



Call for Applications

*One two-year postdoc position  
for a historian of medieval / early modern science*

MOSAIC (Mapping Occult Sciences across Islamicate Cultures) funded by the European Research Council (ERC) under Horizon Europe (GA no. 101167040)

2026-09-04

**The ERC synergy project MOSAIC** (“Mapping Occult Sciences Across Islamicate Cultures”) investigates Islamic and Eastern Christian occult-scientific sources from late antiquity to the nineteenth century and from Iberia to India. It aims at identifying, investigating, cataloguing, and interpreting highly technical sources, making them available through editions, translations, surveys, studies, exhibitions and conferences. It combines, as feasible, the study of scientific theories with their technological practice, and develops open-access digital tools of immediate use to specialists and nonspecialists. The project is conducted for six year (2025-2031) by four PIs and one partner, Godefroid de Callataÿ (UCLouvain), Matteo Martelli (UniBo), Petra Schmidl (FAU), Matt Melvin-Koushki (USC), and Fatma Sinem Eryılmaz (UAB) and carried out in close collaboration among the five teams at each location. **Further information** is available at [www.mosaicsynergy.net/](http://www.mosaicsynergy.net/) .

As part of MOSAIC, the position contributes to **two work packages**, (1) research on Arabic and Persian inscribed instruments designed for an astrological use to be published in a series of articles – based on the applicants interests and expertise, the focus may be expanded to instruments serving another occult use (*e.g.*, alchemical equipment); and (2) collaboration with the History of Science Museum, Oxford, in preparing and realising museum’s displays, as well as co-organizing supplementary events such as an accompanying lecture series to disseminate MOSAIC’s results.

**The qualifications** required for these work packages include:

- a PhD in History of Science or a closely related field;
- a good command of Arabic and Persian; a basic command of one or more of the other source languages of the project (Turkish, Greek, Syriac, Hebrew) is an advantage;

- a demonstrated interest in the history of the natural and occult sciences and their historical organisation;
- experience in research on scientific instruments and their intellectual and material contexts;
- experience in presenting, popularizing, and disseminating knowledge to both academic and non-academic audiences;
- openness towards innovative approaches and the ability to collaborate effectively with academic and non-academic partners;
- strong academic writing and presentation skills in English (the project's working language);
- the ability to work both individually and as part of a team.

**We invite applications for one two-year postdoc position** to start on 1 April 2027 or as soon as possible thereafter. The position is remunerated at 100% of TV-L E13, liable to deductions for tax, social security, and retirement provisions. It is hosted by the Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg and will be supervised by Dr. Silke Ackermann and Dr. Petra G. Schmidl. It will include regular research stays at the History of Science Museum, Oxford.

The position is asked to participate in regular team meetings (online and in person) at the History of Science Museum in Oxford and at the Friedrich-Alexander Universität in Erlangen, as well as to contribute to the intellectual life of MOSAIC.

### **How to apply?**

Applications should be submitted in English to Dr. Petra G. Schmidl ([petra.schmidl@fau.de](mailto:petra.schmidl@fau.de)) before 1 November 2026:

- a cover letter setting out the applicant's qualifications and motivation for applying for this position (maximum 2 pages);
- a curriculum vitae, including detail of research activities: publications (if any), presentations at conferences, etc. (maximum 2 pages);
- samples of published work (maximum 3 articles or chapters) in pdf (if any);
- the name (with title, affiliation, and e-mail) of three people who have accepted to be contacted as potential referees.

Online interviews will be arranged between 19 and 22 January 2027. Candidates selected for the interview will be contacted mid December 2026, and asked to write a short research design on a topic to be announced at that moment. Employment should become effective from 1 April 2027.