

IWGP Research Group on Early Plant Management and Domestication in Southwest Asia

Terms of Reference

(version 1, 21/02/2024)

1. Aims and purpose of the research group

- i. Provide a platform within the International Work Group for Palaeoethnobotany (IWGP) for researchers of all career stages and levels of experience interested in early plant management and domestication in southwest Asia.
- ii. Promote the development of research and knowledge exchange in this field.
- iii. Foster communication within and beyond the research community. This can involve sharing preliminary results, communicating novel approaches and concepts, and discussing methodological advances.
- iv. Provide support and opportunities for networking and skills development.

2. Regional focus

The research group (RG) focuses on the area commonly referred to as the Fertile Crescent and adjacent regions in southwest Asia, including the modern states of Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Cyprus, Iraq and Iran.

3. Methodological focus

The RG focuses on evidence from macro- and microbotanical remains, including (but not limited to) carpology, anthracology, aDNA, phytoliths, starch grains and stable isotopes.

4. Thematic and chronological focus

The RG focuses on investigating, discussing and promoting a better understanding of the origins and development of plant management and domestication in southwest Asia. Chronologically, evidence for such processes may derive from different periods, including (but not limited to) the Epipalaeolithic, Neolithic, Chalcolithic and Bronze Age.

5. Meetings

- i. The RG will meet once every two years.
- ii. Meetings aim to provide a discussion forum for current research and debates in the field.
- iii. Meetings also aim to provide opportunities for skills training and knowledge exchange, for example in form of practical or theoretical workshops.
- iv. The biannual meetings will be organised as hybrid events to allow in person and remote participation. If justified, a meeting can also be held online in its entirety.
- v. When a meeting falls in the year of an IWGP conference, the RG will aim to organise a thematic workshop, session or related event during the IWGP conference.
- vi. Each meeting is organised by at least one main organiser who is associated to the RG and becomes member of the RG board (see 6). The RG board provides support for the organisation of meetings.

6. Organisation of the research group

- i. The RG is overseen by a board with the following members:
 - a. A minimum of two and a maximum of four coordinators. In each cycle, one to two coordinators will take an active role in the organisation of the next meeting. The board will also include the coordinator(s) who organised the previous meeting of the working group, which will ensure that they are able to provide support to the incoming coordinators(s).
 - b. One communications officer. The task of this role is to manage and moderate the RG's mailing list, and to oversee and update the RG's website.
 - c. One ordinary board member. The role of the ordinary board member is to support the board in their business and be active in decision-making. It is not expected that the ordinary board member is involved in the organisation of RG meetings.
 - d. One student representative. The role of the student representative is to promote student matters and support the board in their business and be active in decision making. It is not expected that the student representative be involved in the organisation of RG meetings.
- ii. Terms of service:
 - a. Each coordinator serves for a period of four years:
 - i. The two years that lead up to the meeting they organise.
 - ii. The two years after the meeting in which they support the new coordinator(s).
 - b. The communications officer serves for four years and stands for re-election at the first biannual meeting after the end of this period.
 - c. The ordinary board member and student representative serve a minimum of two years and stand for re-election at the first biannual meeting after the end of this period.
 - d. Each board member must notify the coordinators in advance in case they decide to step down from their role before their term ends.
 - e. Board membership is limited to four consecutive years per individual. The only exception to this is when the communications officer or ordinary member agrees to organise the next meeting and becomes a coordinator.
- iii. Nomination and election of board members:
 - a. Nomination and election of board members happens at the biannual meeting.
 - b. The person(s) who offer(s) to organise the next meeting will become coordinator(s).
 - c. Members interested in becoming communications officer, an ordinary board member or student representative should self-nominate and will be elected by RG members via a simple majority.
 - d. Elections will take place anonymously via an online poll to take place during the RG meeting. The poll will be circulated via the mailing list so that all members have the opportunity to vote.

7. Liaison with IWGP

- i. The RG represents an official body within the IWGP.
- ii. The RG has webspace on the IWGP webpage, where the activities of the group are presented.

8. Amendments to the Terms of Reference

- i. The terms of reference can be amended by vote with a simple majority during a meeting of the RG.

Annex I – Appointment of board members

	Co-chair(s) A	Co-chair(s) B	Co-chair(s) C	Communications officer A	Communications officer B	Ordinary & student members A	Ordinary & student members B
Year -1	in role since last meeting			elected at last meeting		elected at last meeting	
Year 1							
Year 2	organise meeting	agree to organise next meeting				can stand for re-election	election
Year 3							
Year 4	support meeting org.	organise meeting	agree to organise next meeting	end of four year term	election		can stand for re-election
Year 5							
Year 6		support meeing org.	organise meeting				