

WORLD CONGRESS - *Song of an Ancient Earth*

An International Multidisciplinary Exploration of the Human Legacy of the Neolithic Transition

Preliminary Call for Position Papers

Recent discoveries, particularly in Anatolia and other regions of the ancient world have revealed one of the most consequential transformations in human history: the transition from mobile societies to settled communities and the emergence of new forms of social organization, technology, symbolism, and relationship with the natural world. The archaeological record has expanded our understanding of this transition and raised profound questions about the human experience. At the same time, research across other contemporary disciplines has generated important new insight.

Song of an Ancient Earth brings these fields together in an international multidisciplinary congress to explore a central question: **What can the deep history of humanity, combined with current knowledge of human development, teach us about creating stronger communities and a more human future?** The congress seeks scholarly and institutional perspectives on the profound questions raised by both the archaeological record and contemporary human sciences.

Deep Human History

What can evidence from the Neolithic reveal about human adaptation, cooperation, creativity, identity, and community? Questions may include:

- How did early communities organize relationships, resources, and shared responsibilities?
- What can the emergence of the first large communities teach us about human cooperation and belonging?
- How should we understand the transformation from collective relationships with land and resources toward concepts of ownership and individual control?
- What aspects of prehistoric societies have yet to be fully considered in public understanding?

Human Sciences and Contemporary Understanding

What can current research across disciplines reveal about the needs and capacities that have shaped human flourishing? Perspectives are invited from fields including:

Anthropology - Psychology - Neuroscience
Genetics - Human Evolution - Education
Indigenous Studies - Public Health
Architecture and Environmental Design
Social Sciences, the Arts and Cultural Practice

From Knowledge to Application

How might insights from humanity's deep past and contemporary research inform practical approaches to modern challenges? The congress will explore the development of pilot programs that translate interdisciplinary knowledge into meaningful public initiatives. Potential areas may include:

Museum and cultural institution programming
Educational initiatives

Intergenerational community programs
Approaches to strengthening social connection
New models for public humanities engagement
Community-based explorations of human flourishing

A Conversation About the Future

At a time when societies face growing challenges related to isolation, mistrust, fragmentation, and declining community connection, questions about the human past are also questions about the future.

- What conditions have allowed human beings to thrive?
- What human capacities have accompanied us through our long development?
- How can deeper understanding of ourselves contribute to healthier communities?

Song of an Ancient Earth invites researchers, educators, cultural institutions, and practitioners from diverse fields to contribute perspectives that can help shape this emerging conversation. The goal is not only scholarly exchange, but the creation of a framework through which archaeological knowledge and contemporary human research can be translated into living public humanities initiatives adaptable by museums, educational institutions, cultural organizations, and communities worldwide.

Expected timeframe:
End of March 2027 (subject to confirmation)
Location: To be announced
Proceedings: Selected contributions will be published.
Hosted by:
OTS Foundation for Neolithic Studies
Preliminary 200-word abstract, title or note of interest can be submitted via website form before
04 SEP 2026 <https://otsf.org/ancienteearth>