

Doctoral Candidate in History – University of Warsaw – MSCA DN “TESTAMENT”

Offer Description

We are looking for you!

Are you fascinated by the legal and social history of the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period? Do you want to be an active player in a truly international and interdisciplinary environment, within a prestigious MSCA Doctoral Network, funded by the European Commission? Do you want to know more about how earlier generations regulated the post-mortal transfer of patrimony, through last wills and related legal mechanisms? Are you interested in the interplay between societal dynamics, “learned law” and testamentary freedom? Are you willing to leave your home country and to start working as a Doctoral Candidate in history at a foreign university? Are you looking forward to getting the chance of a six-months research stay in yet another country, at yet another high-level university, and a three-month internship in a museum? Then, you might be the candidate we are looking for!

This Doctoral Candidate (DC) will be employed at the Faculty of History of the University of Warsaw, a leading center for research on the history of Poland and Central Europe. The Faculty conducts both team-based and individual research, aiming to address important questions in the study of the past. It also fosters methodological reflection on the nature of historical research, the status of sources, and the history of historiography.

The DC will be supervised by prof. dr hab. Agnieszki Bartoszewicz (social history, University of Warsaw) and co-supervised by prof. dr. Adrian Schmidt-Recla (legal history, FSU Jena). In the course of this fellowship, the DC will work six months in Jena and three months at the Museum of Warsaw.

This DC will focus on the analysis of wills drawn up by Warsaw burghers between 1543 and 1604 and partly in Latin, partly in Old Polish, preserved in the Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw, in order to reconstruct the social and economic structure, as well as the family relationships that influence the testators’ decisions. Particular attention will be paid to examining the position of the spouse, especially the widow, in the context of the law and the restrictions imposed both by the family and by the existing legal regulations. An important area of research will also be the role of children in wills and how testamentary practices reflect family relationships in Polish towns.

Research program description

The MSCA Doctoral Network “TESTAMENT” (Testamentary Practices in the Periphery of the *Ius Commune* Tradition: Freedom and Oppression (c. 1420-1620)) is funded by the European Union under Grant Agreement No. 101226689. It groups 5 hiring universities: KU Leuven (Belgium, co-ordinating institution), Jagiellonian University Cracow (Poland), University of Warsaw (Poland), Charles University Prague (Czech Republic), and Friedrich-Schiller-University Jena (Germany). The network also comprises several Associated Partners, museums and archives, which will host Doctoral Candidates for internships, allowing them to gain practical experience as well.

TESTAMENT, an interdisciplinary consortium of social and legal historians from the universities of Leuven, Kraków, Jena, Prague and Warsaw, will study dynamics of freedom and ‘unfreedom’, of power and oppression, through the lens of testamentary law and practice in Western and Central Europe (c. 1420-1620), with a particular focus on the regions in the ‘periphery’ of the late medieval and early modern academic tradition. The project members will develop a language to transcend the traditional

dichotomy between 'freedom' and 'unfreedom' and will single out criteria that can be used to situate specific cases on this continuum. On the basis of thorough archival and doctrinal-historical research, the project will single out the family, policy, jurisdictional and jurisprudential dynamics that determined the extent to which people could dispose of their goods post-mortally.

To this end, the consortium will train promising junior scholars into professional, critically-minded, communicative, cooperative and digitally competent social and legal historians. The Ph.D. students will be integrated in a unique international network of scholars from both law and social history. They will be trained in both disciplinary and transferable skills at summer and winter schools, at monthly online seminars, through a secondment at another academic partner abroad and also through meaningful experiences in collaboration with non-academic actors (especially archives and musea).

This project will open new scientific perspectives for research by using digital methods (especially HTR-tools) and will add new unedited material to existing open access databases for further research. Through social media, blogposts, (online) exhibitions, course materials for secondary school teachers, interdisciplinary university seminars and presentations at alumni events, the consortium explicitly aims to introduce new approaches to the past through lesser-known historical documents to a wide range of audiences.

Responsibilities

In the framework of the MSCA Doctoral Network "TESTAMENT", the Doctoral Candidate will have the following responsibilities:

- researching testators and their families in early modern Warsaw (Old & New Warsaw, 1543–1604), and preparing a doctoral dissertation on this topic;
- actively participating in the activities of the TESTAMENT-network (summer and winter schools, monthly online meetings, concluding conference);
- presenting the research at at least one international conference;
- writing at least one peer-reviewed scientific article;
- actively participating in the activities of the Research Unit and of the Doctoral School of the University of Warsaw;
- conducting a six-month research stay at the FSU Jena [*which can be divided in several shorter terms*];
- conducting a three-month internship at the Museum of Warsaw, where the DC will be involved, *inter alia*, in organising an online exhibition on Warsaw last wills.

Profile

We are looking for a candidate who meets the following requirements:

- You are creative and ambitious, hard-working, and persistent.
- You have a master's degree in law or history or you will have it by August 2026.
- You have good communicative skills, and the attitude to partake successfully in the work of a research team.
- You have a good command of the English language (spoken and written).
- You have a good passive command of Latin.
- **Passive or active command of Polish is an advantage.**

Eligibility criteria

- Supported researchers must be doctoral candidates, i.e. not already in possession of a doctoral degree at the date of the recruitment.
- Recruited researchers can be of any nationality and must comply with the following mobility rule: they must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country of the recruiting beneficiary (Poland) for more than 12 months in the 36 months immediately before their recruitment date. Compulsory national service, short stays such as holidays and time spent by the researcher as part of a procedure for obtaining refugee status under the Geneva Convention are not considered.

Offer

A meaningful job in a dynamic and ambitious university, in an interdisciplinary setting and within an international network. In addition, we offer you:

- Full-time employment for three years, with an intermediate evaluation (go/no-go) after 1 year.
- The **gross amount*** of the doctoral salary includes approximately:
 - Living allowance: 2 260 - 2 280 EUR (9 490-9 576 PLN)
 - Mobility allowance: 710 EUR (2980 PLN)
 - Family allowance, if applicable: 660 EUR (2770 PLN)
- *gross amount includes compulsory deductions under national law, such as employer and employee social security contributions and direct taxes
- Additional benefits are in accordance to University of Warsaw regulations.
- High-quality training programs and other support to grow into a self-aware, autonomous scientific researcher.

Do you recognize yourself in this profile and would you like to know more? Please contact prof. Agnieszka Bartoszewicz (abartoszewicz@uw.edu.pl).

We invite you to submit a complete application by using e-mail adres provided below. Only applications that are submitted in this way are taken into account.

The application should include a motivation letter (including the topic of your master thesis project), a curriculum vitae (including contact details of at least two references) and a list of your bachelor and master courses and grades (and ranking, if available).

Promising candidates will be contacted by email. Deadline for applications is Monday **20 April**. After a first selection, candidates will be invited for a first round of interviews (online) on Wednesday **6 May 2026**. A second round at the location of employment (University of Warsaw) will be organized a few weeks later (**the project will cover the cost of travel and accomodation**). The successful Doctoral Candidate will be employed from **1 October 2026**.

More information?

Do not hesitate to contact prof. Agnieszka Bartoszewicz (abartoszewicz@uw.edu.pl).

Where to apply

praca.historia@uw.edu.pl with the subject line: **MSCA DN Testament**