Anthropology in Praxis

Applying Anthropology: UserX & Design

January 21st, 2026, 4:00-5:30pm MT

Welcome & Introductions

Anthropology in Praxis (AP) is dedicated to providing a forum to practicing, professional, and applied anthropologists for the exchange of ideas, information, and experiences related to the practical application of anthropology and ethnography.

AP is an official network of CASCA but there is no requirement to be a member of CASCA to join (although there are great benefits to joining CASCA!).

✔ Membership is free

✔ Google Group

✔ Regular virtual meetups

✔ Community driven engagement

AP is brought to you by a group of volunteer Conveners!

Welcome & Introductions

This session will feature two speakers on UserX and Design. These fields lean into user experiences, user context, using empathy and other mixed methods to generate value and are therefore very compatible with applied anthropology.

Panel Discussion

Emma Jo Aiken-Klar
Anthropologist,
consultant, and coach.

Kat Hutton
Applied Anthropologist
and UX Researcher

Guiding Questions

1. Tell us about your work in mixed methods, UX, and design? Why is what you do anthropological?

2. How are you using your anthropological training in your work? What difference is it making?

3. Why do people hire you? Tell us about specific competencies and about the kind of work you do.

4. What advice do you have for students and early career anthropologists for working in non-academic settings?

   - How do you see your career evolving? What are your likely next steps?

   - Do you have extra training you'd recommend and why?

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ANTHROPOLOGIE PRATIQUE
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Thank you for attending!

Virtual sessions will be held on the 3rd Wednesday of the month, every second month, 4:00-5:30 MT.

- March 18, 2026: Publishing Outside Academia

- May 20, 2026 (CASCA Annual Meeting May 20-23): TBD

Dates may change based on availability of Conveners and invited speakers.

Save the dates!

Link to AP website:
https://anthropologyinpraxis.ca/

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See you next time!

Publishing Outside Academia
Wednesday, March 18, 2026, 4:00-5:30pm MT

Eshe Lewis

Eshe Lewis is a cultural anthropologist who has dedicated years to working with Afro-descendants in Latin America., womens' movements, and social activism. As a professional anthropologist she works to bring her skillset to work in museums and archiving, her newest passion. Eshe currently works as a community consultation coordinator at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto.

Suanna Selby Crowley

Suanna Crowley (she/her) is an archaeologist, science communicator, and entrepreneur who leads projects across the globe – even breaking the Internet once for science. She is a founder of her own consulting practice, HeadFort Consulting, LLC, and manages applied research undertakings for federal, private and nonprofit clients. As the President of the National Association for the Practice of Anthropology, Suanna works to connect anthropologists across the Four Fields to resources and networks that enhance careers.

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Links to Resources

- https://learning.linkedin.com/resources - for specific skill development such as business fluency and quantitative research understanding

- https://www.qualtrics.com/training/

- Idea Couture, acquired by [Cognizant](#)

- [Service Design courses, University of Toronto, School of Continuing Studies](#)

- Emma Aiken-Klar on [Medium](#)

What we Heard: Session Summary

- "The fact that I am an anthropologist has offered me entry and seats at the table throughout my career."

- "It's the difference between a wink and a blink, right? You know, Geertz talks about these identical gestures, the rapid opening and shutting of the eye, but they mean very different things… The same gesture or phenomenon can be interpreted very differently depending on the context, and the idea that anthropology is able to offer that context is a very powerful thing that we do."

- "There has been an elusive sense that anthropology offers the 'magic beans'… So we would sell projects by promising clients that we could uncover hidden motivations and hidden truths. And that's not necessarily always true… a different way that I tend to try to position the value, is being able to offer a broader perspective on a problem to be solved, which opens up different avenues for solutioning."

Emma-Jo Aiken-Klar

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What we Heard: Session Summary

- "The design given to a tool to do its job contributes to how we end up using that tool... we can think about the culture that we'd like to encourage and prioritize amongst our user base, and build the tools that could support those values and those experiences that we want our users to experience."

- "I think it's a slippery slope that you can really easily be pigeonholed into usability research, which is evaluative, and you're validating designs... but I think a lot of the time, the mindset shouldn't be like, we're validating that we have the right answer. It should be 'what is a right answer?'"

- "Empire continues to be the biggest employer of anthropologists."

Kat Hutton