



# **TETR ARCHs**

**Transforming Data Reuse in Archaeology**

**Deliverable 6.4**

**Case Studies of Reuse**

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# Table of Contents

<b>Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1. Archaeology, Archives and Creativity: Creating a Collaboration</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 Phase 1: TETRARCHs Storytelling with Kingston University	4
1.2 Phase 2: Supermarket Ruins	5
1.3 Phase 3: Dissemination and Further Exploration	8
1.4 Phase 4: Online Exhibition	10
1.5 Acknowledgements	10
<b>2. Toumba Serron: AIR-Enabled Data Stewardship and Routes to Reuse</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1 Phase 1: Foundations - Workflow Optimisation and Data Consolidation (2023)	11
2.2 Phase 2: Broadening the Record - Multimodal Data and Stakeholder-Led Design (2024)	13
2.3 Phase 3: From Digital Infrastructure to Public-Facing Reuse (2025)	15
2.4 Acknowledgements	18

## Summary

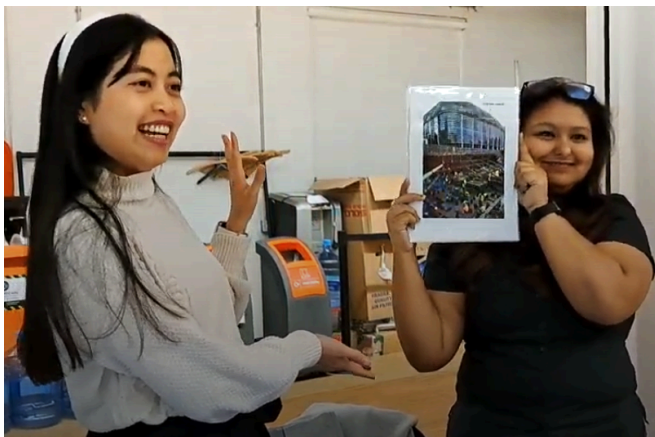
This Deliverable 6.4, titled *Case Studies of Reuse*, reports on two multi-phase case studies of archaeological data reuse, which took place during the TETRARCHs project. The first case study describes creative collaborations involving storytelling and poster design, as well as their dissemination via conference presentations and an online exhibition. The second case study describes reuse of data from the Toumba Serron exhibition, including community engagement and artistic interventions, facilitated through its dissemination via the AIR system.



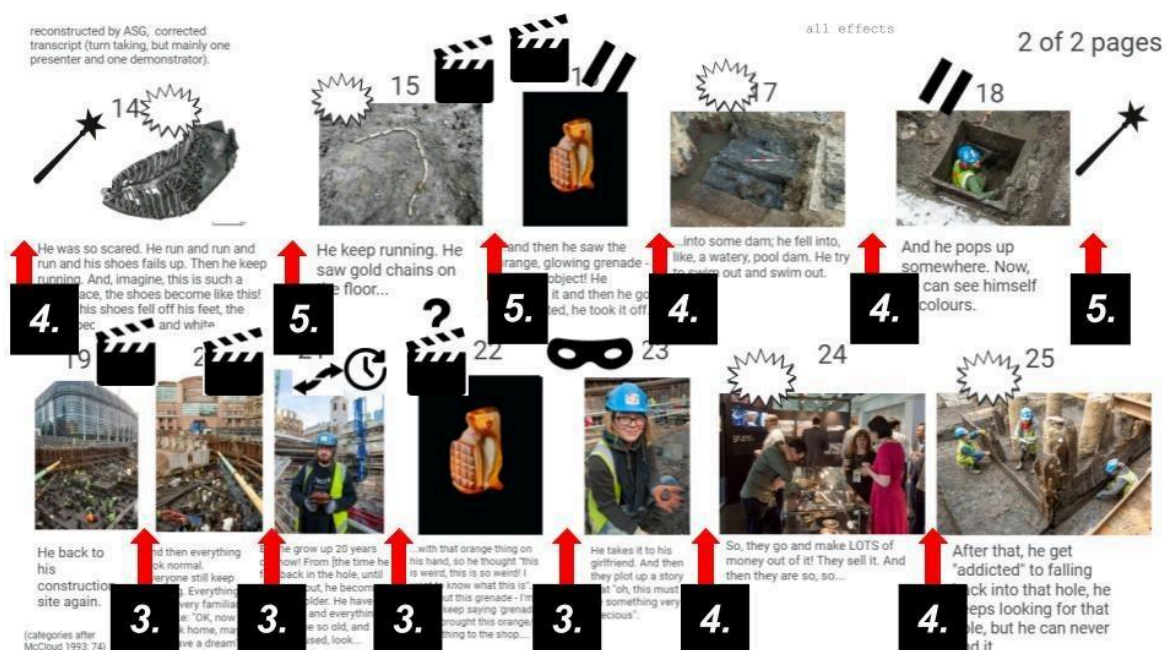
# 1. Archaeology, Archives and Creativity: Creating a Collaboration

## 1.1 Phase 1: TETRARCHs Storytelling with Kingston University

The UCL part of TETRARCHs (Perry, Simandiraki-Grimshaw) conducted a number of experiments with several cohorts of archaeologists and creative practitioners between May 2023 and May 2024, which involved the reuse of archival archaeological data to generate semi-structured storytelling activities and outputs. During this set of experiments (explored elsewhere in detail), Perry invited Dr. Helen Wickstead (Senior Lecturer in Museum Studies at Kingston University and founder and director of Recycle Archaeology) and her students at Kingston University, London, to participate in two experiments: a) one in early November 2023 at MOLA, where the students were directly involved in archaeological storytelling, b) a second one in late November 2023, at a Greater London primary school, where the students facilitated the workshop whose principal cohort was 11 year old pupils. The photographic archive used for these experiments was of the excavations of the London Mithraeum.



