2 positions in Medieval Art History, StoryPharm project, University of Salerno

"StoryPharm" international PhD project (European Marie Skłodowska-Curie program)
Application deadline: Mar 31, 2025

Maddalena Vaccaro

[New Deadline: 31 March 2025]

"StoryPharm": Storytelling as Pharmakon in Premodernity and Beyond: Training the New Generation of Researchers in Health Humanities.
The University of Salerno (UniSa) is pleased to advertise 2 three-year Special Scientist PhD positions in HISTORY OF MEDIEVAL ART with a generous research allowance in an international, multi--partner EU project, employment beginning between June and August 2025.
The StoryPharm project, which is funded by the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action – Doctoral Networks – Grant Agreement 101169114 (https://www.ucy.ac.cy/storypharm/).
The focus of the project will be on premodern narratives and images involving medicine, health, and healing. These will be studied from a transdisciplinary and comparative perspective, across linguistic and cultural borders.

SALARY
The successfull candidate will be employed full-time. The gross salary before taxes and fees will be €3,311/month plus mobility allowance (€600) and, only if applicable, family allowance (€495). There is no provision for 13th salary.
The successful applicant will be employed under full-time, fixed-term contracts governed by Italian labour law, UNI SALERNO regulations, and the rules of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions.

More details are available below and at https://www.ucy.ac.cy/storypharm/vacancies/

PROJECTS

STORYPHARM FELLOW 7:

"IMAGES OF CHRIST'S MIRACULOUS HEALINGS BETWEEN MEDICAL AWARENESS AND SOCIAL INCLUSION (9TH–11TH C. CE)"

This subproject investigates miraculous healing scenes in Central European Christological cycles from the 9th to 11th centuries, focusing on the remarkable examples of Müstair (Unterengadin/Münstertal, Switzerland), Sant'Angelo in Formis, and the "Salerno Ivories" (Campania, Italy). These works vividly depict individuals suffering from illnesses and physical deformities. The

research will explore the iconographic typologies used to portray illness, the figurative sources available to painting workshops, and the interplay between artistic imagery, textual traditions, and contemporary medical knowledge practiced by both men and women. It also seeks to uncover how these visual narratives presented Christ as a healer, highlighting the relationship between divine compassion and human suffering in medieval art. The subproject will encourage to examine connections with manuscript cultures of the period—including religious texts and medical compilations, that depict also the female practice of the medical profession—providing a comparative framework for understanding the narrative strategies of these cycles.
The successful candidate will be employed at UNI SALERNO and enrolled in the Department of Cultural Heritage Sciences. The training includes a three-month academic secondment at the University of Bamberg (UNI BA) and a one-month non-academic secondment at the Bamberg State Library. At UNI SALERNO, the PhD candidate will work under the supervision of Maddalena Vaccaro while Katharina Schüppel will act as a supervisor at UNI BA.

Objectives
Fellow 7 will aim at achieving the following results: (1) show whether artistic representations in non-medical contexts reflect actual medical knowledge and practices; (2) demonstrate if representations of disease and deformity are connected to instances of exclusion concerning certain types of sufferers in the examined societies.

Specific Requirements
A Master's Degree in History of Art or a related field is required. Candidates should demonstrate a solid grounding in Medieval Art, preferably of the examined period (9th–12th c. CE). Previous experience with digital humanities and the ability to work in an international research team are desirable.
The University wishes our staff to reflect the diversity of society and thus welcomes applications from all qualified candidates regardless of personal background. We are committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive environment, and we aim to create a supportive atmosphere that respects and promotes different perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences.

THE APPLICATION
The application package should contain a short document (max 2 pages) describing how candidates would approach the research. This is a crucial part of the evaluation as it is meant to reflect writing ability, creativity and grasp of theory and research. It is therefore crucial that the best effort is made toward making the document reflective of candidates' true abilities.
When composing the text regarding the project, candidates may wish to consider:
• How do medieval visual representations of Christ's healings align with contemporary understandings of illness and deformity?
• What are the narrative strategies used in artistic representations to convey Christ's role as a healer, and how do these compare across different cultural contexts?
• Can the depicted interactions between Christ and sufferers offer insights into societal attitudes toward illness and disability during the examined period?
• How might territorial and environmental factors have influenced the representation of healing and religious imagery across different geographical contexts?

