



# The earliest multi-island obsidian exchange network and exciting discoveries from Wetar Island, Indonesia

Dr Shimona Kealy,  
Australian National University

Friday 18 October 2024, 3:30pm-4:30pm

Our species embarked on the world's first great maritime journey from Sunda (greater Southeast Asia) to Sahul (greater Australia) at least 50,000 years ago. In the process they settled Wallacea, the archipelago of thousands of islands lying between these two continental landmasses. While this initial settlement has been the focus of many research efforts in the region, the period after this also holds many narratives that have yet to be explored. In particular, recent research has identified obsidian artefacts belonging to a single source in the archaeological assemblages of Timor, Alor, and Kisar islands from ca.16,000 years ago (Reepmeyer et al. 2019). Dating to approximately 15 ka, this obsidian exchange network marks the onset of the world's earliest, multi-island maritime network. However, until now, the source of this obsidian has remained a mystery with the islands of Timor, Alor, and Kisar all ruled out as possibilities. Here I present the results of recent geological and archaeological survey efforts on the island of Wetar attempting to locate the source of this obsidian.

**Location:** Room 3.03,  
Sir Roland Wilson Buidling, ANU

**Zoom:**  
<https://tinyurl.com/yc4546ts>

**Contact**  
E [anna.florin@anu.edu.au](mailto:anna.florin@anu.edu.au)

