professionals.

Authors: Professor Cornelius Holtorf, Chairholder and Helena Rydén, Assistant to the Chair
Map p.5 and p.12–13 by Stephanie Carleklev
Date: 10 November 2025

The ideas and opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors; they are not necessarily those of UNESCO and do not imply any commitment by the Organization.

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Training Resources

What are Heritage Futures and why do they matter? The Chair provides free training resources online to enhance futures thinking and futures literacy in relation to culture and heritage.

Find out more at https://lnu.se/en/unescochair (under Training Resources). We will be continuously updating and improving these resources.

Team

From left some committed members from the UNESCO Chair on Heritage Futures: Helena Rydén, Cornelius Holtorf, Ulrika Söderström, Anders Högberg and Gustav Wollentz. Photo from 22 October 2024 when Ulrika Söderström, defended her PhD thesis entitled "Cultural Heritage as a Resource in Socially Sustainable Urban Development: A Designed Living Environment for the Future".

DR CORNELIUS HOLTORF, Professor of Archaeology and holder of the UNESCO Chair on Heritage Futures at Linnaeus University. Director of the Graduate School in Contract Archaeology (GRASCA).

DR EMILY HANSCAM, Researcher at Linnaeus University. Her projects apply techniques from the digital humanities to explore ongoing entanglements between nationalism and archaeological discourse, working towards developing a better critical understanding of the past for negotiating the global future.

DR ANDERS HÖGBERG, Professor of Archaeology at Linnaeus University. Special fields of interest are heritage studies and human cognitive evolution.

DR SARAH MAY, Affiliated Researcher. She is currently working with ButCH, a collective of heritage consultants with a background in Heritage Futures and focused on strategy and policy for community development and climate change.

DR LEILA PAPOLI-YAZDI, Affiliated Researcher. She researches the dirty heritage of modern civilization; garbage, waste, and consumption. She runs a company: Garbonomix is providing waste management consultation to businesses and households.

HELENA RYDÉN, Assistant to the UNESCO Chair on Heritage Futures.

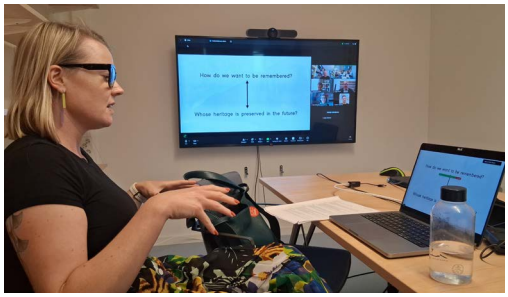
DR CLAUDIO PESCATORE, Affiliated Researcher. A nuclear engineer, previously at the Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) of the OECD, special field of interest is the preservation of memory.

DR ULRIKA SÖDERSTRÖM, until October 2024, Doctoral Student at Linnaeus University, subsequently Affiliated Researcher from Kalmar County Museum.

DR GUSTAV WOLLENTZ, is a Senior Lecturer at Linnaeus University focusing on critical heritage studies.

Visiting:
PhD student Erman Ertuğrul from Turkey arrived in Autumn 2024 to spend several months with the Chair. He focused on public archaeology in Turkiye during the digital age.

PhD student Marije Miedema from the Netherlands arrived in August 2025 to spend a few months with the Chair. Her work takes an interdisciplinary approach to heritage, focusing on the future of our digital past.



Visiting PhD student Marije Miedema from the Netherlands addresses key questions: 'How do we want to be remembered?' and 'Whose heritage is preserved in the future?'

Introduction

This report highlights the eighth year of the UNESCO Chair on Heritage Futures. Again, the year was full of activities and recognition of our work by others, both in Sweden and internationally.

A key moment was our participation in the side events of the UN Summit of the Future in September 2024, where world leaders adopted a global Pact for the Future. This will pave the way towards a Post-2030 Agenda for the world where culture and heritage may feature more prominently and in broader ways than before.

Another highlight was our Futures Workshop held during the 17th World Congress of the Organisation of World Heritage Cities in Cordoba, Spain. Other important engagements included our participation in the Nuclear Energy Agency's (OECD) newly formed Expert Group on Archiving and Awareness Preservation.

During the year, we could also celebrate the Defense of Ulrika Söderström's Doctoral thesis (see Research section below) and new funding received by the Swedish Research Council for Dr. Marcy Rockman, widely known for her work at the intersection of climate change and cultural heritage, to join our team at Linnaeus University Kalmar from September 2025.

Visiting Doctoral Students during the past year included Erman Ertuğrul from Istanbul University for several months during the winter and Marjie Miedema from Groningen University from August 2025.

Finally, we had reason to celebrate that UNESCO granted a third period to the Chair, created in 2017 and now continuing until the end of 2029. This would not have been possible without the reliable support of our work from Linnaeus University through the Vice-Chancellor and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities.

Please get in touch if you have any comments or suggestions!

