

LEIZA Journal of Archaeology (LJA)-Information and policies

About the Journal

LEIZA Journal of Archaeology is a peer-reviewed journal of world archaeology, established in 2026 by the Leibniz-Zentrum für Archäologie (LEIZA) to deal with the understanding of humans and their biological, social, cultural and economic development from paleolithic till medieval times, covering Europe, Africa and Asia from roughly the 25th northern latitude upwards, but not exclusively. With this chronological and geographical approach, we purposely adhere to a broad definition of the “Old World”, which has been the focus of LEIZA since its establishment as the Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum (RGZM) in 1852.

LJA publishes articles that study human behaviour and action, and their incentives and constraints, against the background of communities and environments. Contributions should advance our comprehension of people both as individuals and as members of the human species, functioning and evolving within complex systems. Papers are welcome to engage with any of these themes on different levels, from site-, area- and period-specific analyses to broader diachronic, multi-regional or comparative studies. LJA is especially interested in papers that address topics and questions of broad significance, and that have the potential to shape global debates, able to enlighten the past, inform the present and shape the future.

The journal aims explicitly to promote interdisciplinary discourse, and to build bridges between archaeological and other (sub)fields. Both qualitative and quantitative studies, theoretical and methodological contributions, as well as the results from archaeological fieldwork projects, laboratory analyses and experiments are accepted, as long as they engage with any of the core themes of the journal. Scholars and teams, whose research combines various data and methods, or relies on hard science approaches to address key archaeological questions and debates, are especially encouraged to submit their work.

LJA distinctly offers the opportunity to publish and discuss research in greater detail and with high-quality illustrations, with the possibility to include elaborate tables and other datasets as supplementary materials. Besides research papers, LJA also publishes longer review papers, and shorter discussions, news and comments. A more detailed description of these categories can be found under ‘Submission’. LJA only publishes in English.

LJA is an online journal, with articles published in HTML and formatted PDFs. After an initial editorial assessment, submissions are subjected to a double-blind peer-review process. Once accepted, articles are immediately published in their definite online format and assigned to an issue at the end of the calendar year. The workflow from submission to publication takes about 3 months and is entirely handled via [OJS](#), the Open Journal Systems software at Heidelberg University Library. Further information on the submission process and author guidelines can be found under below, under [Submissions](#).

Why Choose LJA?

Choosing to publish your next work in LJA means:

- Publishing in the flagship journal of **LEIZA** (Leibniz-Zentrum für Archäologie), the second biggest archaeological research institute in Germany and an internationally acclaimed centre of scientific excellence.
- Getting a platform to publish and discuss your research in great detail and with high-quality illustrations, and with the possibility to include elaborate tables and other datasets as supplementary materials; all in an enhanced online publication format. This aligns with LEIZA's policy to promote research transparency, as well as citation, reuse and replication of research data.
- Benefitting from a high-standard, double blind peer-review process, and a smooth and transparent online submission-to-publication workflow in OJS. LJA aims to publish accepted papers within three months after submission.
- Publishing your work as Diamond Open Access, with all articles free of charge for authors and readers, and perpetually available under an open access-compliant license (CC BY-SA 4.0). Authors retain full copyright of their original work. With DOA, LJA explicitly wants to contribute to greater fairness in the publication system.
- Granting your work, via DOA, greater discoverability and visibility, more views and citations, and ultimately more impact. Papers will also be actively promoted via our networks as well as targeted outreach via social media and other communication channels.

Editorial Board

LJA is committed to the highest level of academic excellence, and the international Editorial Board ensures the scientific orientation, quality and integrity of the journal. The Editorial Board consists of leading scholars whose scientific expertise reflects the journal's scope and coverage. The members of the Editorial Board support the journal by soliciting articles, identifying new topics, advising on the direction of the journal, and by providing feedback on previous issues. They also help to identify reviewers, as well as provide further assessment in the event of conflicts between reviewers. They do not receive any remuneration for their work. The members of the Editorial Board are appointed for an initial term of four years. The members of the LEIZA Board of Directors are not part of the Editorial Board.

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Submissions

Submissions are to be sent to leizajournalofarchaeology@leiza.de or lja@leiza.de.

