

### 3. Abstract

The International Etruscan Sigla Project (IESP) aims to assemble documentation on the thousands of examples of Etruscan nonverbal writing (*sigla*) of one or more letters, numbers or symbols, dating from around 700 BCE to the first century BCE, which were incised, painted or stamped on objects of many different types made of clay, metal, bone, ivory and stone. These markings, discovered on numerous Etruscan archaeological sites, are normally relegated to the background in Etruscan studies in favor of letters that form words and can therefore be studied from a linguistic perspective. In order to investigate the potential of communication in these markings, IESP will create a data base of *sigla* that aims to recognize and group similar items by means of matching scanned images and other factors such as date, provenance, context, artifact type, artifact function, and location of the mark on the artifact. An international team from the US and Italy —archaeologists and computer scientists, professors and students—will meet and share research and will experiment to develop terminology, methodology and software in multiple languages for the new systematic tool.