**Fig. 1:** Participants' narrative performance (Experiment 03, Activity #3). Photo credit: TETRARCHs 2023.



**Fig. 2:** Reconstituted part of a creative practitioners team storytelling output (annotated for analysis by the TETRARCHs team).



## 1.2 Phase 2: Supermarket Ruins

Following this collaboration, Dr. Wickstead introduced Laura Copsey (Senior Lecturer in Illustration Animation at Kingston School of Art) to Perry and Simandiraki-Grimshaw and it was agreed to pursue further archival reuse research. On this occasion, Copsey's Illustration and Animation students would be involved as the creative practitioners engaging with archives and transforming them into design outputs, while Wickstead's Museum and Gallery students would be involved as a cohort also utilising Recycle Archaeology materials. Recycle Archaeology, led by Dr Helen Wickstead, is a community archaeology project giving new life to archaeological finds that cannot find homes in museums. Each year, thousands of 'deselected' artefacts risk ending up in landfill. Recycle Archaeology repurposes them to promote meaningful public engagement.



**Fig. 3:** (L-R) Sara Perry, Laura Copsey and Helen Wickstead engaging with the Horse Fair excavation archives in July 2024. Photo by Anna Simandiraki-Grimshaw.

The four researchers were granted access to the archive of the 1980s excavation of the Horse Fair site (HOR) at Kingston-upon-Thames, London. The archive is held at Museum of London (MOL), where they were able to review and partly digitise some elements of the excavation's materials in July 2024.

In early Autumn 2024 at Kingston School of Art (KSA), they engaged students of [Illustration Animation](#) and [Museum and Gallery Studies](#) in the reuse of this archive. In the context of an annual KSA Illustration task called 'Brief Encounters', they focused on the topic of markets and place-making across the ages. Both Illustration and Museum Studies students were first asked to react to and create narratives with the archival sample that we provided, as well as to interact in the space where some of the original ruins are now preserved (the [FuseBox](#)), whilst also making use of relevant historical, market-related artefacts from Recycle Archaeology. At the next stage, having documented

their research process, the Illustration students created a series of posters directly or indirectly inspired by archival contents and conventions (not necessarily related to Horse Fair).



**Fig. 4:** Students engaging with copied samples of the Horse Fair archaeological archive, October 2024. Photo by Anna Simandiraki-Grimshaw.



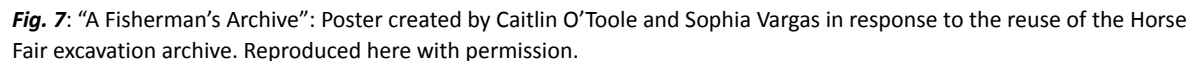
**Fig. 5:** Some of the (relocated) ruins of the Horse Fair site at the Fuse Box. Photo by Laura Copsey.





**KINGSTON  
UPON  
THAMES**

**Fig. 6: Pa**



‘Supermarket Ruins’ reimagined archaeological archives as living, collaborative and responsive entities, challenging us to consider not just what we keep, but how and why we keep it.

The creative responses by the students, which will be explored elsewhere in more detail, raised issues about ease of reuse, the role of materiality in engagement, copyright, accuracy versus creativity, the meaningful engagement with the locality of the archaeology and its archives etc.

### 1.3 Phase 3: Dissemination and Further Exploration

The four researchers, alongside Illustration students Caitlin O’Toole and Lizzie Joyce, presented their creative process and outputs in the paper ‘Supermarket Ruins: Archaeological Stories For Our Times’ at the International Illustration Research Symposium “Illustration & Heritage: Sharing Stories to Draw Out Futures”, at the Chelsea College of Art, University of the Arts, London, on 23 November 2024. After describing the case study, the presenters raised questions about how archaeology should create and reuse archives for the future:

**What if** content could only be deposited into an archive after undergoing a creative intervention?

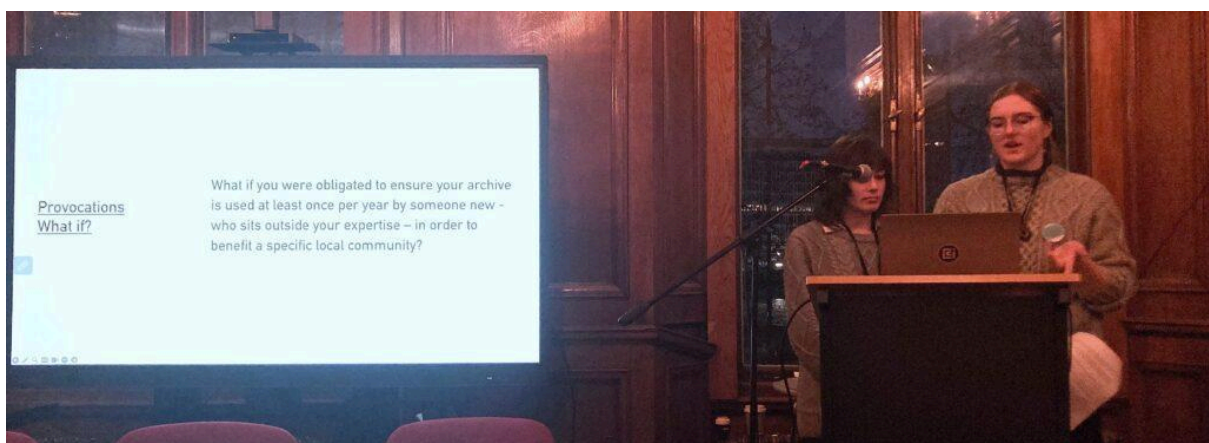
**What if** it was mandatory for every archive to be used at least once per year by someone new and unexpected – someone locally whose expertise extended beyond the obvious content of the archive?

**What if** every institution holding an archive employed a creative practitioner in-house, full-time to experiment with the potential of the archive? Could illustrators in residence, in the archival space, be at the heart of archaeological stewardship?

**What if** all archives were labelled with emotional responses rather than dehumanised codes? How would this improve access and support meaning making?

**What if** creative practices with historical records were regularly used to support new funding and investment decisions or to mediate conflicts between different organisations or individuals?

**What if** acts of data archiving and preservation were measured against their climate impacts? Could creative interventions help to mitigate these impacts?



**Fig. 8:** Caitlin O’Toole and Lizzie Joyce presenting during our November paper. Photo by Laura Copsey.





**Fig. 9:** Laura Copsey presenting during our November paper. Photo by Anna Simandiraki-Grimshaw.

The paper presentation was accompanied by an exhibition of the vast majority of the 'Supermarket Ruins' posters created by KSA Illustration students, within the larger conference exhibition. Completing the group's presence at the symposium were a small interactive exhibit with historical artefacts from Recycle Archaeology, facilitated by Helen Wickstead, as well as the handling of some of these artefacts by the audience during the paper. The exhibit consisted of museum boxes and activities by the Museum and Gallery students who had liaised with the Illustration students. Symposium participants praised the innovative approach of this research, as well as the interplay between visuality and materiality.



**Fig. 10:** The eight exhibited 'Brief Encounters' / 'Supermarket Ruins' posters at the symposium exhibition space. Photo by Laura Copsey.

The four researchers subsequently collaborated on the creation and submission of a short paper/photo-essay for the Journal of Illustration, where they succinctly presented the ‘Supermarket Ruins’ part of the overall collaboration.

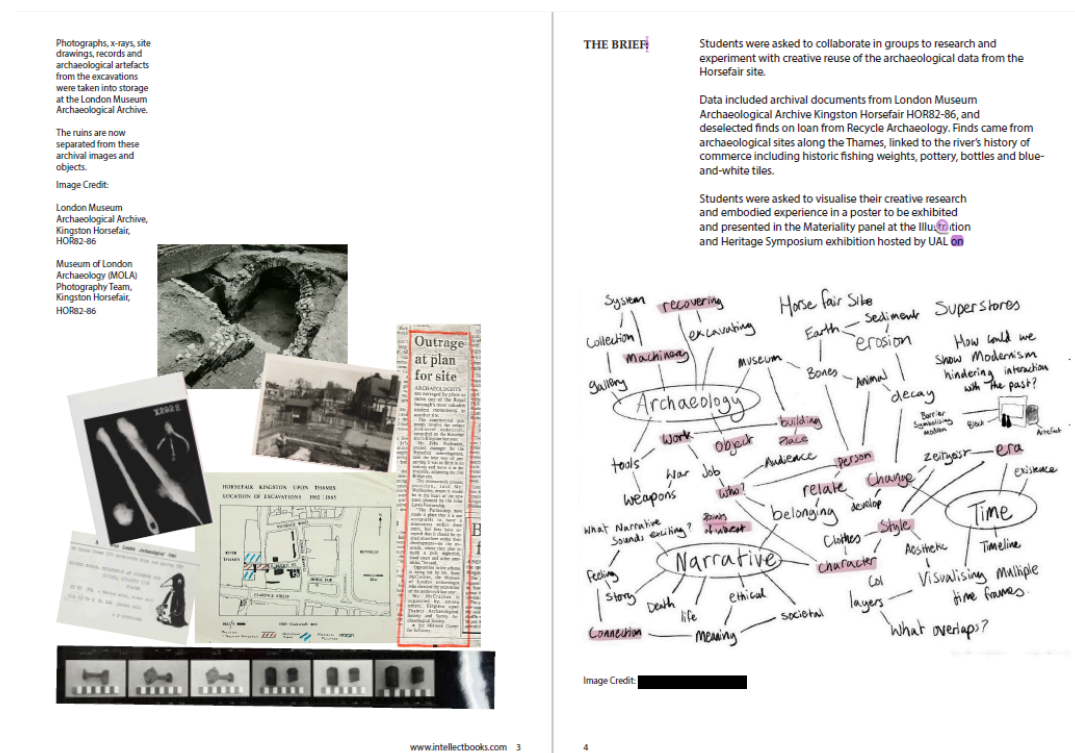


Fig. 11: Spread from the visual photo essay submitted to Jol.