Submissions should fall within one of the following five categories:

Research papers (≤ 20,000 words* + illustrations): Research papers offer the opportunity to publish research in great detail, and with ample room for addressing its meaning and implications for the discipline and beyond. Large datasets and other supplementary materials that underpin the research presented, are much welcome.

Review papers (≤ 20,000 words* + illustrations): Review papers provide syntheses or comprehensive overviews of specific themes and topics, focusing on open questions and future research directions. Reviews that, in addition, strengthen connections between (sub)disciplines and/or foster knowledge gain about non-English and often difficult-to-access work are of particular interest to LJA. LJA does not publish book reviews or book chronicles.

Discussions (≤ 5,000 words* + illustrations): Discussions are short, thematic or conceptual contributions that highlight current views and debates, and indicate potential research perspectives in the field. Up to five responses and a concluding statement will be accepted for each discussion. A discussion paper may be accompanied by illustrations, but the responses and concluding statement generally are not.

Comments (≤ 2,000 words*): Comments are concise and focused texts that refer to, and provide impulses for ongoing research debates.

News (≤ 2,500 words* + illustrations): News items are timely and accessible updates, meant to highlight outstanding new discoveries and interim results of ongoing projects. These include reports from the fields of Restoration and Conservation, Digital Humanities and Heritage. The potential impact on our understanding of human beings in the past must be clear. This section also features policy briefs—concise, evidence-based papers that translate research into clear and practical recommendations for decision-makers and stakeholders.

* The word limits for each contribution category refer to all sections of the manuscript, including the bibliography.

All submissions are subject to double-blind peer-review.

If you have doubts on the suitability of your contribution within this classification, or on the general fitness of your work within the scope of LJA, please contact the Managing Editor dimitri.vanlimbergen@leiza.de before submission.

Manuscripts can only be submitted in English. LJA follows UK spelling. If English is not your native language, please ensure that the text has been professionally proofread before initial submission.

In view of the anonymity of the peer-review process, all author addresses and contact details (e-mail) and, if applicable, ORCID and other common researcher identifiers, need to be submitted in a separate word file. Any acknowledgments or funding sources should also be mentioned here, and not in the manuscript file. Make sure to acknowledge funding according to the policies of the funding body.

In case of a submission with multiple authors, a corresponding author is to be indicated. The corresponding author is considered authorized to act on behalf of all contributors. He/she takes care of manuscript submission, proofreading, correction and revision until its final acceptance, and is responsible for all communication pre- and post-publication. The corresponding author also provides information on the respective contributions of all co-authors according to the [CRediT](#) (Contributor Roles) taxonomy. The corresponding author and the first author of a submission do not have to be the same person.

Submission Preparation Checklist

The (corresponding) author is required to check whether the submission complies with all of the following items. Submissions that do not adhere to these guidelines may be returned.

- LJA submissions must not have been published elsewhere, or be under active consideration with any other journals.
- Check the open access policy of your institution before submitting your paper.
- Please ensure that your text (references included) does not exceed the maximum word limits for LJA contributions.
- Please ensure that all parts of the contribution are submitted in the correct file format(s) (*.docx, *.odt, *.rtf, *.xlsx, *.tif, *.jpg, *.psd, *.ai, etc.).
- Please ensure that the text is formatted correctly and follows the stylistic and bibliographic guidelines outlined in the [Submission](#) section.
- Please make sure that your manuscript meets all accessibility requirements (see [Submission](#) guidelines).
- Please include an AI use statement in your manuscript, if applicable.

- Please provide a summary of ca. 150 words in the manuscript word file. Ensure that the summary reflects well the content and outcome(s) of your paper, as it will be used to initially select and invite suitable reviewers.
- Please provide up to ten keywords, and 3 to 5 highlights (as bullet points) in the main world file. Think carefully about keywords and highlights, as these will much contribute to the discoverability of your paper in search engines.
- Please provide figures, graphics, tables, datasets, supplementary materials and multimedia content as separate files. If necessary, Indicate desired print size and layout for illustrations.
- Please provide all author addresses and contact details, ORCIDs or other common research identifiers, authorship and respective contribution information, as well as acknowledgements and funding sources, in a separate word file. Make sure to acknowledge funding according to the policies of the funding body.
- In case of a multi-author submission, please provide information on the respective contributions of all co-authors according to [CRediT](#) (Contributor Roles).
- On acceptance, please provide permissions for the use and publication of images and materials in LJA, if applicable.
- Please include a declaration of consent for publication in open access licence CC BY-SA 4.0. Form available from the ME dimitri.vanlimbergen@leiza.de.

