**Call for applications**

**International Seminar "Approaching Byzantium Through Seals: A Digital Exhibition" Winter semester course 2023-2024 | University of Cologne**

The Department of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies of the University of Cologne invites applications for the International Seminar "Approaching Byzantium through seals: a digital exhibition", organised in the framework of the project "DiBS – Creating a Sustainable Digital Infrastructure for Research-Based Teaching in Byzantine Studies", funded by the Volkswagen Foundation. For more information on this project see https://uni.koeln/NXPQU

Byzantine seals have emerged lately as a valuable resource for the study of Byzantium. This course aims to bring together students from various parts of the world and provide them with the skills to analyse and use seals as a source for understanding Byzantine society and culture, without requiring an extensive background in sigillography. At the same time, the students will contribute to the creation of a digital scholarly exhibition, which will revolve around some themes related to the topic of the Seminar.

Structure: Two introductory sessions (17.11.2023 and 24.11.2023) after the end of which students will be handed out assignments with the aim of analysing seals under the prism of specific questions and topics, such as identity, relation between text and image, expressions of piety, and individual representation. At the end of the semester there will be a week-long workshop (19.02.–23.02.2024) with presentations and discussion of the commentary and the texts prepared by the students.

Aims: The students will have the opportunity to contribute to the creation of an online exhibition that is intended to serve as reference to the wider scholarly community and public, by introducing seals as a crucial source for the society and culture of Byzantium. The exhibition will consist of texts on topics related to the history and culture of Byzantium, focused on a set number of seals selected out for this purpose. These texts will be produced by the students and the instructor during the course.

Instructor: Christos Malatras, University of Cologne

Maximum number of external participants: 15

ECTS points: 2

Eligibility: Postgraduate (Master or PhD) students in the fields of Byzantine Studies, Classics, Medieval History, or Digital Humanities, or early career researchers (less than three years since defence of the thesis) in the same fields. Prior training in sigillography is not a prerequisite, though desirable. Adequate knowledge of Byzantine history and culture is essential.

Additional information: The language of instruction will be English. The event will be hybrid, with both online and in-person participants. A limited number of bursaries are available to assist students and other unfunded scholars covering the costs of travel and accommodation in Cologne for the week-long workshop. If you would like to apply for a bursary, please confirm that you have sought funding from your institution to cover the fees and that none was available. Those who opt to participate in person, will have the opportunity to use for their research and study purposes the library of the Department of Byzantine Studies and Modern Greek Philology, particularly well-informed in the discipline of sigillography.

Application: Please fill in the application form and the motivation statement (no longer than 500 words) describing the academic achievements, the scholarly interests, and the reasons for applying to this course. Please address any queries to: c.malatras@uni-koeln.de

Deadlines: The deadline for applications is **1 September 2023**. Successful applicants will be informed by late September/early October when they will also receive some learning material to prepare for the course. Please distribute this call to persons, and especially students, to whom it may be of interest.