



**PlaCe-ITN**  
Pre-modern Plasters and Ceramics

## Research position and PhD in Classical Archaeology

Research project: **Characterisation of binders used for pre-modern plasters in the ever-changing urban environment**

Deadline for applications: **May 17, 2021**  
Expected starting date: **September 1, 2021**  
Place of employment: ÚTAM AV ČR, v. v. i., Prague, the Czech Republic  
Project website: <https://place-itn.cyi.ac.cy/>

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### Research position and overall project

The Institute of theoretical and Applied Mechanics (UTAM-AVCR) of the Czech Academy of Sciences, beneficiary of the Horizon 2020 MSCA-ETN-ITN project Training the next generation of archaeological scientists: *Interdisciplinary studies of pre-modern Plasters and Ceramics from the eastern Mediterranean* (PlaCe-ITN), offers a fully funded research position within the PlaCe ITN project. This high-profile Innovative Training Network aims at training Early-Stage Researchers to conduct state-of-the-art, science-based research on the provenance, use, and technology of plasters and ceramics in pre-modern societies in different regions of the eastern Mediterranean.

The successful applicant is expected to carry out his/her research as a PhD student and will have to independently apply to the Classical Archaeology PhD programme (combined study) at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University, Prague, provided by the Institute of Classical Archaeology (ICAR). The student will be co-supervised in collaboration with the Institute of Archaeology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague (ARUP).

The academic institutions participating in the PlaCe ITN project offer a high-quality interdisciplinary training on a broad range of topics in the fields of archaeology and archaeological sciences. Most of the research will be conducted at UTAM-AVCR, and the successful applicant is expected to travel to partner organisations for further training, including a secondment at the Science and Technology in Archaeology and Culture Research Center (STARC) of The Cyprus Institute (Cyl).

### Research topic

The candidate is expected to conduct research on plasters and mortars, primarily from the archaeological sites Palaepaphos and Nea Paphos in Cyprus. The study includes fieldwork, collection of samples, characterisation of mortars and precursor raw materials including microscopic and chemical analysis, experimental research of production and processing technologies, data processing and publication of the results. The research should attempt to link the binders of mortars with their use in buildings and structures, aiming at an enhanced understanding of technological changes from the Late Bronze Age to the Roman times. As a result, the following lines of inquiry should be followed (not necessarily all of them): The beginnings of lime technologies in plaster use as such; diachronic changes on the Palaepaphos and Nea Paphos sites, targeting two or three specific periods; differing functional uses of lime plasters for



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private and public buildings, on the interior and exterior. More specific questions will emerge from the initial assessment of the available samples as well as individual preferences of the applicant. Required in all scenarios will be the ability to combine the various approaches, resulting in a truly interdisciplinary work. Any analytic/archaeometric results need likewise to be embedded in broader archaeological and culture-historical questions/context.

### **The academic workplaces**

**UTAM-AVCR** and its Division of Applied Sciences for Cultural Heritage conducts research on interdisciplinary issues in the field of built heritage conservation and cultural heritage science, covering a wide scope of topics ranging from historic materials and structures to site, urban and territorial issues. It operates well-equipped laboratories and specific and unique research infrastructures dedicated to cultural heritage science. The department of Lime Technologies focuses on research and development of building binders produced by the calcination of limestone and other carbonate rocks with a specific focus on historical materials. The work is centred around an experimental lime kiln, which enables the replication of specific historic materials. The unique expertise includes characterisation of historic mortars, understanding of production and processing technologies and replication of historic building techniques.

**ICAR** at Charles University offers courses and conducts research on a variety of aspects in ancient art and archaeology of what is known as the Classical world itself (that is, the Mediterranean area or Greece and Italy) and beyond. More specific topics of interest are Aegean and Anatolian Bronze Age, Iron technology, relations between Central Europe and the Mediterranean, relations between the Mediterranean and the Middle East/Central Asia, Roman provincial archaeology, and the traditions of Antiquity in Czech and European art and architecture. There are currently 30 PhD students being trained at ICAR. More recently a collaboration with the department of Geology at the Faculty of Sciences resulted in a joint programme being offered.