Short Bibliography

Caseau-Chevallier, Béatrice. 2021. Rituels religieux et sensorialité (Antiquité et Moyen Âge). Parcours de recherche. Milan.
Krötzl, Christian (eds.). 2015. Infirmity in Antiquity and the Middle Ages. Social and Cultural Approaches to Health, Weakness and Care. Farnham.
Mitchell, John. 2018. Lombard Legacy. Cultural Strategies and the Visual Arts in Early Medieval Italy. London.

Main Training Activities Specific to the Project
• Induction Week (University of Cyprus; UCY)
• Training in Critical Discourse Analysis (Lund University)
• Training in Narrative and in Literary Criticism (UCY)
• Training in Intersectionality, Sexuality, and Gender (UCY)
• Summer School (University of Bamberg)
• Training in Obtaining Funding in Project Management (online)
• Training in Entrepreneurship (online)
• Training in Publishing Industry (Bamberg State Library)

Expectations
The PhD candidate will fulfil the requirements of the PhD programme (https://www.dottoratomem.it/en/phd-programme-regulation/; and lead the research under the guidance of the supervisors and present their work at international conferences, in accordance with the consortium's communication and dissemination plan. Furthermore, they will cooperate with other fellow PhD students to fulfill the StoryPharm's training and other objectives. Participation in StoryPharm's training and other activities is compulsory.
For more information about Unisa Project 2/StoryPharm Fellow7, contact Prof. Maddalena Vaccaro (mavaccaro@unisa.it).

STORYPHARM FELLOW 15:

"THE HEALTHY PLACE: ARCHITECTURE AND IMAGES FOR HEALING DEVOTIONAL EXPERIENCES IN SOUTHERN ITALY IN A MEDITERRANEAN CONTEXT"

This subproject will investigate the strategies behind the construction and decoration of pilgrimage sites in Southern Italy, where believers sought bodily and emotional healing. The focus will be on Campania, where thaumaturgic devotions are well-documented from the early Christian era, such as those associated with thaumaturgic saints in the Naples area, to the Norman period, with devotions to Saint Nicholas, Saint Matthew, and Saint Catherine in the Salerno and Amalfi Coast areas. The study will explore how architectural layouts and visual decorations were carefully designed to enhance the healing experiences of pilgrims, fostering both spiritual connection and physical restoration. The research will also examine the influence of medical traditions (such as the documented presence of women practicing medicine or the "Medical School of Salerno") on the development of religious practices in these sanctuaries, tracing how legacy cultures shaped their devotional and thaumaturgic roles. By drawing connections with other European or Mediterranean sites known for similar healing practices, the study aims to situate these sanctuaries within broader networks of devotional and cultural exchange, emphasizing their significance within the medieval religious landscape.

The successful candidate will be employed at UNI SALERNO and enrolled in the Department of Cultural Heritage Sciences. The training includes a three-month academic secondment at the University of Cyprus (UCY) and a one-month non-academic secondment at the Diocesan Museum Bamberg. At UNI SALERNO, the PhD candidate will work under the supervision of Maddalena Vaccaro while Maria Parani will act as a supervisor at UCY.

Objectives
Fellow 15 will aim at achieving the following results: (1) demonstrate the power of religious sites and decoration, alongside that of narrative to alleviate the pain of pilgrims; (2) provide a systematic investigation of the interaction between suffering pilgrims and the architecture and decoration of pilgrimage sites.

Specific Requirements
A Master's Degree in History of Art or a related field is required. Candidates should demonstrate a solid grounding in Medieval Art and Architecture. Previous experience with digital humanities and the ability to work in an international research team are desirable.
The University wishes our staff to reflect the diversity of society and thus welcomes applications from all qualified candidates regardless of personal background. We are committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive environment, and we aim to create a supportive atmosphere that respects and promotes different perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences.

Main Training Activities Specific to the Project
• Induction Week (University of Cyprus; UCY)
• Training in Critical Discourse Analysis (Lund University)
• Training in Narrative and in Literary Criticism (UCY)
• Training in Intersectionality, Sexuality, and Gender (UCY)
• Summer School (University of Bamberg)
• Training in Obtaining Funding in Project Management (online)
• Training in Entrepreneurship (online)
• Training in Publishing Industry (Bamberg State Library)

Expectations
The PhD candidate will fulfil the requirements of the PhD programme (https://www.dottoratomem.it/en/phd-programme-regulation/, and lead the research under the guidance of the supervisors and present their work at international conferences, in accordance with the consortium's communication and dissemination plan. Furthermore, they will cooperate with other fellow PhD students to fulfill the StoryPharm's training and other objectives. Participation in StoryPharm's training and other activities is compulsory.

