

International Archaeology Day

MEDIA TOOLKIT

International Archaeology Day is held annually on the third Saturday in October.

2019: October 19

2020: October 17

2021: October 16

2022: October 15

2023: October 21

2024: October 19

2025: October 18

2026: October 17

2027: October 16

2028: October 21

2029: October 20

2030: October 19

2031: October 18

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1. Overview

International Archaeology Day is a celebration of archaeology. Every October the AIA and archaeological organizations around the world present archaeological programs and activities for people of all ages and interests. Whether it is a family-friendly archaeology fair, a guided tour of a local archaeological site, a simulated dig, a lecture or a classroom visit from an archaeologist, the interactive, hands-on International Archaeology Day programs provide participants with the chance to be an archaeologist for a day.

2. Why Publicity Matters

Archaeology is not well understood. In 2018, 54% of American adults thought that archaeologists studied dinosaurs (SAA Ipsos Poll 2018). Today numismatic enthusiasts contend that archaeologists who support bilateral agreements between

countries are selfishly trying to keep the past to themselves. Despite these mistaken beliefs, there is still a high level of public interest in archaeology.

In recent years, public interest has been directed towards television shows such as Spike TV's *American Digger* and International Geographic Television's *Diggers*. Both shows deliver the message that history is up for grabs and is a way to make a quick buck. One is encouraged to show enthusiasm for history by grabbing a metal detector, a shovel or a backhoe, and digging up the closest archaeological site. Archaeologists need to redouble their efforts to engage with and educate the public. Together, as a community, we can achieve much more and share the positive effects of archaeology to a wider public.

Working together, we can raise the profile and appeal of archaeology, get noticed, and increase participation. Publicity will help us accomplish this.

3. How the Campaign Works

Our PR campaign depends on working with Collaborating Organizations to reach a broad audience by contacting international and local news outlets near the events. The campaign works across traditional media like print, TV, and radio, as well as online sources like social media, email, and websites.

4. Archaeological Institute of America Contacts

For questions about the PR campaign, International Archaeology Day or your role as a Collaborating Organization, please contact one of the following:

- AIA Director of Programs **Ben Thomas** bthomas@archaeological.org
- AIA Senior Programs Coordinator **Meredith Langlitz** mlanglitz@archaeological.org

5. Planning Your Press Campaign

Make sure you utilize local media as much as possible, as this is a great source of publicity for your events! Think about the audience you would like to attract and where they would get their news from—local papers or TV channels, the radio, blogs, Twitter, Facebook, or newsletters?

Contacts: You may have contacts already, but if not, research your local media and compile a list of contacts. You could look at local radio and TV channels, online groups, or community calendars, and you'll need to include news editors, listings editors, and features editors in print media, and producers of TV and radio that cover events and local news. Don't forget to include digital media contacts as well! Popular event listing sites include: Craigslist, EventBrite, Eventful, and Yelp. To find local listing sites, try searching the websites of TV and radio news stations for your area, the website for your city or town, and community websites. You can also try searching 'CITY events' or 'STATE events' and see if there are other event listing sites specifically for your area.

Prepare: Read the publications that you are targeting before you reach out to your contacts so that you can tailor your pitch to the kinds of articles that they usually write and the features that they might be interested in running.

Storytelling: Will your event be featuring any new research or artifacts that have only been recently released or discovered? Stories like these are great for features writers.



Topical: Can you link your event to anything going on in your area, such as a current exhibition or historical anniversary? Local journalists like things with human interest or local angles.

Timing: Check the deadlines for your local media. Most weekly newspapers need submissions at least 2 weeks in advance, and you can contact broadcast crews 1 week ahead of time.

Follow-Up: Keep note of which editors, journalists, and bloggers you send press releases to. Follow up with them a couple of days later with a phone call to see if they are interested in your event.

Be Efficient: Respond to information requests as quickly as possible, journalists are on tight deadlines and need an immediate response.

6. Writing a Successful Press Release

The basic toolkit you will need consists of two things: a **press release** and **an image**.

Good images can make a strong impact on how much coverage you get, so choose arresting, high-res images, preferably featuring people or children smiling and having a good time. Pictures from previous International Archaeology Day events are ideal.

Writing your press release:

Keep it clear and simple. Put a short, catchy **headline** at the top and **date** it.

Include all the most important information about your event. Remember the 5 W's: **what, when, where, why, and who!**

Ensure that it has a local angle, but don't forget to mention that it's part of International Archaeology Day.

Information on how to attend your event should be included either in the body of the press release or at the bottom. This should include details about the time and location of the event, as well as ticket price if applicable.

Put a **contact** name and phone number at the bottom of the release, and ensure that someone is available to deal with journalists' inquiries.

Include a web address for the **International Archaeology Day website**: <http://www.archaeologyday.org>

If possible, please include this general information about International Archaeology Day:

This October [Your Organization Name] is joining hundreds of archaeological organizations around the world to celebrate International Archaeology Day. <Insert info about your event>.

