**Session**
Entry ID: 191

Title: **Digital Religioscapes of Cavernous Mountains – New Ways Ahead in Speleo-Archaeology**

Description (250-300 words required)
In the recent past applications of photogrammetry and terrestrial laser scannings in the Franconian Jura and the Pontic Mountains provided new insights into subterranean ritual landscapes through three-dimensional recordings of rock-cut tunnels and natural shaft caves, their ecological features and artificial installations. As such attempts aiming for high-resolution digitalisation of sacr(aliz)ed places exemplify, digital archaeology offers exciting prospects for revealing the unilluminated: underground shrines cut into the bedrock, sequences of events for ritual practices of past communities and hitherto unseen cult facilities carved from the rock. In combination with zooarchaeological, osteological and textual analyses as well as radiocarbon dating 3D digitization enables an integrated socio-spatial approach for reconstructing detailed sequences, e.g., of the deposition of cultic assemblages and the remains of animal and human bodies.

In this session we wish to discuss new ways to document, visualize and investigate invisible ritual landscapes and their built environments through digitalisation of underground structures and the location of finds. We invite contributions presenting case studies applying digital approaches at cavernous sites and current methodologies including cutting-edge technologies that are particularly suitable to explore

• religious and settlement activites of cave-dwelling communities
• prehistoric rock art and architecture as features of sacr(aliz)ed landscapes
• rock-cut tombs and burial assemblages of grave goods deposited in rocky environments
• ritual activites performed at cave sites (e.g. the ritual deposition of human/animal remains or votive offerings).

By focusing on digital religioscapes as cultural landscape inventories we wish to promote new ways for a better understanding of subterranean sacr(aliz)ed places and raise the following questions: What kind of digital technology is both applicable and appropriate to create digital religioscapes under specific circumstances? How can digital approaches support us in rendering sensorial experiences and reconstructing religious practices of past communities? Which strategies for the visualization of ritual landscapes is offered through digital data?

**Motivation:**
We wish to promote the documentation and reconstruction of subterranean archaeological sites, which are often tremendously threatened through illicit digging. Therefore, this session aims to create a new platform for the presentation of case studies applying state-of-the-art technologies and to support both the exchange of expert knowledge and the initiation of future collaborative projects.

**Target Audience:**
(geo)archaeologists, speleologists, cultural heritage and monument conservators, architects, students of (geo)archaeology, conservation and restoration scienes

**Keywords (3-5 keywords required):**
digital archaeology, digital religioscapes, speleo-archaeology, 3D laserscanning, photogrammetry