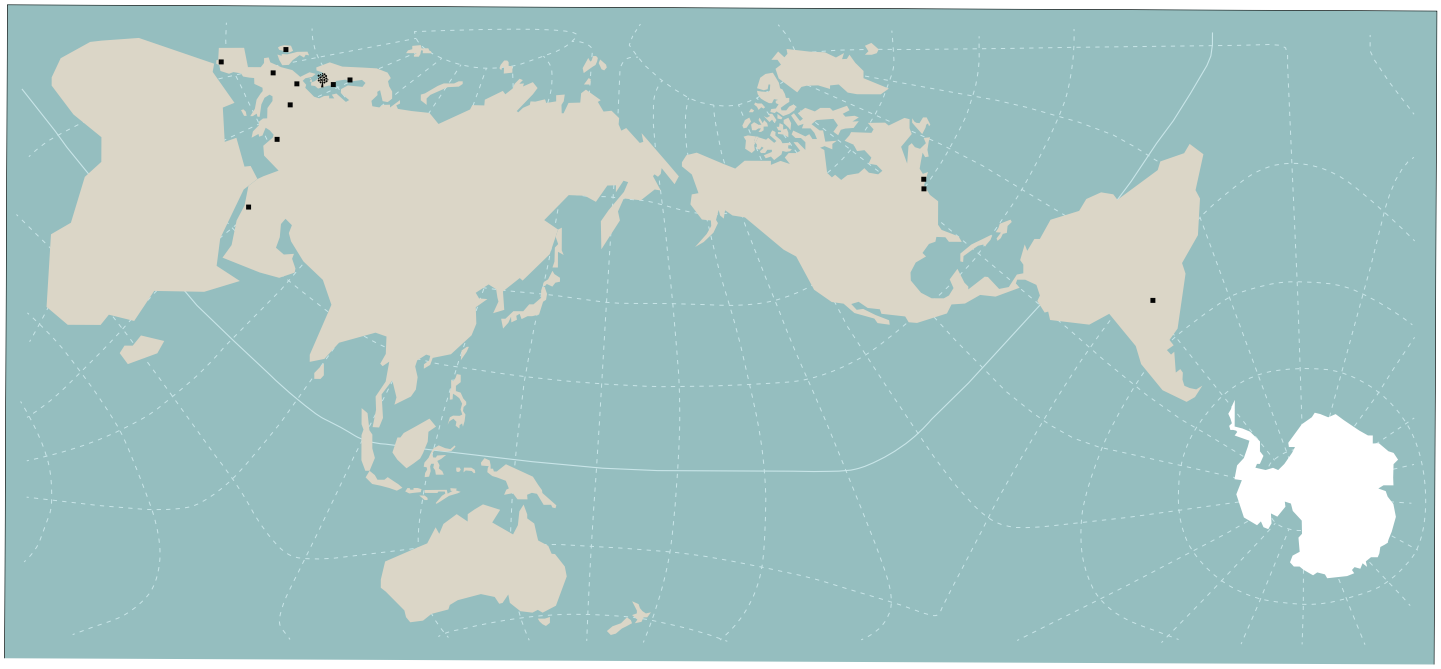
Cornelius Holtorf, Professor of Archaeology, and holder of the UNESCO Chair on Heritage Futures

> "Building better futures for human beings benefits from acknowledging the importance of culture for being human." C. Holtorf

World leaders at the UN Summit of the Future in New York (22–23 Sept 2024) adopted the Pact for the Future — marking the first time culture was officially recognized by the world's governments as essential to all sustainable global development.
https://www.un.org/pact-for-the-future/en

The Chair submitted a written contribution in preparation for the UN Pact for the Future.
https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sof-unesco-chair-heritage-futures-input-zero-draft-pact-for-future.pdf

Map of the Chair's activities 09/2024– 08/2025 (selection)



Activities

Education and Training

» In the context of the 17th World Congress of the Organisation of World Heritage Cities in Cordoba, Spain, Cornelius Holtorf ran a Heritage Futures Workshop for 21 politicians and world heritage managers from the Belgium, Hungary, Germany, Korea, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, and the US (24-27 September 2024).

» Gustav Wollentz lectured for two hours on heritage futures to undergraduate students reading the course An introduction to Cultural Heritage at Linnaeus University, Kalmar (September 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf lectured for three hours on "Cultural and heritage tourism – making choices for the future" for 14 students taking the advanced-level course on Tourism and Sustainability in the Anthropocene 15 credits in Tourism and Recreation Studies at Linnaeus University, Kalmar (10 October 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf held a class on culture and the future for ten students taking the course Ethics and Anthropology at the University of Cork, Ireland (10 October 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf and David Staley ran a digital research seminar bringing together a unique gathering of historians and archaeologists from Ohio State University and Linnaeus University, working on the future. The title was "When history and archaeology meet the future" and the seminar was attended by 18 students and researchers (11 November 2024).

» Anders Högberg and Gustav Wollentz led a four-hour futures workshop for 12 managers at the Department for Nature and Cultural Heritage, Region Västra Götaland, held at the Museum of Natural History in Gothenburg (22 November 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf lectured on "Archaeology, Climate and Sustainability" for 17 students taking the course Archaeology I at Linnaeus University, Campus Kalmar (18 December 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf lectured on "Global Cultural Policy" for 13 students taking the course Possibilities and Limits of Cultural Policy as part of the Undergraduate Programme in Cultural heritage in present and future societies at Linnaeus University, Campus Kalmar (19 December 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf lectured on "Communicating Cultural Heritage with the Future" for 15 students reading the course Cultural Heritage and Communication as part of the Undergraduate Programme in Cultural Heritage in Present and Future Societies at Linnaeus University, Kalmar, Sweden (5 February 2025).

