

BSA Strategic Plan 2024–2030¹

The BSA’s mission is to undertake research and provide research related services as well as delivering a programme of teaching, outreach, and knowledge exchange. The BSA has a rich history of advancing knowledge of Greek studies in the widest possible sense which it strengthens through its innovative research and inclusive approach to knowledge exchange and outreach. This work is underpinned by a strong research environment in Athens and Knossos, progressive collaborations with Greek and International colleagues, as well as supporting UK academic research in Greece more generally. This mission faces two key challenges: an increasingly difficult funding environment and a critical need for space at the BSA complex.



BSA Introduction

The British School at Athens (BSA) is an Institute for Advanced Research into all areas of the Greek world from Palaeolithic to present. With a focus on people, community, arts and material culture, it moves the study of the ancient, medieval and modern Greek world into a modern perspective through innovative methodological and technological approaches, networks of projects and partners, and a philosophy of inclusive engagement. The BSA is the UK’s hub for such research in Greece and the wider region. The BSA supports scholars at all stages and disciplines through the provision of library and archive facilities in Athens and Knossos, a laboratory in Athens, research funding, publications and permit services and diligence.

¹ The BSA Director would like to thank Dr Nathan Meyer who generously gave his expertise and time to lead on the BSA strategic planning in Spring 2023. Thanks also to BSA Staff and Council members for their valuable input.

The BSA undertakes, collaborates in, promotes, and facilitates research through its fieldwork and study programme, the Fitch Laboratory, the Knossos Research Centre, Library and Archive collections, funded studentships, visiting fellowships, travel awards, publications (the *Annual of the BSA*, BSA Supplementary volumes, two BSA Series, one published by Routledge, the other by CUP, *Archaeological Reports*, and *Archaeology in Greece*), lectures, seminars, conferences, and workshops. Whilst in post, research staff also carry out their own programme of research. As the UK's research institution in Greece, the BSA collaborates with British and Greek stakeholders to promote strong cultural relations and shared experiences.

Founded in the late 19th century, the BSA is driven to look to the future while drawing on its decades of experience. It supports and encourages scholarship in the broadest sense (including teaching, knowledge exchange and outreach) in Greece, the UK and beyond, through a series of undergraduate and postgraduate taught courses, teachers' courses, and provision of teaching resources. All of this is funded through core funds awarded by the British Academy (c. 50%), the BSA endowment funds, restricted funds, and donations.

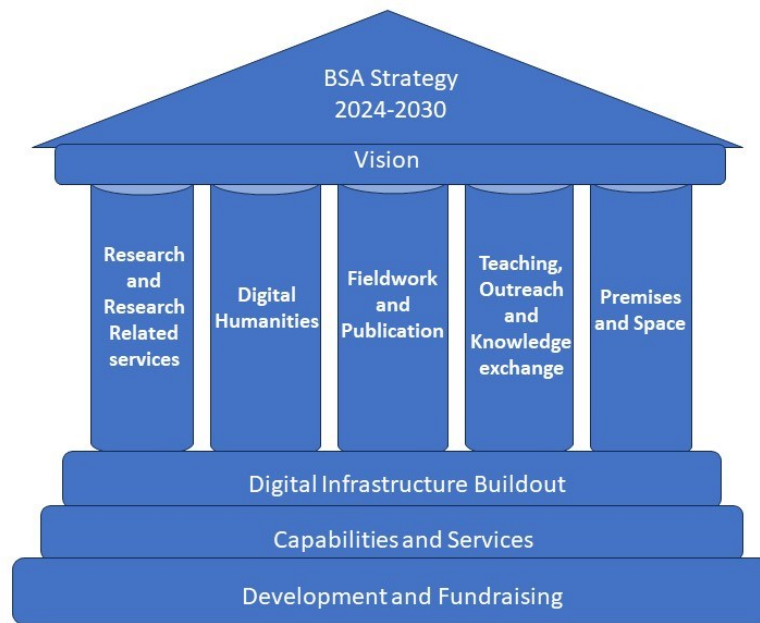
Future of the BSA

The BSA has the potential to become an even more significant research institution with world class research, teaching, knowledge exchange and publication supported by growing investment and funding. A key BSA strength is in its dedicated staff which is well supported by the Chair, Deputy Honorary Treasurer, Council, Committee and Subcommittee members. Its high-profile work is underpinned by Greek and UK collaborations and has the support of the British Embassy, British Council and of course British Academy and the other British International Research Institutes (BIRIs). All of this must be grown with new funding for full realization of the strategy. We do not believe that standing still is an option; in order to build on the achievements of almost a century and a half, during the next six years we need to embark on an ambitious programme of fundraising and investment.

