Hospitals and Confraternities in Europe (Naples, 8–11 Apr 26)

Naples, Apr 8–11, 2026
Deadline: Nov 30, 2025

Stefano D'Ovidio

Hospitals and Confraternities in Europe (13th-18th centuries) - XV Abrils de l'Hospital.

The 15th edition of the Abrils de l'Hospital, a series of annual conferences promoted by the University of Barcelona since 2103, will be held in Naples in April 2026. This edition will focus on the role of charitable confraternities and craft guilds in the foundation, administration, reform, and expansion of hospitals and other welfare institutions. The conference will place particular emphasis on both the tangible and intangible heritage of these organizations, examined through interdisciplinary and gender-aware approaches.
The broad chronological scope will encourage innovative research adopting a longue durée perspective on the ongoing processes of reform, refoundation, and restructuring that characterized confraternities, hospitals, and charitable institutions of the ancien régime. Special attention will be devoted to large and medium-sized urban contexts, in order to promote comparative discussions across the diverse political, economic, social, and cultural landscapes of Christian Europe.

The sessions will be organized around three main research strands.
1. The agency of confraternities, craft guilds, associations of foreigners, and charitable movements in the foundation, management, and administrative reform of hospitals.
2. The involvement of members of ruling families and the urban patriciate, merchants, artisans, and farmers in confraternities and associations responsible for hospitals and other charitable institutions (orphanages, leprosaria, lazarettos, and almsgiving organizations).
3. The written records produced by confraternities and guilds engaged in the management of pious institutions, along with the architectural and artistic heritage commissioned by lay and religious groups for the enlargement, embellishment, and ritual use of hospital spaces and their attached religious buildings.
Alongside academic sessions and discussions, the program will include poster presentations, as well as guided visits to archives and to the main hospitals and confraternal buildings in the city of Naples.

The Call for Papers is open until 30th November 2025. Proposals should be submitted to the conference organizers at abrils.hospital@ub.edu and must include the following information in a single PDF or Word file: full name, academic affiliation, paper title, abstract (150–200 words), and a short CV (maximum 200 words). Presentations may be delivered in Catalan, French, English, Italian, Portuguese, or Spanish.

Accepted proposals will be notified by 31st January 2026.

Organizers: Gemma T. Colesanti (ISP-CNR, Napoli), Toni Conejo and Salvatore Marino (Universitat de Barcelona), Stefano D'Ovidio (Università di Napoli Federico II)

Reference:
CFP: Hospitals and Confraternities in Europe (Naples, 8-11 Apr 26). In: ArtHist.net, Oct 21, 2025 (accessed Nov 15, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/50960>.