## 1.4 Phase 4: Online Exhibition

The current phase of this exploration (October-November 2025) involves the collaboration between TETRARCHs members Lise Foket and Anna Simandiraki-Grimshaw, as well as UCL student Mackenzie Saunders, under the direction and supervision of Sara Perry. The overall purpose is to create an online exhibition which will involve some MOL archival materials, the Process documents and the finished posters of the KSA students in an interface powered by Omeka S and hosted on the TETRARCHs website. The aim is to showcase, in a user-friendly manner, that data reuse derived from archaeological archives is not only possible but can also inspire a wide range of professionals and communities.

## 1.5 Acknowledgements

We would like to thank MOL for access to the Horse Fair archives, especially Michol Stocco; Chiyana Ankhrah and Archie O'Neill at Fuse Box for access to the preserved ruins, as well as all the students whose work was exhibited: James Lucas, Billy Rai, Jasmine Tokoya, Selin Charlton, Matt Molloy, Daniel O'Malia, Oscar Roberts, Lizzie Joyce, Katie Mitchell, Jack O'Connor, Freddy Claridge, Caitlin O'Toole, Sophia Vargas, Cresson Wilson, Elouise Sutton, Wendy Wang, Sanson Xie, Molly Reid, Venus Bon, Kayal Karrupiah, Syd Nencini and Natasha Lynch.

## 2. Toumba Serron: AIR-Enabled Data Stewardship and Routes to Reuse

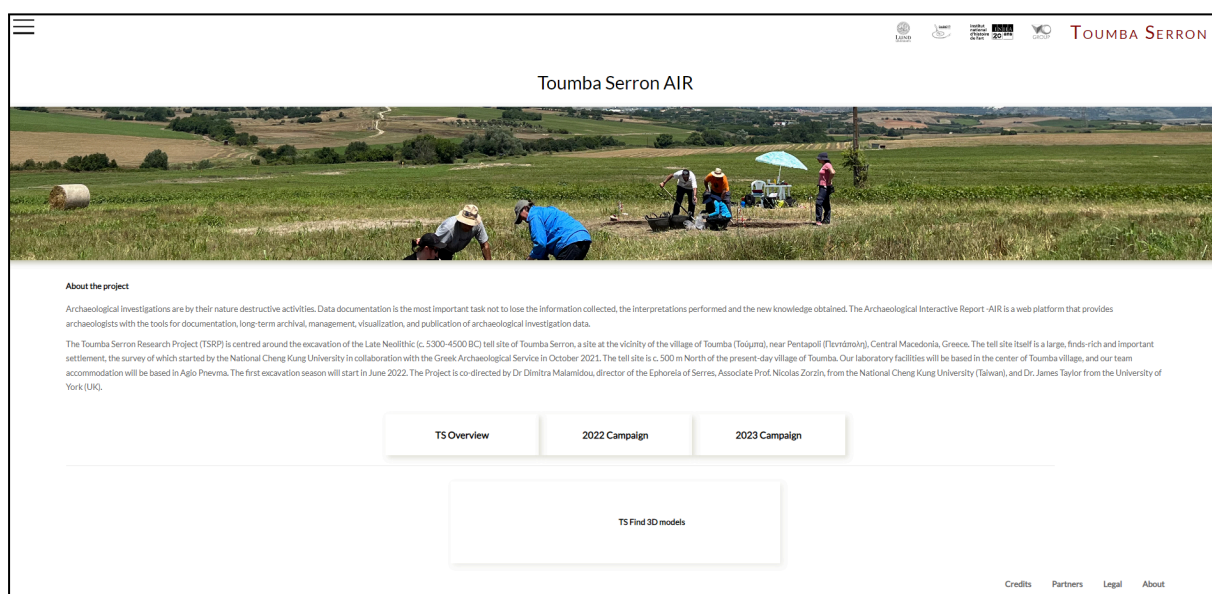
Toumba Serron is a Late Neolithic village site (c. 5300–4500 B.C.) in Central Macedonia, Greece, situated near the Strymon River - an important conduit between the northern Aegean and the Balkan hinterland. As the focus of the Toumba Serron Research Project (TSRP), the site provides a strong comparative platform for examining Neolithic material and social landscapes across the region.

Within TETRARCHs, Toumba Serron operated as a live case study for developing and testing methods that improve archaeological data stewardship and enable reuse - particularly reuse in forms of storytelling and community-facing interpretation. The case study has foregrounded two linked ambitions: (1) to optimise on-site digital recording workflows and consolidate datasets into an interoperable infrastructure, and (2) to identify, understand and support diverse stakeholders as (re)users of archaeological data, in ways that can contribute to more just and equitable narratives about the past.

