

PhD Fellowships in Digital Visual Studies, Zurich

University of Zurich-Max Planck Society

Application deadline: Dec 23, 2020

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Call for Applications: Ph.D. Fellowships in Digital Visual Studies

The Max Planck Society (MPG) and the University of Zurich (UZH) invite applications for interdisciplinary predoctoral fellowships in the field of Digital Visual Studies (DVS) for a duration of 2+1 years. The program is part of a five-year cross-institutional Digital Humanities research project funded by the MPG, supported by the Bibliotheca Hertziana – Max Planck Institute for Art History (BHMPi) and collaborating with the Swiss Art Research Infrastructure (SARI) and the UZH Digital Society Initiative (DSI). The DVS project is operative at the UZH since January 2020.

The fellows will carry out cutting-edge multidisciplinary research at the intersection of Art and Architectural History and Computer Science in a program specifically designed to tackle the current gap in the use, analysis, and interpretation of digital visual resources. They will profit from access to large, rich and open datasets provided by a number of partner institutions in Art History, including the BHMPi. Further digitization required for the research projects will be supported. Data will include:

370 000 digital images of works of art (paintings, prints, drawings, sculptures, buildings, etc.) with rich metadata, and 1.150.000 digitized photographs by mid-2021

very rich semantic data about the history of art and architecture in Italy (200.000 relations)

1400 digitized books in the history of art with rich metadata, and 14.600 books on Rome and Naples by the mid-2022

historic maps with annotated geodata for Rome and Naples

diagnostic and technical information, scientific imaging (X-ray, infrared, microscope) of artworks and books

Ph.D. candidates will also have shared access to a Frontend Development Engineer to help with production-ready code and the distribution of prototypes. The academic program will also include input from international Postdoctoral Fellows and Visiting Fellows.

Ideal candidates have expertise (a good Master's degree) in one or more of the following areas:

- Machine Learning
- Natural Language Processing
- Computer Vision, Image Processing,
- Spatial Humanities and GIS
- Knowledge Representation
- Digital Humanities

- Digital Art History, Art History, Archival Studies in Art History
- Book and Photo History
- Media theory/Artistic Research
- Architectural and Urban Studies
- Social and Historical Network Analysis
- Cultural Analytics, Computational Literary Studies

Accepted PhD candidates will benefit from:

- a competitive yearly salary of approx CHF55'000 (with generous social benefits including contribution to pension fund which can be cashed if you leave the country) in an attractive, well-connected and dynamic European city.
- a network of researchers from MPG, BHMPI, UZH, DSI, SARI, ETH Zurich and other national and international partner institutions
- a stimulating group of DH specialists working together
- a vibrant intellectual and creative community in Zurich, including UZH, ETH and the University of the Arts (ZHdK)
- designated supervisors
- support from the UZH Graduate Campus
- office space in the center of Zurich
- research residences at the BHMPI in Rome will be organized
- attending and organizing workshops
- social events to build community

Candidates are invited to upload their applications on the recruitment website of the BHMPI (<https://recruitment.biblhertz.it>), including their CV, copies of relevant certificates, names and full contact details of two referees and a statement describing their motivation, personal qualifications and research interests (non-binding, max. three pages).

The Call will remain open until filled. Researchers interested in the DVS are invited to consult our website (DVS) and to address inquiries and questions to dario.negueraladelcastillo@uzh.ch

Candidates are responsible for their separate application to a UZH doctoral program in the related disciplines.

Please see our webpage or check the following links for relevant information:

UZH Doctoral programs: Application and registration: <https://www.uzh.ch/cmsssl/en/studies/application/doctoralstudies.html>

Doctoral Programs at the University of Zurich: <https://www.grc.uzh.ch/en/interest-phd/pgrs.html>

UZH Graduate Campus: <https://www.grc.uzh.ch/de.html>

Reference:

STIP: PhD Fellowships in Digital Visual Studies, Zurich. In: ArtHist.net, Jun 1, 2020 (accessed Apr 15, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/23171>>.