**ARUP-AVCR** is the largest archaeological institution in the Czech Republic; it houses a large specialized library, departments and laboratories. Individual teams of the Department of Medieval Archaeology are involved in large interdisciplinary projects, among others, focusing on medieval technologies, including lime plasters.

### **The selection process**

Potential candidates are welcome to demonstrate their interest in the PlaCe ITN research project and apply for the position at UTAM-AVCR. In the first stage, the candidates will be shortlisted based on their qualification and the project's eligibility criteria. The shortlisted candidates will be asked and encouraged to apply to the Classical Archaeology PhD programme at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University, Prague. The contract will be offered to one successful candidate based on the acceptance letter to the PhD programme.

### **Qualifications**

The successful candidate is expected to have a Master's degree in archaeology, earth or material sciences, building conservation, cultural heritage, heritage science or a related field. For the particular research requirements of this fellowship additional experience in mineralogy, petrography of building materials or material science will be considered an advantage. Good oral and written communication skills in English and the ability to work in an international, interdisciplinary research environment are essential.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to check the PhD programme admission requirements on the website of the Faculty of Arts of Charles University <https://www.ff.cuni.cz/home/applicants/phd-programmes/application-and-admission/>. A candidate's readiness to meet the university requirements for the combined study along with the deadline for the application (between May 5, to September 5, 2021) will be discussed in a video interview.



## How to Apply

Applicants should provide:

- A personal statement explaining their research interests and how these are in accord with the project's research topic along with their Curriculum Vitae including a clear description of their academic degrees and other academic achievements (publication, research, employment etc.). The statement should not exceed 1000 words and must be written in English.
- A proof of English proficiency. If the applicant's native language is English or the applicant graduated from a university where English was the language of instruction, then this requirement may be waived.
- A copy of official academic degrees and the corresponding transcripts.

Applicants should also provide the contact details of two referees for the acquisition of references of recommendation.

## Deadline for applications

All required documents should be emailed to [place@itam.cas.cz](mailto:place@itam.cas.cz) by **Monday, 17 May 2021**. Selected candidates will be invited for a short video interview.

## Financial Support

This Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) ITN offers competitive and attractive salary and working conditions. The successful candidate will receive a gross salary in accordance with the MSCA regulations for Early-Stage Researchers; it includes living and mobility allowances, as well as a family allowance if the researcher is married or with children. The exact salary will be confirmed upon appointment.

Employment basis: Temporary for specified period. Duration of the contract: 36 months without provisions for extension. Maximum hours per week: 40 (full-time).

PhD studies: the student will be enrolled on a combined PhD study. It is possible to conclude the study in three years, however the PhD programme is for four years. In the fourth year, the student can apply to change to full-time study and may receive a scholarship from the university.

## Eligibility Criteria

Qualified applicants from all countries are welcome to submit applications, provided they meet the eligibility criteria set by the European Commission and the particular MSCA-ITN-2020 call.

The recruited Early-Stage Researchers (ESRs) will have to comply with the following conditions:

1. not have resided in the Czech Republic for more than 12 months in the three years immediately before the recruitment date, and not have carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the Czech Republic. Short stays, such as holidays, are not taken into account;
2. be — at the date of recruitment — an 'early-stage researcher' (i.e., in the first four years of his/her research career and not have a doctoral degree).

## Contact us

For information about the position and the research project, please contact Dr. Jan Válek, [valek@itam.cas.cz](mailto:valek@itam.cas.cz).

For more information about postgraduate studies at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University, please consult the website <https://www.ff.cuni.cz/home/applicants/phd-programmes/application-and-admission/>.

For general information about the MSCA-ITN PlaCe and the ESR positions, please contact the project's manager at the Cyprus Institute, Dr Maria Dikomitou-Eliadou, [m.dikomitou@cyi.ac.cy](mailto:m.dikomitou@cyi.ac.cy) or visit our website <https://place-itn.cyi.ac.cy/>.