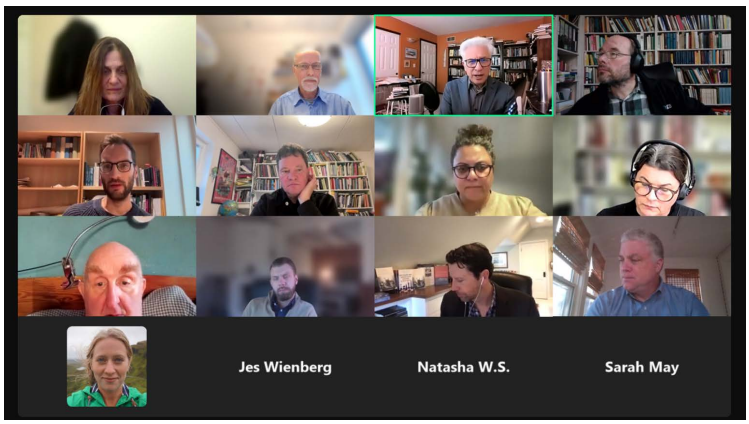
» Cornelius Holtorf lectured on "Unesco världsarv: vad kommuniceras för framtida generationers skull?" for 15 students reading the course Cultural Heritage and Communication as part of the Undergraduate Programme in Cultural Heritage in Present and Future Societies at Linnaeus University, Kalmar, Sweden (10 February 2025).

» Cornelius Holtorf gave a lecture on "The Climate Heritage Paradox – towards a paradigm shift in cultural heritage" to over 70 participants at the 7th UNESCO MOST Winter School for Masters and Doctoral students as well as scholars and professionals. The event was organized in collaboration with the UNESCO Chair for Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainability at the University of Pannonia and held at the Institute of Advanced Studies in Köszeg (iASK), Hungary (24-28 February 2025).

» Dr Michael Ranta gave a lecture for staff and undergraduate students in Archaeology at Linnaeus University in Kalmar, entitled "On Communication with Remote Cultures and Questions of Relativism" (15 May 2025).

» Cornelius Holtorf ran a Future Workshop on "World heritage Southern Öland 25 years in the future" for 20+ students taking part in a course on The World Heritage site of Southern Öland at Ölands Folkhögskola, Skogsby, Öland, Sweden (18 June 2025).

» Leila Papoli-Yazdi ran a workshop: Circular Economy and Environmental Justice: A Roadmap for Urban Regeneration (4 sessions, Online). Institute Bidar: Tehran (August 2025).



A unique gathering in November 2024 brought together historians and archaeologists—18 students and researchers from various disciplines and time zones—from Ohio State University and Linnaeus University, working on the future.

Watch here:
https://play.lnu.se/media/t/0_us3mqftw

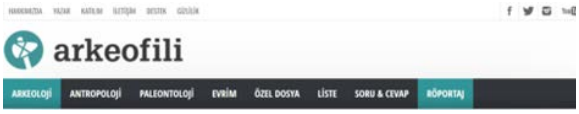
youtube.com/watch?v=egsqt_QqgKM&feature=youtu.be

Media and Popular Science

» Cornelius Holtorf contributed to an online debate (with reply by Birgitta Johansen and Luitgard Löw) after his presentation for the Swedish County Museums, asking Är länsmuseerna (och kultursektorn) i Sverige beredda för fred? Ett svar." (October 2024). https://us13.campaign-archive.com/?u=a638d7bdee73f143fc3e86b3c&id=5e91613943

» Cornelius Holtorf was interviewed by film-maker Vicki Lesley in her series entitled "The Atom & Us". Vicki was the Director of The Atom: A Love Affair (2019) (January 2025). https://vickilesley.substack.com/p/the-atom-and-us-cornelius-holtorf

» Cornelius Holtorf was interviewed by Erman Ertuğrul for the popular Turkish website arkeofili (March 2025).



English version: https://arkeofili.com/on-future-archaeology-an-interview-with-cornelius-holtorf/
Turkish version: https://arkeofili.com/gelecek-arkeolojisi-uzerine-cornelius-holtorf-roportaji/

Expedition Framtiden

Expedition Framtiden is a documentary film produced by Linnaeus University (Kulturella universitetet) in collaboration with the UNESCO Chair on Heritage Futures. The film showcases an innovative project by the Department of Culture and Leisure in Kalmar Municipality, exploring how cultural heritage can be integrated into future-oriented planning and community development. Through interviews, local case studies, and creative approaches, the project demonstrates how heritage can serve as a resource for sustainability and social resilience.

The film was presented at the national cultural policy conference Folk och Kultur in Eskilstuna in February 2025, where it contributed to discussions on the role of culture in shaping long-term strategies for municipalities and regions. It stands as an example of how cross-sector collaboration—between academia, local government, and cultural institutions—can generate new perspectives on future-making.

