

Virtual Palaeoscience (ViPs)

Collating, curating and developing virtual lab and fieldtrip resources for palaeoenvironmental teaching: call for registration of interest in the project

Aim:

Create a shared archive of virtual palaeoscience teaching resources to support the learning and teaching of environmental change as both a short-term COVID19 response and for the longer-term improvement of learning, accessibility and outreach within and beyond the academic community.

Context:

- The scramble to get online in response to coronavirus closures of teaching spaces and the curtailment of field work activities
- The prospect of partial/complete online provision being required for academic year 2020-21
- The potential of virtual environments to improve access to learning for educators, students and wider audiences
- The growing pressures on academic time and resources
- Drive to reduce carbon emissions and minimise the environmental impact of our activities
- New, widely available technology offers new opportunities (and changes student expectations)

Objectives:

- Create a single collated source of currently available shared ViPs materials
 - Short term: WordPress.com web site (<https://virtualpalaeoscience.wordpress.com/>)
 - Longer term: transfer curation to an established organisation (e.g. potentially the QRA)
- Undertake a gap analysis – what materials are missing or poorly represented?
- Reduce duplication of effort and optimise the 2020-21 student experience by:
 - Creating small working groups to collate, produce and share different materials THIS SUMMER in preparation for academic year 2020-21 being partially or fully online.
 - Ensuring that intellectual property of creators is recognised and resources made widely and freely available via Creative Commons and related mechanisms
 - Creating a community which can seek grant funding and institutional support to produce high quality materials exploiting appropriate available and emerging technologies and approaches over a longer term and study their use by students and academics.

Plans for summer 2020:

- Launch workshop – Wednesday 27th May - 09:30-12:00 (UTC+1). (via Zoom)
 - Form working groups
 - Working groups agree priorities and agree an achievable scope of work for summer 2020 (completed by late August conference)
 - Resources produced will all be made findable through the ViPs website at the late August event
- Late August - virtual conference (in advance of the new teaching year).
 - 'Launch' website resources to support planning of teaching for 2020-21
 - Develop "next steps"/legacy plan, including working group restructuring and lessons learned.

How can I stay in touch or get involved?

We've set up a form on WordPress to register interest: <https://virtualpalaeoscience.wordpress.com/form-for-registering-an-interest-in-the-project/>

- Join our mailing list
- Sign up for the launch workshop and virtual conference
- Suggest resources to be added to the website
- Tell us about the gaps you think need filling
- Tell us about your expertise, and how you'd like to be involved
- Highlight the key topics, sites, technologies you think we need to develop beyond 2020-2021
- Tell a friend who might also be interested and disseminate to your group, association, learned society!