

Dear colleagues,

I am writing because, together with my colleagues Sofia Vagnuzzi (Caen) and Laura Bottiglieri (Rome), I am organising a session for the 32nd Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists (EAA 2026, Athens), and I was wondering if you would be interested and/or could kindly share the call for papers amongst colleagues who you think might be interested?

The session, entitled *Housing the Court – Infrastructures, Communities, and Power in Palatial Environments* (session nr. 5 <https://submissions.e-a-a.org/aaa2026/sessions/overview/index>), focuses on the residential and infrastructural dimensions of imperial residences, shifting attention away from ceremonial spaces towards the often-overlooked architecture of housing and service infrastructure. Beyond rulers and court elites, these complexes hosted diverse populations—including officials, administrators, service personnel, and sometimes military units—whose spatial, social, and logistical organisation remains insufficiently explored archaeologically.

The session aims to investigate how imperial residences were planned to accommodate, organise, and regulate these human and infrastructural needs, and how such arrangements materialised power relations, hierarchy, and social permeability. We particularly encourage contributions integrating architectural, documentary, and environmental evidence, and framed within comparative perspectives across the Roman Empire and beyond, including Byzantine, Islamic, and early modern courtly traditions.

We welcome papers addressing topics such as:

- housing and spatial organisation of working communities;
- **sanitation, water management, and care/disposal infrastructures;**
- labour structures and the logistical organisation of working populations;
- military presence and security arrangements;
- access, mobility, and spatial regulation;
- integration of palaces with productive landscapes;
- palatial environments as laboratories of urban planning.

The Call for Contributions will close on **5 February 2026 23:59 CET**. If the session theme resonates with your current or past work, we would be delighted to receive a proposal from you, or to discuss a possible contribution informally.

Please feel free to get in touch if you would like any further information.

With best wishes,

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(on behalf of the session organisers)
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