Watch here https://play.lnu.se/media/t/0_p1c005um

Expedition Framtiden is a documentary film produced by Linnaeus University (Kulturella universitetet) in collaboration with the UNESCO Chair on Heritage Futures. Available here https://play.lnu.se/media/t/0_p1c005um

Publications and Research

Clarke, J., Haour, A., Morel, H., Forster, J., Orlove, B., Holtorf, C., Hutcheson, A., Aryee Adinorkuor, V., Brunnschweiler, C., Brooks, N., Wade, S., Wellington, N., Appeaning Addo, K. & N. P. Simpson (2025) Curating transformation can strengthen adaptation and minimize losses and damages. npj Climate Action 4 (4). https://doi.org/10.1038/s44168-025-00210-z

Dezhamkhooy, M., & Papoli-Yazdi, L. (2024). Education is Life: Collective Experiences of Practising the Archaeology of the Contemporary Past in a Conservative Atmosphere. In G. Moshenska (Ed.), Teaching and Learning the Archaeology of the Contemporary Era (pp. 225–239). London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Dezhamkhooy, M., & Papoli-Yazdi, L. (2025). Margins with the Central Role: An Archaeology of Informal Waste Economy and Waste Pickers in Iran. In M. A. Peters & T. Meier (Eds.), Civilizational Collapse and the Philosophy of Post-Apocalyptical Survival (pp. 341–362). Bristol: Peter Lang.

Dezhamkhooy, M., & Papoli-Yazdi, L. (2025). The Politics of Erasure and Making Gendered Heritage Invisible in Modern Iran. In J. C. Ashton (Ed.), The Routledge Handbook of Heritage and Gender (pp. 441–456). London & New York: Routledge. https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781003258193-39

Hanscam, E., Lincke, A., Mohammed, A. T., van Oeveren, D., & Witcher, R. (2024). Digital Excavations : Text Mining Approaches for a Better Archaeology. Presented at the 3rd International Symposium on Digital Transformation, Växjö, Sweden, 11-12 September, 2024. https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2:1934355

Hanscam, E., Hanscam, R., Lincke, A., Milrad, M., Mohammed, A. T., van Overeem, D., & Witcher, R. (2024). Exploring Antiquity Geographic Regions. https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2:1950942

Holtorf, C. (2024) Life in Plastic, Its Fantastic. In: G. Godin, Þ. Pétursdóttir, E. Praet and John Schofield (eds) The Routledge Handbook of Archaeology and Plastics, 550-558. London and New York: Routledge. https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781003272311-38

Holtorf, C. (2024) Review of A Post-Critical Theory of Cultural Heritage. Review of S. Muñoz-Viñas (2023), A Theory of Cultural Heritage: Beyond The Intangible. London and New York: Routledge. Journal of Heritage Manage ment 9 (2), 213–16. https://doi.org/10.1177/24559296241310589

Holtorf, C. (2025) Heritage Futures. Currents in Critical Heritage Studies (Blog), Association of Critical Heritage Studies, 29 January 2025. https://www.criticalheritagestudies.org/currents-critical-heritage/2024/4/1/heritage-futures

Holtorf, C. (2025) Review of J. Schofield (2024) Wicked Problems for Archaeologists: Heritage as Transformative Practice. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Antiquity, pp. 1–2. https://doi.org/10.15184/aqy.2025.27

Högberg, A. (2025). Krönika: Framtidsskapande. Byggnadskultur, (2), 52. https://lnu.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2:1970747

Papoli-Yazdi, L. (2024). Living on the Mounds of Plastic: The Material Culture and Daily life of Garbage Collectors and Communities. In G. Godin et al. (eds.), The Routledge Handbook of Archaeology and Plastics (pp. 439–453). London & New York: Routledge. https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781003272311-30

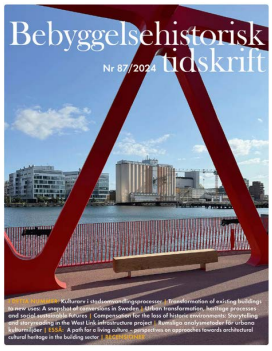
Pescatore, C. (2025). Beyond a million years: Robust radiation shielding for high-level waste. Nukleonika, 70(3), 87–93. http://www.nukleonika.pl/www/back/full/vol70_2025/v70n3p087f.pdf

Pescatore, C. (2025). Humanity's uranium-238 inventory: A significant and enduring gamma-radiation liability. Nukleonika, 70(2), 31–42. http://www.nukleonika.pl/www/back/full/vol70_2025/v70n2p031f.pdf

Söderström, U. (2024). Cultural heritage as a resource in socially sustainable urban development: A designed living environment for the future (Doctoral dissertation, Linnaeus University, Kalmar). https://lnu.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A1901953&dswid=-9221

Söderström, U., & Högberg, A. (2024). Urban transformation, heritage processes and social sustainable futures. Bebyggelsehistorisk Tidskrift, 87, 34–50. https://uu.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2:1944932

Wollentz, G., & Högberg, A. (2025). Att skapa delaktighet genom kulturarvsframtider. In Kulturarv som politik och pedagogik (pp. 179–197). https://lnu.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2:1995822



Ulrika Söderström and Anders Högberg discussed 'Urban transformation, heritage processes and social sustainable futures' in Bebyggelsehistorisk Tidskrift, 87, 34–50. The journal is the Nordic region's leading academic journal on the history of the built environment.