Strategic Pillars

The BSA Strategy (2024-2030) comprises five key areas, or pillars of strategic development, and is underpinned by three enabling strategies. The strategic pillars are:

- Research and Research Related Services
- Digital Humanities
- Fieldwork and Publication
- Teaching, Outreach and Knowledge Exchange
- Premises and Space



I. Research and Research related services

The BSA has a strong reputation for supporting scholarship through its laboratory, libraries, archives, museum and facilities in Athens and Knossos. Its work is supported by the Committee for Archaeology, Committee for Society, Arts and Letters, Publications and Dissemination Committee as well as subcommittees for the Fitch Laboratory, Crete, Lakonia and Lefkandi.

Every year close to 500 researchers and almost 1,000 students use our facilities. The BSA collaborates with over 100 institutions in the UK, Greece, throughout Europe, North America, the Middle East, and Australia. This includes the universities of St Andrews, Newcastle, Oxford, KCL, UCL, Cambridge, the Ashmolean and Fitzwilliam Museums, the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, and universities throughout Greece, including the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

The BSA Library welcomes members (24-hour access to the library) and readers from across the world and it has 80,000 volumes and around 1300 periodical titles. An increasing number of electronic periodicals and books are available via IP access (on-site) and VPN (for remote members). The library at Knossos has over 4000 titles. The BSA Library is one of the best libraries on Hellenic Studies - strong on prehistory, theory and methodology of Archaeology, Greek Epigraphy, Byzantine Art and Architecture. Its collection of 19th and early 20th century maps is a prized possession and includes recently donated Greek Army Maps and 20,000 RAF aerial photographs that cover most of Greece.

Its holdings relating to the modern world have been recently strengthened by the library of Richard and Mary Jo Clogg – an invaluable collection of Modern Greek Studies, Ottoman Studies and Balkan history.

The BSA Archive is home to a wealth of data pertaining to the archaeology and history of Greece. This includes travel diaries (from the traveller and antiquarian William Gell & the Noel Baker Family); letters and works from leading philhellenes such as George Finlay and Captain Frank Abney Hastings;

documents from archaeologists who were also key protagonists in Greek history like John Pendlebury in WWII; the important Byzantine Research Fund collection pertaining to Greece's rich Byzantine heritage, and of course excavation records of the BSA's work across Greece including Knossos, Sparta, Melos and Chios from the late 1800s onwards.

Scholars from across the globe work on these collections in Greece and although we are increasingly making them freely available through our digital collections portal, considerable work remains. An annual endowed lecture and visit to Athens (the Bader Archive Lecture) brings a wide diversity of scholars into contact with the rich resources of the Archives.

Both the library and archives have now occupied all their available room with no more space to grow.

To advance its research work, facilitate UK and international scholarship and make more of its rich digitally available the BSA proposes to:

- invest in an integrated digital humanities programme making its archives, excavation records, artefacts, publications and other associated material digitally accessible
- seek investment to recruit an archive assistant to support daily activities and the on-going digitisation programme
- invest in new space for library books, archives and laboratory materials
- seek external endowment for the positions of the **Archivist and Librarian**

Key to supporting the Library and Archive is the endowment of the **Archivist and Librarian** as named positions.

The Fitch Laboratory

The Fitch Laboratory, whose work is overseen by the Fitch Laboratory Subcommittee, undertakes a demanding programme of archaeological science research (with a focus on craft technologies and mobility in the widest sense) and supports the work of international projects through partnership and mentoring. The Fitch Laboratory complements and collaborates with the neighbouring Wiener Laboratory in research areas and seminar series. The Fitch runs a series of annual taught courses and has a regular internship programme. While core to the BSA research activities, particularly through its research and funding collaborations and courses, the Fitch also provides fundamental services (such as thin section preparation and elemental analysis) to projects in Greece and abroad. Within the rapidly expanding and competitive field of science-based archaeology, the Fitch leadership has identified viable priorities (concerning craftspeople and mobility) which expand on existing and unique strengths.

