



Università
Ca' Foscari
Venezia

Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici

Università Ca' Foscari Venezia
Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici
Palazzo Malcanton Marcorà
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Research fellowship on “Water, Landscapes and Environmental History in the medieval Islamic Mediterranean, c. 600-c.1050 CE” - Università Ca' Foscari Venezia (Italian law 30 December 2010, n. 240, art. 22)

The present document in English is to be considered as a mere summary of the main provisions of the notice of competition which is available in Italian at the following ([link](#)) The text in Italian is the official text of the notice of competition for all legal intents and purposes and, in the event of non-conformity with the present document, it shall prevail.

Description

The Department of Humanities at Ca' Foscari University of Venice (Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici dell'Università Ca' Foscari Venezia) invites applications for a fellowship in: “**Water, Landscapes and Environmental History in the medieval Islamic Mediterranean, c. 600-c.1050 CE**”, Academic discipline: L-OR/10 – History of Islamic countries, duration 36 months, tutor prof. Helen Foxhall Forbes, financed by the ERC COG project “SSE1K - Science, Society and Environmental Change in the First Millennium CE”, Grant Agreement n. 101044437, CUP: H73C22001720006, Principal Investigator Prof. Helen Foxhall Forbes.

Abstract: The post-doctoral researcher will examine the social and intellectual history of water in the Muslim-ruled territories around the Mediterranean from the seventh century to the early eleventh. They will carry out original research into Arabic geographical accounts and cartography alongside archaeological evidence to analyse the toponymy of water resources and the practices and activities connected to these. They will analyse narrative and legal texts to identify specific rituals, practices and significant water-related events and conflicts. The researcher will work with Prof. Theresa Jäckh to make comparisons across different contexts and regions including the Islamic west. Excellent knowledge of Arabic is required and the knowledge of other languages relevant to this area such as Hebrew and Greek is particularly welcome. In addition to preparing their research for publication, the researcher will participate in the various activities of the SSE1K project, including attending team meetings and undertaking dissemination activities (conferences, seminars, workshops) on the project topics.

The research may be carried out in English.

The fellowship is intended to provide the successful candidate with the opportunity to pursue his/her own research while benefiting from the range of expertise at Ca' Foscari University of Venice.

This postdoctoral research position focuses on Islamicate culture in the Mediterranean to examine the social and intellectual history of water in North Africa, al-Andalus and Sicily from the seventh century to the early eleventh. It considers relationships between people and environments in different geographical regions where the religious and cultural contexts are similar. When the Muslims conquered North Africa, al-Andalus and Sicily, a key question for the evolving Islamic administration and law was how to distribute the territory's spoils and resources. Water not only played a key role as a vital source of life but also as a means to ensure religious purity (wuḍū'; ṭahāra). The role of water in Islamicate societies in North Africa, al-Andalus and Sicily has mainly been studied in relation to 1) the 'Green Revolution' that brought agricultural and economic innovation via water engineering and landscape architecture or 2) discourses within Islam relating to the symbolic and ritual meanings of water (Kabra 1997; Watson 2002; Quesada Morillas et al. 2016; Metcalfe 2017). WP4 takes a new approach: it investigates the social implications of water and how these related to changing environments in different regions in order to understand social interactions with, and attitudes to, water and related practices related on an intra- and inter-religious level. The postdoctoral researcher will work with Prof Theresa Jäckh (Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen, Germany / Deutsches Historisches Institut Rom) to examine legal texts, narrative historical texts and scientific texts, and they will also integrate analysis of toponymy and excavated and published archaeological sites. They will contextualise their research with reference to published palaeoclimate and palaeoenvironmental studies, with support from Prof. Dominik Fleitmann (Universität Basel, Switzerland) and Prof. Dan Lawrence (Durham University, UK). In the multireligious societies in the Islamicate sphere water was a key element in defined in-group social conventions because of its specific spiritual and purifying importance: there are significant relationships to be examined in relation to gender and water, and the role that water played in the boundaries between some groups and those whom they considered 'unbelievers'. These issues must be examined in relation to the environmental and climatic fluctuation which affected the availability of water in different regions; comparison between regions will enable identification of specific responses to environmental variation across regions



within a shared culture.

Who can apply

Prospective candidates are expected to hold a **PhD in historical studies or related fields, in particular regarding aspects of the history of the Islamic Mediterranean, its landscapes and environments and should have a suitable scientific / professional track record, in which an excellent working knowledge of Arabic must be declared.**

The candidate is invited to provide a list of his/her modern and ancient language skills.