Here are some research highlights of the past year:

After many years of research, Ulrika Söderström's path-breaking Doctoral research on "Cultural heritage as a resource in socially sustainable urban development: A designed living environment for the future" (available in open access) was completed with her successful defense on 22 October 2024. During the past year, many other research projects associated with the Chair have been continuing, while some more have been in the preparatory process (e.g. by writing grant proposals). Besides, much effort was invested in the time-consuming (but successful) process of extending the Chair for another four years.

AI and human cognitive evolution

Anders Högberg has started to explore aspects on futures and becoming human in the age of AI. He investigates the unpredictable trajectory of AI-human cognitive co-evolution. Underlining the need for anticipatory thinking, he asks: What do we need to know now, to be able to recognize what people need to understand in a yet unexplored future of AI-human cognitive co-evolution? Rather than presenting empirical findings, this theoretical and exploratory work seeks to stimulate reflection and dialogue on how AI's integration into human life may transform our notions of humanness, as AI systems are reshaping human cognition, relationships, and socio-technical practices.

Long-term legacies of uranium-based wastes

Claudio Pescatore's recent research bridges nuclear science and heritage futures by examining the long-term danger and memory of high-level nuclear waste. In 2024, he showed that uranium-based wastes remain intrinsically hazardous essentially indefinitely, raising ethical and cultural questions about how societies remember and manage such enduring legacies. This work reframes nuclear waste as a permanent element of cultural heritage, not a transient technical issue.

Towards a New Garbology

Over the past year, Leila has been developing and implementing an updated approach to garbology (the study of garbage)—referred to as New Garbology—in Sweden. Her goal is to refine this approach into a model that can be adapted to diverse contexts around the world. By New Garbology, Leila refers to an updated methodology of garbology for studying extreme poverty, designed to help build resilience against economic hardship.

"Include more people than just experts when deciding how cultural heritage should be used in urban transformation projects". U. Söderström

The doctoral thesis by Ulrika Söderström 'Cultural Heritage As a Resource In Socially Sustainable Urban Development: A Designed Living Environment For the Future' examines how cultural heritage is used in modern urban planning to shape futures, and its impact on social sustainability.

Her research focused on three specific projects: the Caroli district in Malmö, the Valnötsträdet district in Kalmar, and the urban transformation in Kiruna. These projects represent different time periods and different approaches to the use of cultural heritage. Söderström's work involved interviews and surveys with various stakeholders, as well as studies of laws, regulations, and political objectives.

As part of the Graduate School in Contract Archaeology (GRASCA), she focused on how Swedish contract archaeology can engage with sustainability issues in collaboration with other sectors.

https://lnu.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A1901953&dswid=-9221

Conference Presentations/Lectures

» Emily Hanscam gave a presentation on "Digital Excavations" for an event sponsored by HUMINFRA & KE-DT at Kulturparken Hackathon in Växjö (10 September 2024).

» Emily Hanscam presented "Digital Excavations: Text Mining Approaches for a Better Archaeology", Digital Humanities session chair at the Third Annual Symposium on Digital Transformation in Växjö (11–13 September 2024).

» Gustav Wollentz presented as an invited speaker on an inspirational day for the World Heritage Site "Naval Port of Karlskrona". Around 110 people participated from the region, including representatives from the County Administrative Board, museum professionals, researchers from the university, local politicians, and more (16 September 2024).

» During the Building Better Futures Festival (preceding the UN Summit of the Future), the UNESCO Chair on Heritage Futures offered a session entitled "Why Cultural Futures Make us Hopeful", chaired by Cornelius Holtorf (19 September 2024).

» Emily Hanscam gave a presentation - "Archaeology and nationalism on the Roman Frontier" at Bokmässan - Gothenburg Book Fair (27 September 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf participated and presented the work of our Chair in the 2024 International UNESCO Chairs Conference at Leuphania University Lüneburg, Germany, dedicated to the theme "UNESCO Chairs' Perspectives on Sustainable Development Goals" (7-9 October 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf was invited to present for ca 50 participants of the Swedish County Museums Autumn Meeting (Länsmuseernas höstmöte) on the extent to which the Swedish County Museums should be contributing to peace rather than preparing for war (17 October 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf introduced and led a discussion on the importance of the past and cultural heritage for civil defense and cultural mobilisation during the Meeting of the Scientific Council of the LEIBNIZ Centre for Archaeology (LEIZA) held in Schleswig, Germany (24 October 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf was invited to contribute to a panel on 60 years Venice Charter, addressing the topic "Regeneration vs the Venice Charter", for 20 members of ICOMOS Sweden attending the ICOMOS Sweden Advent meeting in Stockholm, Sweden (26 November 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf contributed as a panel member to Linnaeus University's internal "Future Day" in Växjö (3 December 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf took part in the online round table "Exploring connections – climate action for living heritage" co-organized by UNESCO, the Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Latin America (CRESPIAL) and the ICH NGO Forum and held in the framework of the Nineteenth session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Asunción, Paraguay (3 December 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf presented an online talk on "The meaning of culture in global policy for sustainable development" for CultureSustain – a network researching Scandinavian museums' impact on Cultural Sustainability based at the University of Aarhus, Denmark (5 December 2024).