Peer Review

The quality of LJA is guaranteed by a rigorous double-blind peer-review process, meaning that both authors and reviewers remain anonymous to each other at all stages in the submission process. All submissions are first considered by the Managing Editor. Suitable articles are assessed by at least two expert reviewers. Potential reviewers are identified with the help of the Editorial Board members, who provide further expert judgement in case of conflict between reviewers. Reviewers are requested to comment on the article's scientific and wider appeal, originality, the strength of method and argument, as well as the level of its engagement with the journal's core themes. The final decision on acceptance or rejection lies with the Managing Editor, whose verdict is final. Resubmissions with minor revisions are only checked by the editorial team; those with major revisions are subjected to further peer-review before going into production.

LJA aims to ensure full objectivity and integrity in the peer-review process. Manuscripts are evaluated solely for their intellectual merit, regardless of the nationality, age, ethnicity, race, gender, political beliefs or religion of the author. The Managing Editor bears overall responsibility for guaranteeing the independence of authors, reviewers and Editorial Board members throughout the process. All reasonable measures are taken to avoid conflicts of interest, and reviewers are selected only based on expertise and independence from the authors. Manuscripts submitted by authors affiliated with LEIZA are handled and reviewed exclusively by EB members and reviewers with no institutional ties to LEIZA.

LJA recognizes the essential contribution of peer-review in publishing scholarly research, and reviewers are paid an honorarium for their work. In return, we expect

reviewers to hand in their reports on time and to maintain high standards of professional conduct. We consider peer-review as a core scientific activity, and reviewers are not allowed to use Generative AI or AI-assisted technologies in their assessment, nor upload a manuscript or a report into a generative AI-tool, for reasons of confidentiality and data protection. More information on the use of AI-tools can be found in the [AI Policy](#) section of the journal.

How to Increase the Discoverability of your Paper (pre-Publication)

In addition to the benefits of DOA in terms of visibility and impact, authors themselves can further contribute to the discoverability of their paper in an increasingly saturated and competitive publishing landscape. The most effective way to ensure that your paper is easily discoverable is to work on Search Engine Optimization (SEO). Most readers today will find your paper through search engines like Google, Bing, Yahoo and Baidu (Chinese-language world), which is why it makes sense to optimize your paper as to appear more easily in the first page(s) of search engine results. Some useful actions include:

- Thinking carefully and purposefully about keywords and highlights; highlights should be short bullet points and focus on the key takeaways of your work, the methods and approaches applied, and its main results. Do not aim to cover all aspects of the paper in your highlights, but list them as part of an elevator pitch.
- Making your paper title engaging yet descriptive, simple and short; use keywords and phrases that closely reflect the core of your research; consider stating its main result(s) in the title.
- Presenting a carefully formulated and structured abstract; focus on key elements of your work, stress and repeat keywords and phrases in a natural way, but keep your text concise and to the point; avoid overly technical jargon and complex details; place the most important aspects early on in your abstract, as many search engines tend to display only the first sentences of a summary.
- More inspiration and ideas can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

How to Promote and Share your Work (post-Publication)

LJA encourages its authors to share their published paper to maximize the impact of their work. They can freely (re)use their work themselves, or have it used by third parties, e.g. to publish the work elsewhere. They are free to promote and share their work anywhere at any time, including on their own homepage or social media profiles, or via non-commercial hosting platforms, including their institutional repository, given that they provide the DOI link to the original formal publication on the heiVIEWER platform. Below you can find a number of suggestions for further self-promotion and sharing.

- Contact the press office of your institution to maximize the coverage of your work in the media.
- Inform your colleagues by personal email and/or subject specific mailing lists. You may also add a link to the publication in your e-mail signature.