THE APPLICATION
The application package should contain a short document (max 2 pages) describing how candidates would approach the research. This is a crucial part of the evaluation as it is meant to reflect writing ability, creativity and grasp of theory and research. It is therefore crucial that candidates make their best effort toward making the document reflective of their true abilities.
When composing the text regarding the project, candidates may wish to consider:
• How did the architectural layout and visual decoration of pilgrimage sites in Southern Italy enhance the healing experience of pilgrims?

• What connections can be drawn between these healing sanctuaries and other Mediterranean sites of similar devotional practices?
• What role did the legacy of several healing cultures (ancient heritage, involvement of women, foreign knowledge and traditions…) play in shaping the religious and healing practices of Southern Italy?
• How might territorial and environmental factors have influenced the structures of healing sanctuaries across different geographical contexts?

Short Bibliography
Brandenburg, Hugo (ed.) 2007. Salute e guarigione nella tarda antichità. Rome.
Oldfield, Paul 2014. Sanctity and Pilgrimage in Medieval Southern Italy (1000–1200). Cambridge.
Piva Paolo (ed.) 2012. Medieval Art. London.

For more information about Unisa Project 3/StoryPharm Fellow15, contact Prof. Maddalena Vaccaro (mavaccaro@unisa.it).

MORE DETAILS ABOUT THE CALL FOR APPLICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE BELOW AND AT
https://www.ucy.ac.cy/storypharm/vacancies/

The StoryPharm consortium publishes a call for 19 PhD fellowships within the training programme “Storytelling as Pharmakon in Premodernity and Beyond: Training the New Generation of Researchers in Health Humanities”. The fellowships are funded by the European Union’s Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action – Doctoral Networks, Grant Agreement 101169114.
All recruited doctoral fellows will become highly skilled cultural historians specialising in premodern intellectual and healthcare worlds. At the same time, they will acquire transferable skills allowing them to use, develop, and deploy cutting-edge approaches to storytelling and its ethical ramifications for scientific, professional, business, healthcare, and social purposes. After the offered doctoral training, the fellows will be ideally positioned to (1) achieve ground-breaking research results; (2) meet current trends and needs in the job market; (3) work towards establishing a human-centred medical system; and (4) create better and more resilient societies.

StoryPharm welcomes highly-motivated applicants. Depending on the position, applicants will be employed at the University of Cyprus (Cyprus), University of Bamberg (Germany), Lund University (Sweden), University of Salerno (Italy), and Cardiff University (UK).

The call is open to applicants of any age and nationality who meet the following requirements at the recruitment date:
• Prior to the starting date of the PhD programme they must hold or be due to hold a Master’s Degree in relevant fields mentioned above.
• Must not already hold a doctoral title.
• Must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country of the recruiting organisation for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately before the recruitment date (mobility Rule). Any time spent as part of a procedure for obtaining refugee status under the Geneva Convention (1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol), compulsory national service and/or short stays such as holidays do not count towards the total.

Additional requirements can apply for specific positions. For further information, please consult the detailed information for each position.

Applications for the first round will be accepted from 23/10/2024 until 17/02/2025 at 14:00 (Central European Time).
If any of the above prerequisites is not satisfied, the StoryPharm consortium reserves the right to exclude applicants from the selection procedure at any time, even after the selection procedure has taken place.

Application Procedures
Applications must be submitted electronically to the email address: cemar@ucy.ac.cy.
Applicants may apply for one or more positions, up to three positions in total. In case of multiple applications, applicants should submit one application with a separate research statement for each position and specify the priority order in their personal statement.

The following documents must be provided:
• Personal statement (max 2 pages) detailing the applicant's motivations and goals within the StoryPharm programme
• CV (max 2 pages) with emphasis on prior academic achievements
• Research statement (max 2 pages, 1,000 words) detailing how the applicant will approach the research project and how the StoryPharm training goals fit into the applicant's career plans. Please consider the research questions included in each position's description.
• Copy of Bachelor's and Master's Degree certificates and transcript of records.
• Copy of Master's Thesis.
• A reference letter by the MA supervisor and one other academic reference.
• Copy of an ID document valid at the time of the interview.

