

Tuscany and the Iberian Empires (Florence, 30 Oct 26)

Florence, Palazzo Alberti, Medici Archive Project in Via de' Benci 10, Oct 30, 2026

Deadline: Jul 15, 2026

The Medici Archive Project

Tuscany and the Iberian Empires. Migration and Knowledge Transmission in the Early Modern Period.

In the early modern period (c. 1500-1700), Iberian religious refugees, scholars, merchants, and diplomats took up residence in Tuscany. In search of protection or fame, they weaved a network that linked Iberia, Tuscany, and wider imperial territories. New Christians, Moriscos, and other communities displaced by persecution—as well as intellectuals, philosophers, medical practitioners, envoys, diplomats, and other intermediaries—mediated the circulation of knowledge, materials, and political interests between courts, universities, and religious institutions.

By taking a broad view of these encounters, this workshop aims to explore the multiple and layered presence of Iberian agents in early modern Tuscany between c. 1500 and 1700. Papers may also address the reception and assimilation of knowledge, materials, and ideas from the Portuguese and Spanish empires within Italian contexts. We particularly encourage contributions which address topics including, but not limited to:

- Mobility, exile, and forced migration networks across the Iberian world—including its overseas possessions—and Tuscany.
- The circulation of scientific, technical, ethnographic, and medical knowledge among Iberian and Tuscan institutions.
- The representation and reception of the Portuguese and Spanish empires in Tuscan political thought, literature, science, and art.
- Diplomacy, espionage, and political brokerage within and between courts.
- Material and cultural transfers: books, maps, instruments, liturgical objects, and technologies.

Comparative, micro-historical, and transregional approaches are especially welcome. We also encourage interdisciplinary perspectives that draw on the history of science, the history of medicine, religious studies, economic history, diplomacy, literature, art history, and Jewish studies.

Organizers:

João Covolan (Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa); David Soares Mesquita (Centre for Classical Studies – University of Lisbon)

Application Process:

The conference will take place at the Medici Archive Project in Via de' Benci 10, Florence, on Fri-

day, 30 October 2026. To apply, please submit a PDF with an abstract (max 200 words), along with a short Bio (max 100 words), by July 15, 2026 to education@medici.org.

Successful applicants will be notified by August 1, 2026. Papers may be read in either English or Italian, and presentations should not exceed 20 minutes.

Publication:

Selected papers will be included in an edited volume published by the Medici Archive Project Series with Brepols/Harvey Miller.

Reference:

CFP: Tuscany and the Iberian Empires (Florence, 30 Oct 26). In: ArtHist.net, Apr 2, 2026 (accessed Jun 17, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/52127>>.