At Toumba Serron, these ambitions have been pursued through the implementation and continued development of the Archaeological Interactive Report (AIR), integrated with 3D documentation and linked-data-driven dissemination infrastructures (including Omeka S). The work has been iterative across multiple seasons, enabling a “virtuous circle” in which field recording practices, data structures, stakeholder requirements, and creative reuse activities continually inform one another.

### 2.1 Phase 1: Foundations - Workflow Optimisation and Data Consolidation (2023)

In the 2023 season, TETRARCHs activity at Toumba Serron focused on establishing a reliable and scalable digital recording workflow and consolidating datasets collected in earlier work (including the 2022 season, which required retrospective integration into the emerging system). The primary goal was to ensure that excavation data (3D models, contexts, artefacts and associated documentation) could be captured consistently, enriched with adequate metadata, and made legible for reuse within and beyond the excavation team.



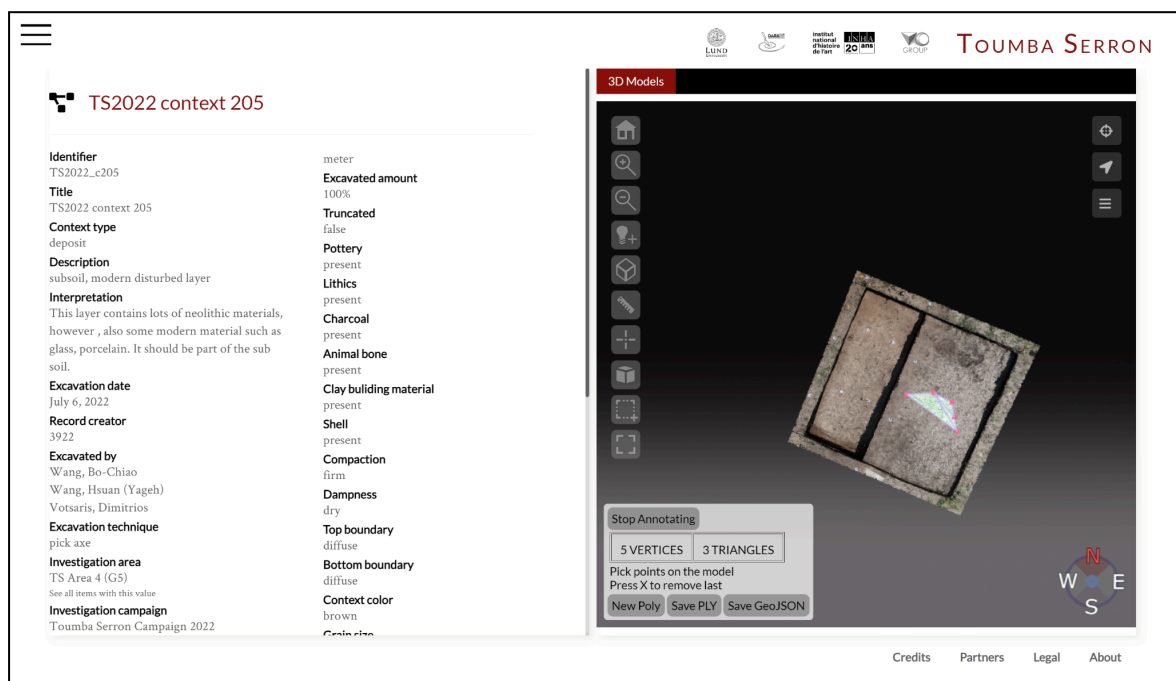
**Fig. 12:** Screenshot of the Toumba Serron Research Project AIR landing page. Courtesy of Paola Derudas.



A central element of this phase was the integration and customisation of AIR for Toumba Serron’s requirements and stakeholder environment. A review of AIR’s data model supported tailoring to local recording needs and to the immediate stakeholder landscape, which at this stage included archaeologists as domain specialists and the Ephorate as custodian of the site, among others. Prior to excavation, campaign- and area-specific database structures were created to ensure an orderly recording environment from the outset. During fieldwork, archaeologists documented in AIR daily, using unique identifiers to maintain traceability between contexts, 3D datasets, and finds.

This phase also established the project’s baseline 3D workflow. Contexts were documented through image-based modelling, processed in Agisoft Metashape, geo-referenced, and prepared for online visualisation through AIR (via 3DHOP). Graphical annotation tools were employed to increase interpretative clarity by linking observations directly to corresponding 3D representations. Artefact registration workflows were streamlined through structured spreadsheets and controlled import into Omeka S via CSV modules, supported by semantic mapping checks to maintain consistency.

Although this phase primarily served internal project needs, it also clarified early reuse pathways: for example, 3D sequences and AIR visualisations could support knowledge transfer between trench teams and off-site researchers, and potentially provide accessible materials for TSRP’s ethnographic work and community engagement.



**Fig. 13:** Digitising a context into AIR, with 3D model and single-context record visible. Courtesy of Paola Derudas.

## 2.2 Phase 2: Broadening the Record - Multimodal Data and Stakeholder-Led Design (2024)

In 2024, the Toumba Serron case study broadened in two ways: (1) AIR development continued with expanded data types and refined workflows, and (2) stakeholder evaluation moved from mapping and characterisation towards direct engagement activities and early testing of reuse-oriented approaches.

