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Faculty of Life Sciences

Neanderthals, Denisovans and Homo sapiens: How new science is changing our understanding of human evolution

Invitation to the inaugural lecture
Monday, 12 December 2022, 17:00
University of Vienna, Main Ceremonial Hall



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Tom Higham
Professor of
Scientific Archaeology



Professor Tom Higham

Tom Higham is a Professor of Scientific Archaeology at the Department of Evolutionary Anthropology at the University of Vienna. He studied archaeology and chemistry at the universities of Otago and Waikato, in New Zealand. Before joining the University of Vienna, he was at the University of Oxford (2001–21), where he was the Director of the Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit in the School of Archaeology. He was a Fellow of Keble College, Oxford. Prior to going to Oxford he was the Deputy Director of the Waikato Radiocarbon Laboratory in Hamilton, New Zealand.

Research focus

His research involves applying cutting-edge archaeological science methods to the ancient past, particularly to the period from around 70,000–30,000 years ago when Neanderthals, Denisovans and modern humans met and interacted with one another. He is a specialist in dating archaeological sites, mainly using radiocarbon dating, but also applying other chronometric and Bayesian modelling methods. His recent book “The World Before Us: How science is revealing a new story of our human origins” was published by Penguin/RandomHouse in 2021 and describes some of his work in this area over the last two decades. In particular, he focuses on his work as part of the team at the key site of Denisova Cave (Siberian Altai) which has revealed the presence of three different groups of humans over the last 200,000 years.

“My research sheds light on a key period in human prehistory ~50,000 years ago, where we see evidence for 7, 8 or more different types of human species; from Neanderthals to the ‘Hobbits’ of Flores, to the Denisovans and us.”

Programme

Monday, 12 December 2022

Main Ceremonial Hall of the University of Vienna
Universitätsring 1, 1010 Vienna

17:00

Welcome by

Manuela Baccharini
(Vice-Rector of the University of Vienna)

Welcome address

Karl-Heinz Wagner
(Dean of the Faculty of Life Sciences)

Inaugural lecture

Tom Higham

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After the lecture, we would like to invite you to a small reception in the Small Ceremonial Hall.

Barrier-free access: Right side entrance, lift to the 1st floor

University of Vienna

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