International Archaeology Day, officially held on the third Saturday, but fêted throughout the month of October, is a celebration of archaeology and the thrill of discovery. Every October the Archaeological Institute of America and collaborating archaeological organizations across the United States, Canada, and abroad present archaeological programs and activities for people of all ages and interests. Whether it is a family-friendly archaeology fair, a guided tour of a local archaeological site, a simulated dig, a lecture or classroom visit from an archaeologist, interactive, hands-on International Archaeology Day programs provide the chance to indulge your inner Indiana Jones and be an archaeologist for the day.

NOTE: Some editorial departments don't accept email attachments, so copy your press release into the body of the message, and mention that there are images available.

7. Making the Most of Pictures

Photo Requirements: Images for standard newsprint should be at least 300 dpi and in color. Include people or children in your pictures, if possible and relevant, to make the image more interesting; but make sure the photos are high quality and look professional. If you're taking photos of children, be sure to get their parents' permission.

Sample consent form (you can have all parents sign the same sheet to eliminate the need to keep track of multiple forms):

PHOTOGRAPHS CONSENT, WAIVER, AND RELEASE

I consent and give permission to [Organization Name] to photograph my **child** in connection with this International Archaeology Day event.

I understand that any such photographs and all rights associated with them will belong solely and exclusively to [Organization Name], which shall have the right to copyright, duplicate, reproduce, alter, display, and/or publish them in any manner, for any purpose, and in any form including, but not limited to print, electronic, video, and/or online. This image may be provided to the media and educators.

I voluntarily waive any and all rights with respect to any such photographs, including compensation, copyright, and privacy rights and any right to inspect or approve such photographs and/or copy, print or other materials that may be used in connection with them. I hereby release and discharge and agree to hold harmless, [Organization Name], its officers, agents and employees, and all persons acting under its permission or authority from any claims and liability in connection with such photographs and their use.

I HAVE READ AND FULLY UNDERSTAND THE CONTENTS OF THIS CONSENT, WAIVER, AND RELEASE FORM AND I SIGN IT FREELY AND VOLUNTARILY.

Child's Name (First, Last)	Parent's Name (First, Last)	Parent's Signature

Attachments: Attachments should not be more than 3MB. To meet this limit, you can reduce the file size of your images, or email the images individually. You may also use free file sharing sites like Dropbox.

Essential Info: All photographs should be captioned, include a title, your venue name, the name of the photographer, the date, and any copyright restrictions. Don't forget to send pictures of your events to the AIA! In October, the AIA will send all event organizers a follow up form so that statistics can be compiled about all IAD events.

8. Broadcasting Opportunities

If you're interviewed on the **radio**, be clear about the most important aspects of the event that you want to get across to listeners. Have basic information about the event in front of you, and as the interview wraps up try to convey the **next step** that listeners should take, whether it's calling a phone number, sending an email, or showing up at a certain time.

For **TV** coverage, you may need to organize the way your event is set up beforehand to make it easier for news crews to film.

9. Your Website/Blog

Promote International Archaeology Day on **your own website!** Make sure that the details and contact information for your event are clear. If your organization is part of a group or has affiliates, see if they can post information on their sites as well.

If your organization has a **blog** you can build anticipation for the event by posting stories about the event planning and preparation process. You can even take some photos of yourselves at work! Use a conversational voice in your posts to draw people in, and include a call to action like a link to your event listing.

10. Email Newsletters

If you already send out programs of events or monthly news updates to an email mailing list, be sure to mention your International Archaeology Day event!

If you don't currently do this, it's a good idea to place a sign-up link on your website, a similar link in your email signature, and a printed form in your venue (if applicable) to **capture the email addresses** of members of the public who would like to be kept updated about news and events from your organization. Cheap or free services like MailChimp can make designing newsletters and tracking their success simple and easy.

You may like to keep different lists so that you can send **targeted messages** to different segments of your audience, like the public, local teachers, or friends of your organization.

11. Print Publicity

It's a good idea to create flyers or posters for your event, which you can put up in visible areas around your community. Some great locations for flyers are notice boards, tourist information centers, local hotels, other attractions whose visitors might like your event, and places like coffee shops, libraries, or churches where members of the community gather and spend a lot of time.

You can print posters from the International Archaeology Day website, be sure to select the paper size you want under your print properties as well as "fit to printable area."

12. Social Media

Social media is important for raising awareness and tracking interest in your event and International Archaeology Day in general.

Set up a **Google Alert** (<http://www.google.com/alerts>) to track mentions of your organization or your event on the web.

Promote your event on Twitter, Facebook, and any other social networking sites that you use. If you don't have any social media accounts for your organization, you may want to create them. Before you create an account, make sure that you will be able to continually maintain it and that it will reach the people that you expect your event or organization to attract. The AIA is also maintaining Twitter and Facebook accounts for International Archaeology Day, feel free to suggest posts and tweets about any updated information you have about your event leading up to, during, or after the big day. You can also submit brief articles for the International Archaeology Day blog (<http://www.archaeological.org/archaeologyday/blog>).



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The hashtag for International Archaeology Day is IAD plus the current 4 digit year (i.e #IAD2020).

Good luck with your event, we hope you have a fantastic International Archaeology Day experience!

This toolkit is adapted from the Museums at Night PR toolkit. More information about their UK-based event can be found at:
<https://museumsatnight.wordpress.com/2012/04/24/get-the-museums-at-night-2012-pr-toolkit/>