



Postdoctoral Research Position

The Department of History at the University of Zurich invites applications for a 15-month research position in history as part of the project “Humility in Theory and Practice. Historical Approaches Across Cultures (1250–1500)”, funded by an SNSF Starting Grant (2024–2029) and led by SNSF-Professor Silvia Negri.

Humility was omnipresent in past societies. It was conceived, practiced, and represented as a social, epistemic, religious, and aesthetic value. The overarching goal of our project is to explore the re-negotiations of humility in both theory and practice across time (primarily, though not exclusively, between 1250 and 1500) and across regions. Our current focus lies on Latin Europe and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), specifically Egypt and Syria. Humility serves as an analytical category for interpreting texts, images, behaviors, practices, and artifacts from the past. We employ it heuristically to describe human beings’ awareness of their situatedness and positionality, and the value they ascribed to it. The project implements approaches from historical semantics, material philology, book history, intellectual, cultural, and social history, as well as the history of knowledge, with a particular emphasis on gender-related issues. Digital tools are also implemented within the project.

The appointed researcher will:

- conduct research relevant to the project’s objectives;
- contribute to the development of the project’s digital environment;
- participate in team meetings and project events;
- assist in organizing project activities and a related publication;
- author at least one academic paper.

We particularly welcome applicants who have successfully completed their PhD and who have demonstrated expertise in the history and in the written, visual, and material cultures of Iberian, or Byzantine, or Middle Eastern communities during the period covered by the project. Applicants should be interested in contributing to the study of concepts and/or practices of humility, focusing on selected corpora of sources, and should value dialogue and exchange across disciplines and areas of expertise. Digital skills and an interest in contributing to the development of the project’s digital tools are an asset. The appointment will be at the rank of a Postdoctoral Researcher.

The starting date is flexible, preferably between May 1, 2026, and September 1, 2026.

Application

Applicants should submit the following documents as a single PDF file to silvia.negri@hist.uzh.ch

- A motivation letter
- A detailed CV outlining their academic track record
- The names and contact details of two references
- Their dissertation and, if applicable, one additional publication

The deadline for applications is January 16, 2026. Candidates invited for an interview will be asked to prepare a 1–2-page document outlining their ideas for contributing to the project.