In order to continue to develop as one of the major centres of archaeological science in the UK and Greece, the Fitch will require a new state of the art building to undertake its own research, support that of the international archaeological community and to continue its important programme of mentoring and training of the next generation of archaeological scientists.

Knossos

The **BSA Knossos Research Centre** is a globally unique facility with outstanding value to researchers and the community. The Knossos curator oversees the research and outreach programme with support from the Crete Subcommittee. Thanks to the transformative gift made by the **Packard**

Humanities Institute and the support of many other friends, we are at last rebuilding, enlarging and modernising the **Stratigraphical Museum** which is at the heart of the Knossos Research Centre.

The BSA will begin work on a **flagship archaeological project at Knossos**. This interdisciplinary project draws on the expertise of colleagues in UK, Greece and International research institutions, and will focus on the diachronic environmental history of Knossos; from Neolithic to early Modern. Drawing on legacy data as well as advanced archaeological techniques, experts from environmental archaeologists to anthropologists will collaborate working towards an innovative understanding of the city of Knossos. This multi-stranded approach is needed to achieve a step-change in understanding of the city's growth and sustainability over the long term, including its ecological footprint and cultural landscape.

Digital Knossos continues as an important focus of BSA work. It started with the Digital Curation Project supported by **INSTAP**. Most recently the Digital Assets Manager has been working on the **Digital Gazetteer** of sites in the Knossos Valley. This will be a paradigm shift in the way scholars can work on the archaeology of Knossos, providing linked archival and archaeological data.

Work at Knossos is underpinned by the generous collaboration of colleagues in the archaeological service and museums of Crete.

II. Digital Humanities

The BSA has essential archival records, science heritage (geological/pottery samples), art, maps and aerial photographs that we willingly share with our researchers. At present, most of these can only be used in person. To make our material globally accessible, the BSA wishes to invest in becoming a Digital Humanities Hub. By revising its digital database the BSA aims to meet the requirements of Linked Open Data, the gold standard for research repositories. In the next four years the BSA aspires to:

- appoint a fixed term Digital Humanities Officer (who will contribute to Fieldwork & Publication)
- design a map server/spatial database and an image repository / server;
- integrate all the BSA digital systems;
- develop an infrastructure to make the significant amount of field project data generated by BSA sponsored research available thereby allowing future researchers to capitalise on past work, as well as making it available for international scholarship;
- develop exhibition software to design digital exhibitions;
- provide secure off-site back-up.

Such investment will establish the BSA as a leader in the field of Digital Humanities and advance g its role as a leading scholarly institute.

III Fieldwork and Publication

The Committee for Archaeology oversees the BSA's fieldwork programme and develops its strategy. As a foreign archaeological institute in Greece, the Ministry of Culture awards the BSA a maximum of 6 permits per year to enable UK HEIs to undertake fieldwork projects in Greece. This fundamental role places the BSA at the heart of the UK's research agenda in Hellenic studies as well as attracting research funding.

The BSA focuses on field projects such as Knossos, Keros, Toumba Serron and Samos while never losing sight of continuing projects such as Lefkandi and Palaikastro as well as legacy data from Sparta and Melos.

The BSA has an extensive academic programme of lectures, seminars, conferences, and workshops often in partnership with UK and Greek institutions.

The BSA undertakes an extensive programme of publication (including electronic media as well as print) overseen by the Publications and Research Dissemination Committee with input from the Committee for Society, Arts and Letters and the Committee for Archaeology: *The Annual of the BSA*, *Archaeological Reports*, *Archaeology in Greece Online*, *BSA supplementary series*, *BSA/Cambridge University Press Studies in Greek Antiquity*, and the *BSA/Routledge Modern Greek and Byzantine Studies*. *Archaeology in Greece Online* is undertaken in collaboration with the French School at Athens (EFA) and is a fundamental resource for scholars working on Greek archaeology.

To expand its global research profile and to drive forward a broad and diverse research and publication agenda the BSA will seek to fund a part-time position of Research and Publications Officer. This person would:

- Oversee the growth of research and publications by identifying and pursuing research funding opportunities that will support individual study and research partnerships.
- Revise the BSA Research Strategy in collaboration with the Director, Heads of Section, and relevant subcommittee members, to enhance and synergize research across fieldwork, the Fitch, the Archives, Knossos, Sparta and publications.
- Develop institutional collaboration and matched funding.
- Strengthen the scholarly network through the advertisement of potential partnerships.

