Digital Humanities Scientist, Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome

Bibliotheca Hertziana – Max Planck Institute for Art History (BHMPI)
Application deadline: Jan 31, 2027

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The Bibliotheca Hertziana – Max Planck Institute for Art History in Rome promotes advanced research in Italian and global art and architectural history. As part of the Human Sciences Section of the Max Planck Society, it is recognized as one of the world's foremost research institutes in its field.

The Bibliotheca Hertziana is a leading institution in digital art history. In the past decade, it has invested in the digitization of its photographic and book collections, the development of digital research infrastructures, and research at the intersection of artificial intelligence and art history. Its Digital Humanities Lab (DHLab https://www.biblhertz.it/en/digital-humanities-lab) develops new methods and systems at the interface of art history and computer science and coordinates the institute's digital infrastructures. The DH Lab maintains a network of researchers and developers across the institute and beyond, including collaborations with other Max Planck Institutes and international partners. Its projects span digital mapping, text and image digitization, computer vision, digital publishing, and open science. The DH Lab is a member of the Consortium for Open Research Data in the Humanities (CORDH https://www.cordh.net/). The institute also hosts the Max Planck Research Group for Machine Visual Culture (MPRG-MVC https://www.biblhertz.it/machine-visual-culture) and collaborates closely with the Center for Digital Visual Studies (DVS https://dvstudies.net/) and the International Max Planck Research School for Multimodal Digital Humanities (IMPRS-MDH https://www.mdh.uzh.ch/en.html), both based at the University of Zurich.

The Bibliotheca Hertziana is seeking a new colleague for the position of Digital Humanities Scientist to join its interdisciplinary DH Lab team.

With this position, the Bibliotheca Hertziana aims to:
- expand its leadership in digital art history with a focus on machine-learning technologies
- innovate and strengthen foundational art historical research through the application of artificial intelligence
- connect cultural heritage data infrastructures with new developments in computer science and emerging art historical research questions
- intensify collaborative research across the institute's departments, library, and photographic collection
- create synergies between the DH Lab, DVS, IMPRS-MDH, MPRG-MVC, and CORDH
- grow its international network of scientific collaborations

- make legacy data productive for research
- provide data stewardship
- train early-career researchers and staff in adopting new digital technologies

The Bibliotheca Hertziana offers two contractual options for the position:

a) Full Position: a full-time postdoctoral position of Digital Humanities Scientist with a one-year fixed-term contract that can be converted to a permanent position

b) Project Position: a full-time predoctoral or postdoctoral position of Digital Humanities Scientist with a fixed-term contract of up to two years that can be renewed or converted to a permanent postdoctoral position; this position consists of one or more research projects to be concluded within a maximum of two years

For both positions, the Bibliotheca Hertziana offers:
- a position under a German employment contract, up to pay grade EG 14, including foreign service allowances and social benefits in line with the German public sector where candidates meet the requirements for employment under the TVöD (Bund) in Rome;
- otherwise, an attractive local employment contract in accordance with the standards of the German Embassy in Rome
- support for balancing work and family life, and opportunities for professional development
- a strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and a particular welcome to applications from underrepresented groups
- unique premises in the historic center of Rome
- a highly international and diverse research context
- access to a broad scientific network across the Max Planck Society
- collaboration with excellent early-career art historians in an innovative research context
- inspiring team spirit and integrative institutional culture

The Bibliotheca Hertziana welcomes candidates who:

a) as postdoctoral candidates for both the Full Position and the Project Position, hold a PhD with a thesis in the digital humanities, preferably related to art and architecture, or a thesis in computer science together with several years of successful research experience in digital cultural heritage; the PhD thesis must be defended no later than six months after the start of employment; candidates for the Full Position are required to submit a vision of their activity at the institute and specific projects for the first year
Postdoctoral candidates must:
- demonstrate an excellent track record of innovative digital humanities research
- have experience in the development and application of machine learning and artificial intelligence
- have published digital humanities research in leading scholarly outlets
- be familiar with machine learning, retrieval-augmented generation, data modeling, and semantic web technologies
- be able to use or develop multimodal models in the digital humanities
- have experience in developing, leading, or participating in funded research projects

b) as predoctoral candidates for the Project Position, hold a master's degree with a thesis in the digital humanities, preferably related to art and architecture, or a thesis in computer science; dedicated time will be granted to work on a PhD thesis that qualifies candidates for the postdoctoral Full Position; successful candidates will receive support in enrolling in a PhD program, for example with the IMPRS-MDH at the University of Zurich
Predoctoral candidates must:
- demonstrate a strong interest in innovative digital humanities research
- have experience in the development and application of machine learning and artificial intelligence
- have at least submitted publication in digital humanities research
- be familiar with machine learning, retrieval-augmented generation, data modeling, and semantic web technologies
- be able to use or develop multimodal models in the digital humanities
- have an interest in developing, leading, or participating in funded research projects

All candidates must:
- be able to work across multiple projects and departments
- communicate effectively and work well in teams
- possess very good English language skills

The preferred starting date is September/October 2027; an earlier start is negotiable.

Application procedure:

Applications must be submitted by January 31, 2027, via the institute's recruitment platform: https://recruitment.biblhertz.it/positiondetails/23232515.

Online interviews will take place in February 2027. Shortlisted candidates will be invited for on-site visits in March 2027. Postdoctoral candidates can apply for both positions at the same time. AI-generated applications will be discarded. Applicants must upload separate PDF files containing:
- a letter of motivation
- a curriculum vitae with a list of publications
- for the Full Position: a vision for the position at the institute and a plan of activities for the first year; for the Project Position: a proposal for research projects to be concluded within a maximum of two years; candidates applying for both positions must submit both documents
- optional writing samples

The Max Planck Society is committed to equality and diversity in all fields of research and particularly welcomes applications from members of underrepresented groups.

Reference:
JOB: Digital Humanities Scientist, Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome. In: ArtHist.net, Nov 25, 2026 (accessed Nov 26, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/57212>.