» Ulrika Söderström was invited to Föreningen Byggnadskultur in Umeå and gave a lecture on cultural heritage as a resource for social sustainable development (17-18 February 2025).

» Gustav Wollentz presented and joined a panel at the conference "The Houses, the History, and the Future" in Gothenburg, organized by Gothenburg University and regional partners. Around 140 heritage professionals attended, focusing on building conservation and restoration (25 February 2025).

» Cornelius Holtorf presented a keynote lecture on "Time Travel – More than Learning About the Past" for ca 50 listeners in the room and another 20 online, coming together for the conference Re-Action: Time Travels in a Changing World – Bridging Ages 20 Years in Kalmar, Sweden (4 March 2025).

The university management invited to a theme day in Växjö in December 2024 about Linnaeus University and the future. Cornelius Holtorf participated live and a recording of the event is available here:
https://play.lnu.se/media/t/0_tb0d3lc4
Photo Helena Rydén.

» Anders Högberg gave a keynote at the conference "Cultural Heritage Research in Sweden 2025" in Stockholm, organized by the Swedish National Heritage Board. Ulrika Söderström participated as an invited speaker (20–21 March 2025).

» Emily Hanscam gave a presentation on "Populism, identity politics, and the archaeology of Europe" at a Higher Research Seminar, Department of Political Science, Linnaeus University (2 April 2025).

» Cornelius Holtorf gave an invited talk on "The Climate Heritage Paradox" for ca 90 participants in the national conference Heritage Horizons: Pathways to the Future by the Heritage Council of Ireland, held in Dublin, Ireland (1 May 2025).

» Emily Hanscam co-organized the event Gender Equality in Academia: Picture a Scientist Film Screening and Panel in Kalmar and helped host a discussion panel on gender equality in science (6 May 2025).

» Anders Högberg presented the research programme InKuiS – Innovative Cultural Entrepreneurship in Collaborative Co-creative Research, including the future-related project Earth Logic Design, at a conference organised by the Småland Academy at Linnaeus University in Växjö (16 May 2025).

» Anders Högberg was invited as keynote speaker at the National Library of Sweden. The invitation came from their Department for Research and Collection Management, which hosted a joint staff day. Högberg presented his research on heritage processes as futures-making practices (May 2025).

» Emily Hanscam was an invited participant to 'Cross-Field Dialogues: Cultural Heritage and Civilization' in Aarhus, Denmark, contributing a paper: "Roman Origin Myths as Civilizational Narratives" in Aarhus, Denmark. The event brought together leading scholars to explore the critical intersections between heritage and civilisational analysis (19–20 June 2025).

» Emily Hanscam was a guest panelist for "after the PhD" at the retreat of the Cultural Sciences Department, Linnaeus University (21 August 2025).

The focus of Gustav Wollentz's presentation in Karlskrona in September 2024 was on how Strategic Foresight can benefit a sustainable development of a World Heritage Site. Examples were provided from the work that Gustav has been carrying out with ICCROM, where he has been working to anticipate futures for heritage.

The session organised and chaired by Cornelius Holtorf during the Building Better Futures Festival (preceding the UN Summit of the Future) in September 2024 explored the role of culture in anticipation and futures thinking. The discussion focused on why a global Pact for the Future should take culture seriously, what can be learned from transcultural futurisms, and how cultural heritage can serve as a tool for future-making.

Global Engagements

» Cornelius Holtorf attended an online symposium on "Nuclear Futures. Art, Speculation, Matter, Performance" arranged by Linköping University (11 September 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf took part in a meeting of the Pledge Network, promoting strong references to future generations and their interests in the UN Summit of the Futures in September 2024 in New York and its aftermath (12 September 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf attended the report launch of the project "The Nuclear Spaces: Communities, Materialities and Locations (NuSPACES)" featuring speakers Sam Alberti (National Museums Scotland) and Elizabeth Norton (NDA) addressing questions of nuclear cultural heritage, held at the Science Museum, London, and online (18 September 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf participated in a side-event to the UN Summit of the Future organised by the Culture 2030 Goal Campaign and entitled "No Future Without Culture: Reflecting and Imagining on the Place of Culture in Delivering the Past for the Future" (20 September 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf followed online selected parts of the Action Days preceding the UN Summit of the Future, featuring, among others António Guterres, General-Secretary of the United Nations, Gabriella Ramos, the UNESCO Assistant Director-General for the Social and Human Sciences, Mamphela Ramphela, the former Co-Director of the Club of Rome, and Kim Stanley Robinson, the author of The Ministry for the Future (20-21 September 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf had an informal meeting in Córdoba, Spain, with Matthias Ripp, World Heritage Coordinator of Regensburg (Germany) and OWHC Regional Division Representative, discussing future collaborations (24 September).