- Make sure that your published paper is added to your ORCID account and/or your institutional bibliography webpage. Don't forget to DOI-link directly to the original paper on the heiVIEWER platform.
- Use social media such as BlueSky, X, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn to promote your work. Include a photo or video to grab attention, and tag your institution and co-authors to stimulate wider dissemination.

Journal Policies

Open Access and Data (Re-)Use

LJA follows the Open Access policy of the Leibniz Association and adheres to the principles of the ["Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities"](#) and the ["Leibniz Association Open Access Policy"](#).

LJA is published as Diamond Open Access, which means that no fees are charged to either authors or readers (no article processing charges, nor subscription costs), and articles will be immediately and permanently free for everyone to read, download, copy and distribute. LJA papers are published under the Open-Access compliant Creative Commons CC BY-SA 4.0 licence, to reduce copyright barriers for the free circulation of ideas and the dissemination of scientific results. When using external materials (e.g., images, graphs, etc.), it is the responsibility of the individual authors to ensure that the necessary copyrights have been obtained under this license. The license allows users to distribute, remix, adapt, and build upon the material in any medium or format, including extracts and abstracts and any commercial use, as long as proper attribution is given to the creator(s). This means that anyone can re-use and redistribute the content of LJA in new or derivative works (including also translations), provided they give credit and visibility to the original author(s), with a DOI link to the original publication and a link to the license, and with indication of any changes in content. The authors retain the copyright of their work.

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With DOA, LJA explicitly wants to contribute to greater fairness in the publication system, providing all scholars with the opportunity to publish their work in a way that guarantees more visibility, more citations, and ultimately more impact; all while adhering to rigorous double-blind peer-review standards.

The provision and (re-)use of the data published in LJA are regulated in cooperation with Heidelberg University Library via its [HeiDATA platform](#), an institutional repository for Open Research Data that is a partner of [NFDI4Objects](#), a multidisciplinary consortium within the [National Research Data Infrastructure](#) (NFDI) for the material heritage of three million years of human and environmental history.

For further questions on Open Access, authors' rights and copyrights, and the (re-)use of data, please contact the Managing Editor dimitri.vanlimbergen@leiza.de.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

LJA recognizes the growing use of Generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in scientific research and publishing. In general, authors are allowed to use AI tools responsibly in the preparation of their contribution, but the following conditions and regulations apply:

- Authors remain solely accountable for the content, accuracy and integrity of their work. AI tools cannot take full responsibility in these matters, and they cannot be considered as authors.
- AI tools cannot be used as a substitute for human critical thinking. The manuscript must be the fruit of the authors' own ideas, analyses, interpretations, insights and reconstructions.
- AI tools cannot be used to generate or modify images, graphics, artworks, videos and other multimedia files, unless these are part of the argument of the paper. An exception is made for basic image enhancements such as upscaling, denoising, colour correction, and sharpening, etc., which are allowed without declaration.
- If AI tools are part of the research design or methods applied, their use must be declared in a detailed and reproducible way, including the name (and if applicable, version) of the AI tool(s) used and the prompt(s) applied to generate the results. The reasons for their use must also be clearly explicated and justified.
- The use of LLM (Large Language Models) or other AI tools for purposes of copy-editing and proofreading—i.e., refining, correcting, editing or formatting manuscripts to improve clarity of language and argument, or to eliminate errors in grammar and spelling—is permitted and does not have to be declared.

If AI tools are used, authors need to:

- Carefully check the terms and conditions of any AI (or other) tool used, to ensure that 1) they do not grant the tool any other rights—including using their inputs and data, as well as the generated materials for AI training—than those connected with the specific service provided to them; 2) there are no restrictions in the use of the AI-generated output in their publications; and 3) the privacy and confidentiality of all data and input (and hence of their unpublished manuscript) are maintained.
- Include upon their first submission an AI use statement in the manuscript, placed in a separate section at the end of the text, before the bibliography. Any suspected breach of our AI policy will be discussed with the submitting party and, depending on the severity of the case, may cause the submission to become retracted.

For more information and questions on the use of AI in writing and publishing, and in relation to research integrity, further guidance can be found [here](#) or [here](#) (download). Prospective authors are always welcome to discuss specific issues with the ME.

