

Hosting offer for Marie Skłodowska-Curie Postdoctoral Fellowships (PF) 2022 at Antwerp Cultural Heritage Sciences (ARCHES) research group, University of Antwerp

[MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships](#) are individual research grants offering excellent postdoctoral researchers the chance to develop their skills by means of international mobility. Through the implementation of an original and personalised research project, MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships aim to foster excellence through training and mobility and to equip researchers with new skills and competences in order to identify solutions to current and future challenges.

ARCHES invites motivated postdoctoral researchers to jointly prepare an application for the [MSCA-PF-2022 call Marie Skłodowska-Curie Postdoctoral Fellowships](#) call ([MSCA-PF-2022](#)) with them as host organisation.

Description of Hosting organisation/group

Antwerp Cultural Heritage Sciences (ARCHES) is a research group of the University of Antwerp's Faculty of Design Sciences, associated with the educational programmes of Heritage Studies and Conservation-Restoration. The group is inherently interdisciplinary, as are the subject areas it spans. Within this broad remit ARCHES has defined the following research spearheads:

- Critical heritage studies
- Built heritage
- Chemical characterisation and imaging of heritage materials
- Study of historical sources and (reproduction of) technology
- Participatory approaches to heritage
- Cultural history of heritage

<https://www.uantwerpen.be/en/research-groups/arches/>

Topics/expertise

In particular we welcome research proposals sitting within the framework of critical and/or participatory heritage, focusing on controversial, contested or difficult heritage. Within the critical framework of this may include the cultural expressions through heritage of legacies of armed conflict and other acts of violence, heritage that causes dissonance, or 'toxic' forms of heritage. The human past is filled with violent and painful events - ranging from global struggles such as climate change and pandemics, through regional incidences of war and persecution, to personal aggressions and violations. Who owns such pasts? While this question, embracing legal, ethical and cultural dimensions of 'ownership' has been asked numerous times we invite applicants to address this fundamental dilemma with fresh eyes, framed specifically within the context of heritages that hurt. When is it appropriate to forget traumas and move on, as a society, a community or as an individual? How does such heritage affect the present and future?

Presentist ideas distort our understanding of the past, and societies cannot be understood in universalistic terms or through causal processes. Memories and material traces continue to seep into our lives, and shape behaviours as well as expectations, hopes and fears for the future. This is particularly true for the stories that are painful to remember, the objects and buildings that stand as

unsightly memorials to ugly regimes and events – or even for romanticized ideas of a ‘duty to remember’ imposed on citizens. Material and immaterial forms of heritage can be taken as a point of departure to ask questions about long-term change in humans’ struggles with the painful and messy aspects of our living together. In line with ARCHES’ multidisciplinary environment, candidates are invited to build on many disciplines that have studied the transformation of experiences of pain into memorable objects or narratives. Research proposals that incorporate digital humanities methods are welcome. Ambitiously, we place no limit on the geo-political locations of sites and case studies.

The supervisory team for this invitation of interest include professors Suzie Thomas, Marc Jacobs, Yonca Erkan, Piraye Hacigüzeller and H  l  ne Verreyke.

Your profile

- Candidates are expected to have a track record in researching cultural heritage issues and of employing mixed-method approaches.
 - Applicants should have a PhD in heritage studies, museum studies, folklore studies, ethnology, anthropology, archaeology, history, or another related discipline. They should be able to motivate the relevance of their disciplinary background in relation to the planned research and the ARCHES research group.
- You must have a completed PhD at the time of the call deadline (14 September 2022).
- Candidates must have a maximum of 8 years full-time research experience from the PhD award date until September 14, 2022. Periods of inactivity in research (e.g. unemployment, periods of employment outside research, parental or sick leave) do not count towards the time of research experience.
- For European fellowships, candidates can be of any nationality and must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in Belgium for more than 12 months in the 36 months immediately before September 14, 2022.
- Highly motivated candidate with an excellent research track record appropriate to career stage, as evidenced by academic publications and other scientific output.

What we offer

- Support and guidance for the preparation of your MSCA PF proposal
- A stimulating, interdisciplinary environment for high-level research.

How to apply?

Indicate your interest by contacting the host institution as follows:

Please contact prof. Suzie Thomas in the first instance by e-mail with a short CV and motivation to indicate your interest to prepare a MSCA-PF application.

After the supervisor agrees to support you as a MSCA-PF candidate, you can start preparation of MSCA PF project proposal and will be supported further by the supervisor and the Research Support Office of the host university.

For more information on the MSCA PF scheme or the host institution, you can contact the MSCA coordinator of the University of Antwerp: Dr. Liesbet Cockx (Research, Innovation & Valorisation Antwerp, Grants Office): Liesbet.cockx@uantwerpen.be