



ΕΘΝΙΚΟ ΙΔΡΥΜΑ ΕΡΕΥΝΩΝ  
National Hellenic Research Foundation



## CALL FOR ADVANCED PHD APPLICATIONS

TO PARTICIPATE IN INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAM, 2018-2020

The international research program, “Material Entanglements in the Ancient Mediterranean and Beyond,” funded by the Getty Foundation as part of its Connecting Art Histories initiative, invites applications from advanced doctoral (PhD) candidates to participate in the Program’s research activities. The successful candidate will develop an individual research project related to the theme of the Program and participate in the Program’s activities, including attending two workshops to be held in Athens, one running October 1-10, 2018, and one in fall 2019. Costs for attending the workshops, including travel, accommodations and meals, will be covered by the Program.

Applicants should be in the advanced stages of pursuing a PhD degree in Classical and/or Near Eastern art/archaeology, and have fluency in the English language as demonstrated by language certificates and/or thesis/publications.

We welcome applications from all candidates who will not have finished their dissertations by the time of the application deadline (Feb. 28, 2018), but preference will be given to those applicants who will still be working on their dissertations at the time of the first workshop.

Applicants will be assessed on the basis of their academic accomplishments and their commitment to the study of ancient cultural interactions, as demonstrated by their scholarly work (PhD thesis, publications, professional activities outlined in the CV), their project proposal, and other supporting documentation (i.e., recommendations by 2 academic referees).

### **ABOUT THE PROGRAM**

The Mediterranean nexus for cultural interactions and entanglements – a complicated dance of moving people, things and ideas throughout its history – has long been celebrated as a domain for scholarly studies of an expansive geographical and temporal scope. Interconnections between the Mediterranean space and the lands of Western and Central Asia, though also historically significant, have yet to be as intensely examined. Redressing this imbalance, *Material Entanglements in the Ancient Mediterranean and Beyond* investigates more extensive vistas onto ancient cultural and artistic contacts spanning the vast territories from the Jaxartes and the Indus in the east to the Straits of Gibraltar in the west for over two millennia, from the Middle Bronze Age to the Sasanian Period (c. 2000 BCE – c. 650 CE).

Setting the larger historical backdrop of this investigation is an ever growing “internationalism,” allied with expanding diplomatic and political networks and trading ventures, phenomena of far-flung colonization, and a succession of powerful states aspiring to extended territorial control — bridging the geographical divides among the three continents of the Old World. At the heart of the research narrative are the artistic products of

these complex interactions: architectural and sculptural creations, as well as luxury, votive and everyday objects, whose technical execution, styles, forms, materials and imagery variously emanated from and gave shape to processes of cultural contacts through combination, incorporation and adaptation of different regional material resources, traditions of craftsmanship, aesthetics, ideological trends and worldviews.

The range and volume of pertinent artistic products are immense. Our approach is to consider representative artifacts and ensembles, including monumental complexes and small-scale “treasures” with mixed contents of multi-regional objects; and to query mechanisms and outcomes of cultural interactions by breaking down different aspects of materiality, such as scale and proportions, technologies, iconographies, forms and color – examined individually and in concert with one another. Aspects of the materials and media used in (and the economic/social mechanisms that promoted) the production of the artworks also occupy an important domain within the investigation, especially regarding the sources and methods of procurement and disbursement of materials such as stones and metals.

Thinking in terms of material properties like scale, form or technologies, issues of portability/transferability, and the exchange and mobility of craftspeople and skills requires discussion of methodological and theoretical frameworks. A robust body of such frameworks has developed over the last several decades, informed by post-colonial studies, cultural contact studies, materiality studies and agency studies. For the representational arts, iconography remains an important method for accessing meaning and significance, which can be enhanced through notions of object biographies or life ways that permit changes in valences over space and through time. The investigation, thus, takes as a central aim not just the production of new historical and social reconstructions according to the ancient artworks, but also the examination, application and assessment of these developing methodological frameworks.

As part of the Getty Foundation’s Connecting Art Histories initiative, the Program aims to forge connections at both the level of ideas and that of people, crossing chronological and regional disciplinary divides, fostering dialogue among scholars from a range of countries both within and outside the greater Mediterranean, and encouraging the exchange of viewpoints, methods and theoretical constructs among specialists who rarely come into contact with one another’s work.

The Program pivots around two, nine-day workshops, during which the program participants, the two co-PIs, and a Research Fellow will gather for a series of presentations, round-table discussions and site visits. The workshops will be held at the National Hellenic Research Foundation in Athens, Greece, the first one running from October 1-10, 2018, the second in fall 2019.

A website created for the Program (URL to be announced) will list participants and their individual projects, present information regarding the workshops, and provide updates about the progress of the Program’s work.

*Material Entanglements in the Ancient Mediterranean and Beyond* is co-directed by Dr. Marian Feldman (Departments of the History of Art and Near Eastern Studies, The Johns Hopkins University) and Dr. Antigoni Zournatzi (Institute of Historical Research, The National Hellenic Research Foundation)

## REQUESTED DOCUMENTS

- Curriculum Vitae, including candidate’s nationality
- Abstract of doctoral thesis, between 300-500 words in length
- Research proposal (max. 1,000 words): The proposal should justify the connection of the proposed research with the aims of the Program as presented in the Program description. It should be clearly defined and set goals that can be achieved during the course of the Program.
- Writing sample
- References: Applicants should arrange to have letters sent separately from 2 academic referees to [agorou@eie.gr](mailto:agorou@eie.gr); the subject heading of the electronic message should contain “**Recommendation for MATERIAL ENTANGLEMENTS PhD position**” followed by the **applicant’s last name**.

## SUBMISSION

**Application submission deadline:** February 28, 2018 (24h00 - EET)

The requested documents should be submitted **electronically, as a single pdf file**, by the deadline of February 28, 2018, to the address: [agorou@eie.gr](mailto:agorou@eie.gr). The Subject heading of the electronic message should contain “**Application for MATERIAL ENTANGLEMENTS PhD position**” followed by the **applicant’s last name**.

Final selection of up to four participants will be made by the Program directors. All candidates will be informed by e-mail by April 1, 2018 at latest.

Requests for further clarifications on the application procedure may be addressed to [agorou@eie.gr](mailto:agorou@eie.gr)