

# Archaeological Innovation

**Client:** Tom Frankland  
**Academic:** John McIlwaine

ArchaeoFX has been working with the University of Bradford this summer on an innovative project challenging the way computer visualisation is used in archaeology. The project ran from the 29th of June to the 20th of July, and coincided with an excavation on the Faroe Islands run by the Heart of the Atlantic Project at the University of Bradford. ArchaeoFX accompanied the University of Bradford team on these excavations, and made use of their expertise over the projects duration to create visualisations that met the aims of the project:

- To determine the value of 3D archaeological visualisations produced 'on-site' at an excavation as a method of interpretation, and to assess if this has an additional impact on decision-making.
- To assess the way in which 3D visualisations situated at an excavated site have an effect on the public's understanding and enjoyment of a site.
- To establish whether the benefits provided by producing visualisations could be of commercial value to ArchaeoFX as a service made available to archaeological curators and commercial units.

It was believed that this approach had not been attempted previously in either academic or commercial archaeology. The closest parallel is with the TV programme Time Team, where due to the strict time limit imposed by the programme's format, computer visualisation has more of a role with decision making.

The project proved to be a real success, especially as it providing the archaeologists with a powerful way of demonstrating to the public what was being actively excavated. Archaeology can often have an important role bringing communities closer together, and in recent years this has become increasingly apparent to both archaeologists and to funding bodies; recent funding has frequently been granted to projects that include a way of achieving this.



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