Ca' Foscari encourages applications from researchers with positive evaluation in all the criteria in individual proposals such as Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions - Individual Fellowships/ERC Starting Grants/FIRB (Italian Fund for basic research investments)/SIR (Scientific Young Independence Research) or similar.

Researchers having successfully completed Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions - Individual Fellowships/ERC Starting Grants/FIRB (Italian Fund for basic research investments)/SIR (Scientific Young Independence Research) or similar funded projects are warmly encouraged to apply.

Duration of contract: 36 months (approximately starting: 1st September 2023)

Stipend: The research fellowship amounts to **85.500,00 Euros**, including taxes and social charges.

Deadline for submission of applications: 14th June 2023, h. 12.00 noon (Italian time).

How to apply:

Candidates shall submit:

1. The application form;
2. A motivation letter along with their CV in European format, duly dated and signed, both to enclosed as a one single.pdf file ([link](#)); a declaration must be appended in the footnote of the curriculum, pursuant to the Italian DPR 445/2000 and subsequent amendments and additions, that the information provided corresponds to the truth. Moreover the candidates have to consent to the use of their personal data for the purposes of this selection procedure pursuant to the Italian Legislative Decree 196/2003 and to the EU Regulations 2016/679;
3. The attachments called "obligations and understanding" and "participation and compatibility";
4. All documents, qualifications and publications relevant for the selection procedure (please, see the notice - [link](#));
5. A copy of a valid identity document (either Identity Card or Passport);
6. (If available) Evaluation Summary Reports of Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions - Individual Fellowships/ERC Starting Grants/FIRB (Italian Fund for basic research investments)/SIR (Scientific Young Independence Research) individual proposals having passed all the evaluation thresholds;
7. (If available) Details of Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions - Individual Fellowships, ERC Starting Grants, FIRB (Italian Fund for basic research investments)/ SIR Scientific Young Independence Research funded projects;
8. Declaration on availability to held the interview in remote ([Link](#)) to be send via email at the following address: ricerca.dsu@unive.it

All the schemes of the quoted documentation are available on the website ([link](#)).

Incomplete applications will be rejected.

How to submit your application

Applications should be submitted by the online procedure, available on the notice webpage ([link](#))



Or submit here: <https://apps.unive.it/domandeconcorso-en/accesso/2023-dsu-ar-4>

The candidate, after the uploading, will receive a submission number and an e-mail acknowledging receipt of his/her application.

The candidate if necessary could access the procedures for updating any data and materials by the link provided by the e-mail, in any case any updates must be made no later than the deadline on **14th June 2023, h. 12.00 noon (Italian time)**.

Please note that the University can be contacted for any support needs by the candidate until 13th June 2023 (h. 1 p.m. Italian time).

Please note that in case of a high number of applications and / or weight of the materials loaded by the candidates the system might become slower, Therefore it is suggested not to start the process close to the deadline.

NB: the University does not take on responsibility for wrong or late communication of addresses, nor for any communication problem not depending on the University.

Evaluation

Up to 100 points, specifically:

For qualifications, publications and possible tests, from 0 to 60;

For interview, from 0 to 40.

The following qualifications are considered as evaluation criteria:

- a) a list of publications on research topics related to the subject of the project;
- b) electronic submission of a maximum of 3 publications (in PDF format), already published or in press, which will be evaluated by the commission (one of which may be a chapter of the candidate's PhD thesis);
- c) documented research activity following the PhD with contracts, research grants, short-term research fellowships, research fellowships and assignments;
- e) attached 'preferential securities', if the candidate possesses them - see Article 5 of the competition available in Italian ([link](#));
- f) any other element provided for the announcement, to the articles 2, 3 and 5 of the competition available in Italian ([link](#)).

The interview aims to assess the candidates' skills and expertise on the following subjects:

- Knowledge of the history of the Islamic sphere and the medieval Mediterranean;
- Familiarity with relevant textual sources;
- Knowledge of the English language.

At the end of his/her research activity, the research fellow is required to provide the Department with:

- The preparation of three scholarly articles on the subject;
- contribution to co-authored articles as part of the ERC project SSE1K;

Selection procedure

The interview will be on **30 June 2023, h. 1.00 p.m.** The interview will be held in remote with Zoom.

The short-list of the candidates admitted to the interview, or any postponement, will be published on the University's webpage on 19 June 2023 ([link](#)).

Information and contacts

Candidates may find further details about the application process and the research project in the official call



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published on the following ([link](#))

For further information please contact Department of Humanities - Research Office, e-mail:
ricerca.dsu@unive.it