### Continued optimisation of data management

AIR remained the central hub for field documentation and data access, with further customisations aligned to Toumba Serron's evolving needs. A key enhancement was the integration of **audio and video support**, enabling richer multimedia documentation alongside 3D models and text. This extended the project's capacity to capture dimensions of excavation work that are often excluded from conventional recording—supporting TETRARCHs' interest in how data structures shape what can later be reused, narrated, or reinterpreted.

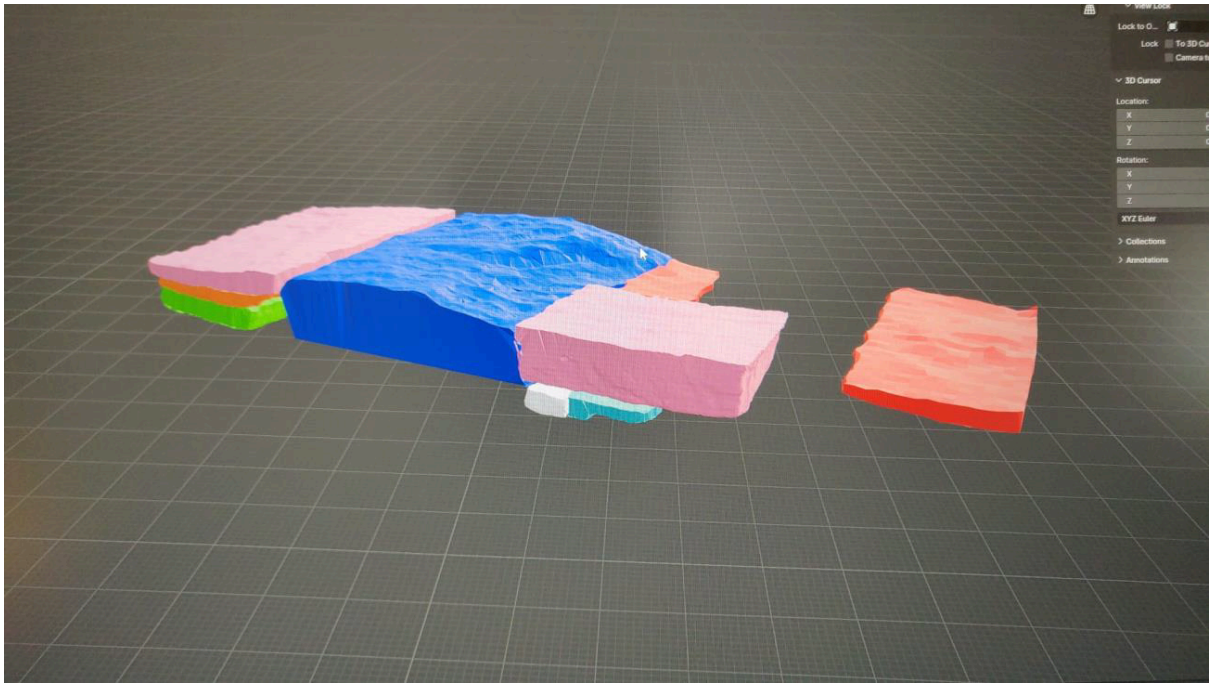
During this season, a robust workflow for generating 3D volumetrics of stratigraphic layers was developed and implemented, strengthening spatial precision and providing new analytical and communicative possibilities (including comparative volumetric interpretation across contexts). Throughout, the consistent use of identifiers and daily documentation supported dataset coherence and reduced fragmentation across platforms.

### Innovative workflow interventions: sensory and emotive metadata

Alongside technical optimisation, the 2024 season included experimental interventions designed to test how “non-traditional” metadata might support future reuse—especially storytelling and community-oriented interpretation. These included:

- **Alternative/creative descriptive labels** to supplement conventional artefact terminology, encouraging interpretive flexibility and emotional connection;
- **Ambient sound recordings**, capturing brief sound clips to extend the record beyond the visual;
- **Emotive photo tagging**, enabling team members to document subjective reactions and reflections tied to images and moments of excavation.

These interventions were implemented pragmatically and selectively, and were not fully successful in operational terms due to constraints on time, staffing capacity and field conditions as well as overarching institutional constraints. Nonetheless, they functioned as productive methodological probes: they revealed where additional guidance, tooling, and resourcing would be required for consistent capture, and they clarified which aspects of sensory and emotive documentation were most likely to support later reuse. In this way, the 2024 trials directly informed TETRARCHs' ability to pursue and test similar lines of enquiry in other contexts with fewer constraints, including the 2025 intervention at Tharros.



**Fig. 14:** 3D volumetric models of stratigraphic contexts prepared for integration into AIR. Credit: Benedict Dyson/TSRP.

### **Stakeholder evaluation and community engagement**

Stakeholder evaluation progressed substantially in 2024 through close collaboration with TSRP's ethnographer (Ioanna Antoniadou) and through locally anchored engagement work. Led by Despoina Sampatakou with James Taylor and colleagues, activities included reviewing existing research to avoid duplication, analysing demographic and organisational contexts, and identifying stakeholder groups relevant to Toumba Serron's heritage futures. Identified stakeholders included local schools, tourism and training institutes, community organisations, local media, and residents.