As AI technologies are expected to change rapidly and profoundly in the near future, we will regularly review and adapt our AI policy.

Archiving

LJA is hosted on the online heiVIEWER platform of Heidelberg University. The institution is an official collaborator of LJA and guarantees the long-term and sustainable archiving of all articles and related content (research datasets, supplementary materials, images, videos, audio files, tables, graphics, etc.) through the [heiDATA](#) institutional repository and [heiARCHIVE](#). LJA considers long-term archiving of publications and research data central to good academic practice. It is necessary for the fundamental accountability of research findings that are based on the respective data. Furthermore, archiving makes it possible for the data and output to be used in future research projects. For more information, see the section on the handling of datasets, supplementary materials and multimedia files under [Submissions](#).

Ethics

LJA is committed to the highest standards in research and publishing ethics, and all contributions must comply with the "[Leibniz Code of Good Scientific Practice](#)" adopted by the General Assembly of the Leibniz Association on 18 November 2021. The submitting party is responsible to ensure that all authors involved in a contribution comply with the practices as explained in the code.

The following aspects apply in particular to this journal:

Affiliations

Author affiliations should represent the institution with which the author is affiliated at the time of submission. Only institutions that hosted, supported and/or authorized (part of) the research should be acknowledged. The intentional inclusion of false information to this regard is a form of scientific misconduct and may cause the submission to become retracted.

Authorship

Only someone who has made a significant personal contribution to the design of the research presented, to its studies and/or experiments, to drawing up, analysing and/or interpreting the data and writing/redacting the manuscript itself, and who has agreed to its overall publication, may be listed as an author of an original scientific publication, and thus share responsibility for it. So-called 'honorary authorships' are not permitted. The intentional inclusion of false information to this regard is a form of scientific misconduct and may cause the submission to become retracted.

For more information on how to deal with authorship in case of multiple authors in your submission, see the [Submission](#) section.

Duplication and Recycling

As a rule, the undisclosed duplication or recycling of previously published text and data is not allowed. Exceptions can be made in cases of clear added value to the submitted paper—such as the strengthening of its reasoning and argumentation, or for understanding its context better—and should be properly justified and referenced. Intentional deviations from this rule are a form of scientific misconduct and may cause the submission to become retracted.

Plagiarism

LJA does not tolerate any form of plagiarism, that is, the use of ideas, words, data or any other material produced by others without proper acknowledgement. We maintain the option to scan all submissions with suitable plagiarism checkers. Reviewers and editorial board members are obliged to report any suspicion on copyright infringement and plagiarism on the author's side to the managing editor. Confirmed and proved plagiarism will cause the submission to become retracted.

Scientific Misconduct

All forms of scientific misconduct-including those listed above, as well as other actions such as inventing or falsifying data (data fabrication), or publishing without authorisation research findings, ideas, arguments and interpretations from work that has not yet been disseminated-are considered bad scientific practice and may cause the submission to become retracted. This also applies to the archaeological work that lies at the basis of the submission, and to research ethics with regard to human remains (for guidance and best practices, see [here](#)) and indigenous and colonial heritage (for guidelines, see [here](#)). LJA reserves the right to refuse papers that involve inappropriate legal, cultural and/or ethical behaviour in the field/laboratory/etc.

If scientific misconduct is detected post-publication, the managing editor may choose-depending on the severity of the misconduct-to publish a Correction or an Expression of Concern on the article in question, or in exceptional cases to fully retract the article.

Confidentiality

All submitted manuscripts, data, and reviews, along with all communication via the OJS platform, are treated with strict confidentiality at all times during the evaluation process. Both authors and reviewers remain anonymous to each other until final acceptance and publication. Reviewers also remain anonymous afterwards, unless they choose otherwise. The managing editor, editorial board members and reviewers can only discuss the shared works between them and with the author(s), and are not allowed to make copies of the manuscripts, nor to disclose any information about them to others. Rejected manuscripts are completely deleted from the system.

Privacy

The Heidelberg University Library is committed to protecting and respecting your privacy. Names and e-mail addresses entered on this journal's web pages are used exclusively for the purposes stated and are not passed on to third parties. For further information on Heidelberg's privacy policy, please visit its [Privacy Statement](#) page.