IV. Teaching, outreach, and knowledge exchange

Through its teaching programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate levels as well as courses for schoolteachers, the BSA makes its work accessible to academics and academic related colleagues overseen by the Courses and Teaching Committee. A detailed programme of outreach and knowledge exchange has successfully made the BSA and its work at Knossos available to a wider range of parties including analogous disciplines, local communities in Athens and Crete, school children and under-represented people. Our annual summer cultural programme at Knossos is hugely successful and is enhanced by regular public engagement events throughout the year. A new programme of outreach and knowledge exchange in Athens, drawing on the resources of the BSA's museum, archive, and laboratory has introduced archaeology to school children (through a regular 'Young Archaeology group' as well as behind-the-scenes visits) and to unaccompanied minors (forced migrants without parents or a home) who are being taken care of by the Home Project. We will enhance our programme of outreach and knowledge exchange for school children and unaccompanied minors.

- We will introduce new Postgraduate and Undergraduate courses to meet the demand of UK institutions
 - PG Course on Communicating Archaeology (taught for the first time in January 2024)
 - UG Short Course on Archaeology of Athens
- We will introduce a free on-line Teachers course in Greek for our Greek colleagues
- We will grow our community engagement programme in Athens and at Knossos
- We will continue to invest in partnerships with

- local institutions such as the British Embassy & British Council
- UK institutions such as TORCH (University of Oxford) and the Hellenic Centre, London

V. Athens Premises and Space

The BSA seeks to reduce its environmental impact while also ensuring the long-term sustainability of the 19th- and early 20th-century buildings. This will require an initial investment to replace windows, doors and shutters of the Hostel, Annexe and Upper House as well as the installation of solar panels and more energy efficient heating systems for the Hostel and Library.

The Archive, Library and Fitch require more storage space and more office space is required for fixed-term colleagues, interns, and fellows.

- We will alleviate space constrictions by installing interim storage facilities in the BSA garden.
- In the longer term, we hope to integrate our needs for storage space for all areas of the BSA in the Fitch 2024 Capital Project

Enabling Strategies

The three enabling strategies are: Digital Infrastructure, Capabilities & Services, and Development and Fundraising.

A. Digital Infrastructure Buildout

To support the four strategic pillars, the BSA will focus on a programme of investment in its digital infrastructure including: Creating a map server / spatial database and integrating it with the BSA's main website as well as with the BSA's Digital Collections website; increasing server space, updating collection management tools in support of Linked Open Data (e.g. EMu or EMu + auxiliary) and complementing the single BSA system administrator role with annual services addressing complex infrastructure and digital security requirements.

B. Capabilities and Services

To achieve all this we need to strengthen our staff, skills and systems including:

- Reviewing and revising staff contracts.
- Aligning service and capabilities within sections behind strategic priorities.
- Streamlining documentation throughout the BSA.
- Investing in an integrated administration system for funding/permit and accommodation applications.

C. Development and Fundraising

The BSA's development strategy has identified a number of fundraising priorities, including the Fitch 2024 campaign, Sustainable BSA and Endowment of key positions in Athens as well as unrestricted funds to support studentships and research grants. To do this we need to increase the number of our registered Supporters and ensure an exciting programme of accessible and relevant events in Greece and the UK. The Campaign Steering Group is responsible for the realisation of the Development strategy.

Summary

To continue to excel in delivering its core mission, the BSA will rise to the challenges of today's economic environment. In the next six years, the BSA will focus its academic leadership through the Strategic Pillars of i) Research and Research Related Services, ii) Digital Humanities, iii) Fieldwork and Publication iv) Teaching, Outreach and Knowledge Exchange and v) Premises and Space underpinned by the three enabling strategies (Development & Fundraising, Capabilities & Services, and Digital Infrastructure) designed to ensure successful delivery of the BSA mission.

The coming years will be an exciting but also challenging time for the BSA. We have never before had such potential to build on past achievements by which to launch an ambitious programme for renewal. Especially at a time when funding by governments for research in the Humanities is under threat, it is more than ever crucial for the BSA to capitalise on its unique premises and exceptional staff so as to secure our leading role in the fields of UK-based research in which we specialise, as well as in cultural diplomacy between the UK and Greece.

Rebecca Sweetman
BSA Director
April 2024