» Cornelius Holtorf contributed to a meeting of cirka 30 international experts and UNESCO staff finalising a UNESCO Guidance note on climate action for living heritage. The expert meeting was chaired by Fumiko Ohinata, Secretary of the UNESCO 2003 Convention and held digitally (25-26 September 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf had an informal meeting with Maria Wilenius, new Secretary-General, and Ellinor Hellberg, responsible for culture, Swedish National Commission for UNESCO, to discuss the renewal of our UNESCO Chair on Heritage Futures 2025-2029 (4 October 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf spent three days in AlUla in Saudi Arabia, on invitation of the Royal Commission for AlUla (RCU), to attend the AlUla World Archaeology Symposium 2024 (30 October – 1 November 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf had an informal meeting with Steven Hartman, Executive Director, UNESCO-MOST BRIDGES Coalition, about future collaborations and mutual endorsements (4 November 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf attended the Regional Consultation for Western Europe and North America in preparation for MONDIACULT 2025, held in Barcelona (one of three UNESCO Chairs participating), (21–22 November 2024).

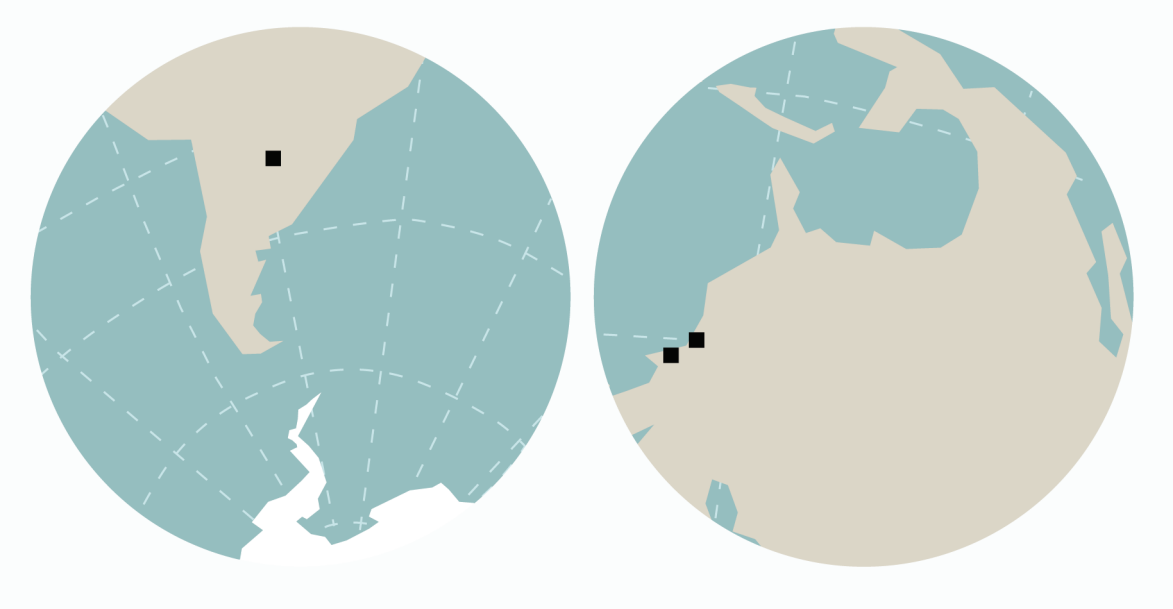
» Cornelius Holtorf held an informal meeting with Michael Münker of Milliongenerations Foundation in Utrecht, Netherlands, about future collaborations relating to global art and culture in relation to future generations (22 November 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf took part in the Transitional First Meeting of the Expert Group on Archiving and Awareness Preservation (EGAAP) of the Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) of the OECD (27 November 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf met with Emma Rydnér, co-ordinator of the Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland World Heritage property at the Municipality of Mörbylånga, Öland, to discuss intensified future collaboration (4 December 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf had an informal meeting on heritage futures with Nataliya Oboznenko, researcher, Lecturer in Marketing, and Academic Director at the Lviv Business School of the Ukrainian Catholic University (13 December 2024).

» Cornelius Holtorf took part in the first meeting of the Heritage and Climate Change Working Group of the ICOMOS International Scientific Committee on Interpretation and Presentation (ICIP) (14 January 2025).



» Cornelius Holtorf participated in a short survey on the illicit trafficking of cultural property, with a particular focus on its online dimension, shaping discussions at the upcoming UNESCO Conference "Addressing Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Property in the Digital Era" to be held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris on 26 June 2025 (15 February 2025).

» Cornelius Holtorf had an informal meeting with Ulrik Brandén, Deputy Mayor of Mörbylånga, Emma Rydnér, World Heritage Coordinator at Mörbylånga Municipality, and Örjan Molander, Director at Kalmar County Museum, on various ideas for collaboration regarding development of the UNESCO World Heritage property Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland (20 February 2025).

» Cornelius Holtorf took part in the regular meeting of the International Scientific Committee on AeroSpace Heritage of the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) which discussed, among others, the recent listing of the sites on the Moon on the World Monuments Watch List 2025 by the World Monuments Fund (21 February 2025).

