

## Conference: New Directions in Classics, Gaming, and Extended Reality

**When:** 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> June 2024, 09:00-19:00 UTC both days

**Where:** Hybrid – University of Bristol / Online

**Organiser:** [Dr Richard Cole](#) (Lecturer in Digital Classics, University of Bristol)

**Sponsors:** [University of Bristol Faculty of Arts](#), [Institute of Greece, Rome, and the Classical Tradition](#), [Bristol Digital Game Lab](#), [Centre for Creative Technologies](#).

From video games to virtual reality experiences, the Classical world continues to inspire developers and players alike. What does it mean, though, to explore antiquity in virtual spaces? How are such virtual worlds built, how are they experienced, and what do current technological developments mean for the future of Classics? Scholarship has begun to explore the contours of these questions. There have been several edited volumes (e.g., [Thorsen 2012](#), [Rollinger 2020](#), [Draycott and Cook 2022](#)), a couple of monographs ([André 2016](#), [Clare 2021](#)), along with chapters and articles published in a variety of books and journals, reflecting the nature of gaming scholarship; namely, that this is a multidisciplinary field drawing on a range of methodologies. Such works have broken important ground, although coverage remains partial. Extended reality (XR) simulations, for example, have received far less attention. This is despite the growing use of AR and VR across the heritage sector (e.g., [Yorescape](#), [Lithodomos](#)), the crossovers with gaming (e.g., [Assassin's Creed Nexus](#)), as well as the potential for academic research and education (e.g., the [Virtual Reality Oracle](#)).

This conference will move to define future directions for research, building on the current state of the art. The aim is to foster a debate that is less reactive to new releases of games and apps, and instead focused on challenging questions around methodology, impact, and industry practice, while also remaining sensitive to the opportunities that these technologies raise for drawing links between the ancient and modern. This two day hybrid conference, hosted by the [Bristol Digital Game Lab](#), thus takes the idea of extended reality, which typically refers to virtual, augmented, and mixed reality, and considers how – from the inception of video games through to the latest AR and VR applications – the history and culture of the Classical past have been twinned with the digital.

The conference will consist of traditional academic papers as well as industry discussions, in-person and hybrid game play sessions, XR showcases, and networking. Presentations lasting up to 30 minutes are invited on any of the following suggested topics.

- Methodologies and approaches for studying Classics in games and XR
- The history of Classics in gaming and XR technologies
- Developing a shared language for Classics, gaming, and XR
- What can games and XR tell us about Classics
- What can the study of Classics tell us about games and XR
- XR and its relationship to Classics and gaming
- Games, XR and education
- Games, XR and outreach
- Game and XR production studies
- Regional game studies
- Industry collaborations
- Platform studies
- Gender and queer studies
- Empirical research on player experiences
- Simulations beyond Greece and Rome
- Classics in non-classical games
- How to nurture and support research and teaching in Classics, gaming, and XR

The above list is by no means exhaustive and innovative proposals are strongly encouraged, including for non-traditional presentation formats.

Please submit proposals and a short biography to [richard.cole@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:richard.cole@bristol.ac.uk) by the 31 March 2024. Proposals should be no more than 300 words long, and should also stipulate the preferred mode of attendance. There are travel bursaries available for postgraduate students and early career researchers who would like to present in person, thanks to the generous support of the [Institute of Greece, Rome, and the Classical Tradition](#). Please state in your proposal if you would like to be considered for a travel bursary. Lunch and dinner will be provided both days for in person attendees.



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