In parallel, Sara Perry and Anna Simandiraki-Grimshaw conducted site tours and workshops with selected local groups (including a school and a flying club), using storytelling prompts and heritage interpretation activities to test routes by which excavation data might become meaningful beyond the trench. Analysis of these engagements remains ongoing, but early indications suggested strong interest in educational programming, visitor experience development, and collaborative creative initiatives that strengthen local cultural identity.

### 2.3 Phase 3: From Digital Infrastructure to Public-Facing Reuse (2025)

The 2025 season demonstrated the increasing maturity of Toumba Serron's TETRARCHs-aligned workflows and provided a platform for observing how technical data stewardship and creative reuse can operate as mutually reinforcing practices.

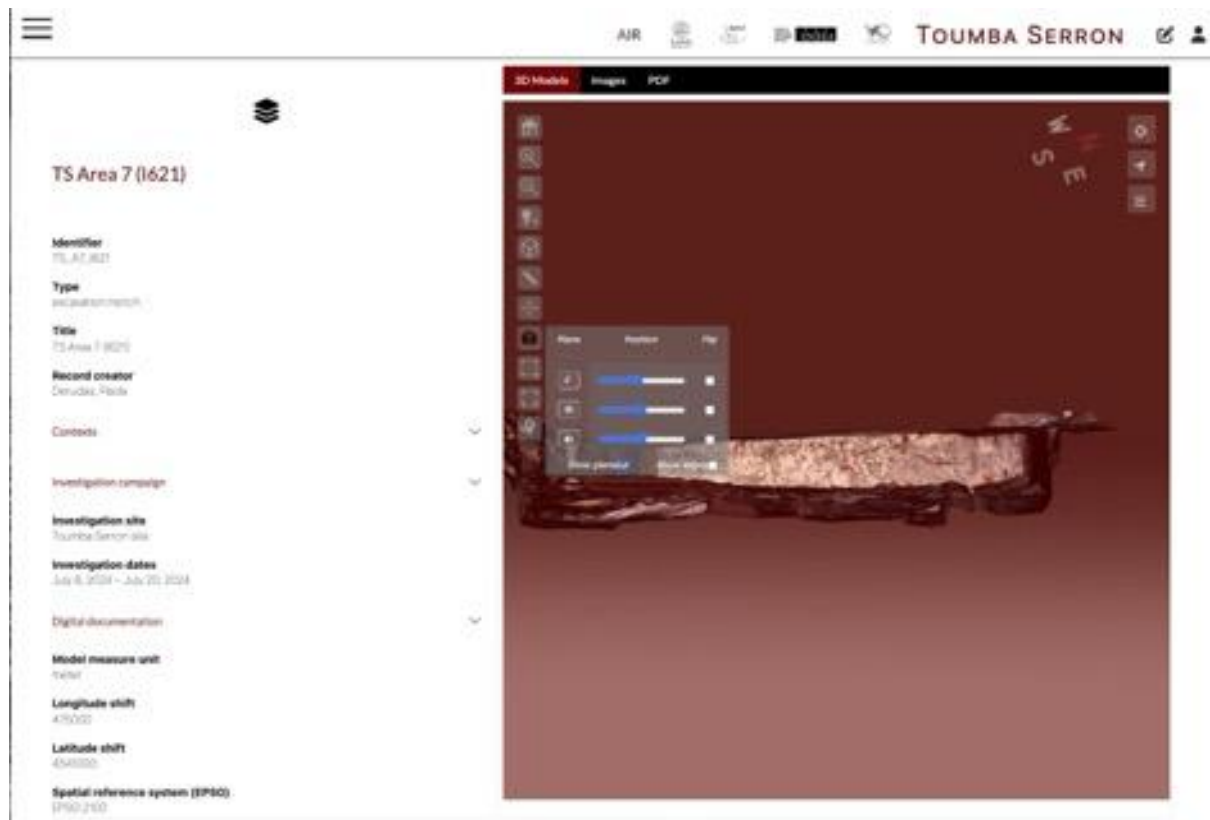


**Fig. 15:** Digital recording on site at sunrise. Photograph by James Taylor.

#### **AIR as a stable platform for legible, reusable excavation data**

Building on earlier optimisation, AIR continued to function as the project's integrated point of access for contexts, 3D documentation, and associated records. Image-based modelling continued for all contexts, with processing pipelines refined to support efficient browser-based visualisation (including use of nexus (.nxz) conversion formats). Annotation tools remained central for linking interpretative observations to visual material, and work progressed towards exporting annotated contexts as GeoJSON for integration within the project's GIS - supporting cross-platform analysis and future packaging of outputs.

Artefact registration workflows continued to rely on structured spreadsheet capture and controlled CSV import into Omeka S, with semantic checks maintaining consistency and interoperability. These practices support not only internal coherence but also longer-term ambitions for generating GIS-ready, archive-ready, and infrastructure-ready outputs (including future integration pathways that require significant lead-in time). Currently the AIR-based data is being optimised for systematic output into a synergistic intra-site GIS, further highlighting the data's interoperability. The interim reporting of the project is also being integrated into the AIR system.



**Fig. 16:** Cross-section of trench I621 in AIR, showing linked context records and 3D visualisation. Courtesy of Paola Derudas.