» Cornelius Holtorf attended the 8th Annual Heritage Lecture of the Cambridge Heritage Research Centre on "Changing concepts of the Future and the 'Ethics of Repair'", given by Aleida Assmann, Professor of English Literature and General Literary Studies at Universität Konstanz (28 February 2025).

» Cornelius Holtorf had an informal meeting with Steven Hartman, Executive Director of the BRIDGES Sustainability Science Coalition in UNESCO's Management of Social Transformations Programme (MOST), on ways of future collaboration (7 March 2025).

» Cornelius Holtorf met with Shanti Morell-Hart of the Dept of Anthropology at Brown University in Providence, USA, for an informal conversation about seeds and heritage futures (14 March 2025).

» Cornelius Holtorf was as an invited speaker at the conference From Menageries, to Zoos, to Everything in Between: Can we Envision a New Breed of Zoos? held at Brown University in Providence, USA for ca 50 attending participants (15 March 2025).

» Cornelius Holtorf met in Providence, USA, with Philip Segadika of the National Museum of Botswana in Gaborone, Botswana, for an informal conversation about collaboration on heritage futures (16 March 2025).

» Cornelius Holtorf participated actively discussing heritage processes and futures literacy in the first Plenary Meeting of the Expert Group on Archiving and Awareness Preservation (EGAAP-1) of the Nuclear Energy Agency held online and at the OECD in Paris (19-20 March 2025).

» Cornelius Holtorf attended the Webinar "Archaeological Cultural Heritage in the UNESCO Mandate" organized by the Polish National Commission for UNESCO, the UNESCO-UNITWIN Network on Culture in Emergencies and the University of Poznan (4 April 2025).

» Cornelius Holtorf contributed to the written consultation of the Swedish Commission for UNESCO concerning Sweden's future collaboration with UNESCO (24 April 2025).

» Cornelius Holtorf participated in a webinar of the "The Path to MONDIACULT 2025" series which is part of the preparations for MONDIACULT 2025, the UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development (19 May 2025).

» Cornelius Holtorf contributed to a Consultation of the Heritage Adapts to Climate Alliance (HACA) on the UNFCCC process to develop indicators for measuring progress in adapting heritage sites and cultural practices to climate change (30 May 2025).

» Cornelius Holtorf attended digitally a High-level panel on future generations entitled "A Tribunal for Future Generations" held at the Hamburg Sustainability Conference 2025 and involving, among others, Guy Ryder (Under-Secretary-General, UN Executive Office) and Sophie Howe (The World's first Future Generations Commissioner for Wales) (2 June 2025).

» Cornelius Holtorf and Anders Högberg held an informal meeting on heritage processes and futures literacy with Dr Anselm Tiggemann of the BGE Bundesgesellschaft für Endlagerung in Berlin to discuss future collaborations (9 June 2025).

» Cornelius Holtorf attended digitally parts of The International Seminar on Heritage Interpretation and Presentation for Future Generations co-organized by the Institute of International Studies at Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan, the ICOMOS International Scientific Committee on Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites, and the Our World Heritage initiative (14 June 2025).

» Cornelius Holtorf arranged and participated in an exploratory meeting for future collaboration with Professor Tatsuyoshi Saijo, Kyoto University of Advanced Science (who has been developing Future Design) and Christine Kavazanjian, UNESCO Paris (representing UNESCO's unit on Foresight and Futures Literacy), (19 June 2025).

» Cornelius Holtorf took part in a meeting of the External Advisory Committee of the Flagship Initiative Transforming Cultural Heritage at the University of Heidelberg, Germany (20 June 2025).

» Cornelius Holtorf contributed to the ICOMOS questionnaire entitled "A Spot on the Horizon: Reflecting on the Future of the Heritage Field and ICOMOS' Role in It!" (1 August 2025).

» Cornelius Holtorf had an informal meeting with Dr Paulius Jurčys of the company Prifina about creating an AI twin for the Chair on Heritage Futures (20 August 2025).

Celebrating the renewal of the Chair for the period 2025–2029 in summer 2025 with a great view from the rooftop of the campus in Kalmar. From left Martin Gren, Emily Hanscam, Johan Höglund, Marije Miedema, Cornelius Holtorf, Gustav Wollentz, Marcy Rockman, Chris Allen and Ludvig Papmehl-Dufay.

The conference building for the AlUla World Archaeology Summit and Symposium (AWAS) is all in glass Maraya and located in the desert canyons of the Ashar Valley in AlUla, Saudi Arabia. Its mirror-clad exterior offers reflections of the surrounding desert and mountains. Cornelius Holtorf was invited by the Royal Commission for AlUla (RCU), to attend the AlUla World Archaeology Symposium 30 October – 1 November 2024). Photo Cornelius Holtorf

List of abbreviations

EGAAP - Expert Group on Archiving and Awareness Preservation (EGAAP) of the Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) of the OECD

ICCROM - International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property

ICH - Intanglible cultural heritage

ICOMOS - International Council on Monuments and Sites

MONDIACULT - The UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development

NEA - Nuclear Energy Agency

OECD - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

UN - United Nations

UNESCO - The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNESCO-MOST - UNESCO Management of Social Transformations Programme

UNFCCC - United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

UNITWIN - University Twinning and Networking Programme, networks for UNESCO Chairs

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