

PhD Position, Splendor and Commerce, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna

Jun 1, 2026–Mar 31, 2029

Application deadline: Apr 15, 2026

Maria Theisen

For our Project "Splendor and Commerce - Exploring Humanist Italian Renaissance Book Production Through Art History and Material Analysis" we are seeking a committed PhD student (f/m/x) in Art History.

Few periods in European history are as closely linked to book culture as the Age of Humanism, in which the rediscovery of classical authors played a central role. To better understand the impact on intellectual life in Vienna, this project focuses on two significant 16th-century humanist collections in Vienna: the collection of Bishop Johannes Fabri, who was closely associated with Erasmus, and the library of the court physician and historian Johannes Sambucus. Both scholars amassed extensive collections that were praised by their contemporaries for their classical and humanist codices, many of which were magnificently illuminated Italian texts from centres such as Florence, Rome and Naples, as well as from the famous Bibliotheca Corviniana of King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary.

The project "Splendor and Commerce - Exploring Humanist Italian Renaissance Book Production Through Art History and Material Analysis" will shed light on the practices of workshops in the early modern period and examine the spread of Renaissance book art across Europe and within Vienna's scholarly circles. It will not only challenge the stereotypical image of the 'Italian Renaissance' versus the 'Gothic North', but also lay the foundations for future conservation measures to preserve these valuable manuscripts as testimonies to our cultural heritage.

Your Tasks

- Art-historical description and classification of illuminated Italian Renaissance manuscripts from the 15th century, entry into the manuscripta.at database
- Collaboration and exchange of expertise with conservators, scholars of materials science

Your Profile

- Completed master's degree in art history, ongoing PhD study, specialization in Italian book illumination desirable
- Basic knowledge of medieval manuscripts and fundamental interest in materials science aspects
- Excellent German and English skills
- Very good IT skills (especially MS Office)
- Accurate, structured, and team-oriented approach to work

- Sense of responsibility, especially when handling historical collection objects

Our Offer

- A position in an innovative and internationally active environment crucial to success
- Numerous voluntary social benefits
- Flex time arrangement
- Opportunity to work independently and develop personally

The minimum annual gross salary for this position is EUR 53.140,92 (full-time based), in accordance with the collective agreement of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (ÖAW). For part-time employment, the salary will be adjusted on a pro rata basis in line with the agreed working hours. The position is starting on June 1, 2026, for a fixed term until March 31, 2029 and involves 30 hours per week.

Application

Please apply online:
<https://www.oeaw.ac.at/en/oeaw-home/jobs?jh=xzobgqttvzkwg8gox9mnkxj206vstdf>. Make sure that your Application is including (1) a cover letter, (2) curriculum vitae and (3) copies of relevant certificates. Applications are open until April 15, 2026. If you have any questions on the position, please get in touch with Mag. Dr. Maria Theisen (maria.theisen@oeaw.ac.at).

Reference:

JOB: PhD Position, Splendor and Commerce, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna. In: ArtHist.net, Apr 3, 2026 (accessed May 21, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/52124>>.