

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 of law 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 scientific institution? Then, you might be the candidate we are looking for!

This Doctoral Candidate (DC) will be based at the Faculty of Law of Charles University (CU) in Prague, at the Department of Legal History. This department is one of the leading legal history workplaces in the Czech Republic and has decades of successful and significant research behind it. The department's staff consists of four professors, six associate professors, and a number of other scientific and pedagogical workers. The department's scope includes both Czech and world legal history as well as Roman and ecclesiastical law. All members of the department are always ready to lend a helping hand, taking into account their specialization.

The DC will be supervised by associate professor dr. Marek Starý (legal history, CU Prague) and co-supervised by prof. dr. Maciej Mikuła (legal history, Jagiellonian University of Kraków). In the course of this fellowship, the DC will work six months in Kraków, and three months at the Centre of Medieval Studies in Prague.

This doctoral project will focus on the role of membership of the Hussite movement for the contents of last wills and the application and development of testamentary law in the fifteenth century. It is reasonable to assume that such major social and religious changes, reflected in the personal choices of individuals, were also important for the content of last wills in the Czech Kingdom. The DC's task will be to verify the relevance of this hypothesis through broad-based research, which will also include the last wills and testaments of the inhabitants of the town of Tábor, which was one of the centres of the revolutionary movement and which was originally founded as an attempt to create a community on completely new ideological grounds.

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 the regulatory framework and societal and religious context of the testamentary practice in the Kingdom of Bohemia in the 15th-16th centuries;
- preparing a doctoral dissertation on the role of membership of the Hussite movement for the contents of last wills and the application and development of testamentary law in the fifteenth century;
- 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 CU Prague;
- conducting a six-month research stay at the Jagiellonian University of Kraków [*which can be divided in several shorter terms*];
- conducting a three-month internship at the Centre of Medieval Studies (part of the Czech Academy of Sciences), where the DC will be involved in a project aimed at the creation of a database of historical sources, which will facilitate the gathering of material for the DC's dissertation.

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 are able to work independently (perhaps with the partial help of a dictionary or AI) with historical texts written in Czech, German and Latin.

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 (Czech Republic) 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. 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 (before taxes and insurances) will be approximately **80 000 Kč (cca 3 300 EUR)** per month if you are single with no dependent family members. It will be higher if you have a registered partner without income and/or dependent child(ren); it will be lower if you have a registered partner with income.
- Additional benefits are in accordance to Charles University's 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 ass. prof. dr. Marek Starý (starym@prf.cuni.cz).

We invite you to submit a complete application by using the online application tools. Only applications that are submitted in the way specified below 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).

Deadline for applications is Monday 20 April. In addition, the application must also be submitted in the required form via the website of the Faculty of Law of CU Prague at the latest on Thursday 30 April!

After a first selection, promising candidates will be contacted by email and invited for a first round of interviews (online) on Wednesday 6 May 2026. A second round at the location of

employment (CU Prague) will be organized in June in the form of a interview before an expert committee. It primarily assesses the candidate's readiness for independent scientific work in the chosen program in the context of broader professional knowledge.

The successful DC will be employed from 1 October 2026.

More information?

Do not hesitate to contact ass. prof. dr. Marek Starý (starym@prf.cuni.cz).

There are also vacancies for DCs at other faculties and institutions within the TESTAMENT-Consortium. For more information on those other DC-positions, please consult our project's website: <https://testament.project.uj.edu.pl>. Do not hesitate to apply for all TESTAMENT's vacancies you are eligible for!

Where to apply

Until April 20 via e-mail to testament@prf.cuni.cz (with required, above-specified attachments), then until April 30 on <https://is.cuni.cz/studium/eng/login.php?do=prijimacky> (official application for the CU – you have to attach a dissertation project of about 7 pages, CV and list of professional activities).