### Creative practice as data reuse: community-centred interpretation

Crucially, 2025 was also the season in which creative practice became highly visible as a mode of archaeological data reuse at Toumba Serron. Facilitated by Colleen Morgan and informed by stakeholder evaluation work undertaken in 2024, two TETRARCHs creative practitioner projects developed from site data, field experiences, and local conversations were finalised, presented, and disseminated in ways that enabled new audiences to encounter and reinterpret the excavation.

- Eloise Moody's** *ALL OF IT HAPPENED AND SOME OF IT'S TRUE* and *Breaking Bread*, Toumba mobilised excavation experience and structured conversations with archaeologists to create an affective “archive of sorts” focused on archaeological labour, identity, and time. The work combined a materially embedded gesture (the burial of a hand-stitched embroidered geotextile within the trench at season’s end) with a village-facing bread collaboration in which small artist booklets containing excavation information and curated questions were baked into loaves sold locally. Here, reuse operates not as dissemination of “facts” but as reactivation of archaeological work through intimate prompts and social encounter.





**Fig. 17:** Unfolding ALL OF IT HAPPENED AND SOME OF IT'S TRUE on site before burial.



**Fig. 18:** Breaking Bread, Toumba — bespoke loaves produced with local bakers.

- **Chloé Dierckx's** *Sunrises* translated artefacts, excavation narratives, and village doorstep conversations into a tarot-inspired card deck designed to be reshuffled and recombined. The deck operates as a flexible storytelling device: it can circulate beyond the trench, it invites non-linear interpretations, and it materialises relationships between present lives and archaeological traces. In reuse terms, the work demonstrates how archaeological datasets can become generative prompts - capable of supporting multiple narratives rather than closing interpretation down.



**Fig. 19:** Chloé Dierckx with the *Sunrises* deck. Photograph by Colleen Morgan.

Early responses from residents and project members suggested that these creative outputs helped scaffold new conversations about the value and purpose of the excavation, and created low-threshold ways to participate in archaeological meaning-making. Importantly, the season also suggested that creative practice and digital workflows need not run as parallel strands but can run synergetically.

## 2.4 Acknowledgements

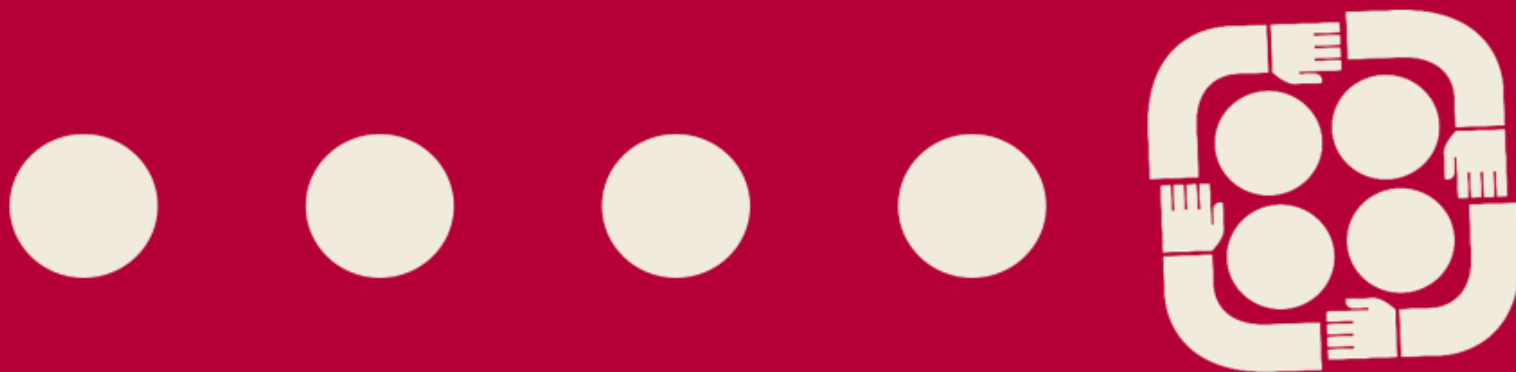
We would like to thank the Greek Ephorate and the British School at Athens for their support and stewardship, the Toumba Serron community for their engagement and generosity, and all members of the TSRP and TETRARCHs teams who contributed to field recording, data integration, stakeholder evaluation, and creative programme delivery across the 2023–2025 seasons. Particular thanks are due to Ioanna Antoniadou for ethnographic collaboration, to Despoina Sampatakou for leadership on stakeholder evaluation work, and to Eloise Moody and Chloé Dierckx for their sustained and locally grounded creative interventions.



**TETRARCHs is making archaeological data accessible to a wider range of people.**

The project explores how data from excavations and post-excavation research can be used and reused for educational, creative, and other life-enriching purposes. We work collaboratively across a variety of communities to experiment with storytelling about the past.

-  For heritage professionals, we create new resources for developing and measuring the effectiveness of archaeological data for storytelling.
-  For memory institutions like museums and cultural centres, we create reference materials to support you using these new resources for storytelling.
-  For creatives and local citizens, we will create a platform where you can search for and experiment with storytelling about the past.



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