All application documents must be drafted in English. For certificates and other official documents official translations in English are preferable. We, however, accept documents in the following languages: Danish, Dutch, English, French, German, Greek, Italian, Norwegian, Portuguese, Spanish, and Swedish.
Applications must be submitted by the call deadline.
The applications must be complete in all their parts and must include all required material in PDF format without any protection that prevents printing.

Evaluation
A specific Evaluation Committee will be established to assess each topic's applicants. Each Committee will by composed of the main supervisors, an external member from the Supervisory Board, and possibly other faculty members of the recruiting university.
The evaluation process will include two stages.

1st Stage: Application Assessment
Application materials will be assessed based on the criteria specified in Table 2.
The score will be calculated on a scale of 0 to 100 points. Candidates with a score of at least 60 over 100 will pass to the second step and will be invited to an interview. We expect to notify shortlisted candidates in December 2024.
Table 2: Evaluation Criteria for the Preliminary Selection

Criteria Percentage
Criterion 1: Excellence of the applicant's CV, skills and track record (see Application Procedures), fulfilment of the relevant requirements related to the position applied for 80%
Criterion 2: Potential impact on the applicant's career and motivations to participate in the StoryPharm training programme 20%
Global score 100% (threshold 60%)

2nd Stage: Interview
Individual interviews will have the purpose of gaining a better sense of the applicants' academic background and their approach to the proposed PhD research project as well as the vision of their role within the network and of their future career. If a candidate has applied for more than one fellowship, the interview will test the fulfilment of the requirements for all of them.
The interviews will last approximately 30 minutes. Candidates will be interviewed on-line via Zoom or Teams.
The Evaluation Committee will evaluate the interviewees based on the criteria specified in the table below. It will produce an evaluation summary report for each applicant, with scores and detailed motivations.
All interviews will be conducted in English.
Table 3: Evaluation criteria for the interview
Criteria Percentage
Criterion 1: Excellence of the applicant's presentation: Argumentation, communication, and evidence of knowledge of the ancient/medieval/modern languages when relevant 35%
Criterion 2: Excellence of the research statement, originality, understanding of the different facets of research demonstrated during discussion 65%
Global score 100%

The Evaluation Committee will produce a ranking list for each position.

Ranking List
All applicants invited to the interview will be informed of the outcome of the selection process with an Evaluation Summary Report.
Applicants with Disabilities or Specific Learning Difficulties
StoryPharm will take specific measures for applicants with disabilities (e.g. blind or deaf applicants or those suffering from any other relevant disability) or with specific learning difficulties (e.g. applicants diagnosed with dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia or dysorthography) to guarantee equal treatment.

Admission to the PhD Programmes
Successful applicants are admitted to their selected PhD programme following the order of the ranking list. The selected applicants must confirm by email their acceptance of the position within 15 days.
Applicants who fail to meet this deadline will be replaced by the next applicant on the ranking list, who will be informed by email and must enroll within 15 days following the same procedure.
If no other applicant is available in the ranking list for the position, StoryPharm may decide to assign the position to a qualified applicant for a different PhD position or launch an extra call for applications for the vacant position.

Employment Conditions
Depending on the enrolling institution, the fellows are expected to start their contracts between June 2025 and August 2025 under a 36-month research contract and will be enrolled in the PhD programme of each institution starting from the 2025-2026 academic year.
All eligible researchers recruited within the network will be employed full-time (see individual Calls for the salaries).

PhD Fellows' Rights, Obligations and Incompatibilities
It is not possible to be simultaneously enrolled in more than one study programme leading to the awarding of a degree (e.g. Bachelor, Masters, Postgraduate Specialisation, short/executive Masters or PhD).
In the case of enrolment in the StoryPharm PhD programme successful applicants will be required to suspend or, if not possible, discontinue any enrolment in their other degree programme before the commencement of the PhD programme in order not to be excluded.
Confidentiality
Personal data will be collected, used and processed in accordance with General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (GDPR).
StoryPharm commits to using personal information for the purposes of the selection process alone.
The participation in the selection process implies the applicant's consent to the collection, use and process of their personal data by the StoryPharm consortium.

For more information visit our website https://www.ucy.ac.cy/storypharm/ and for any questions, contact the StoryPharm Scientific Project Manager, Dr Andria Androu andreou.andria@ucy.ac.cy

Reference:
JOB: 2 positions in Medieval Art History, StoryPharm project, University of Salerno. In: ArtHist.net, Jan 9, 2025 (accessed Nov 23, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/43625>.