

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

Scholar Advisory Group,

Pilot Project, PHAROS - The International Consortium of Photo Archives

July 10, 2019



Ludwig Bickell (1838-1901): View of the city of Marburg with St. Elizabeth's church, april 1882, wet collodion glass plate, 16 x 21 cm ((c) Bildarchiv Foto Marburg).

Applications are sought from researchers interested in participating in a Scholar Advisory Group convened in support of a pilot project that will be initiated by the PHAROS consortium in July 2019. Established in 2013, [PHAROS](#) is an international consortium of fourteen European and North American art-historical photo archives committed to creating a digital research platform allowing for comprehensive consolidated access to photo archive images and their associated scholarly documentation. This 30-month project focuses on the creation of a pilot platform, built using [ResearchSpace](#), through which scholars can explore nearly 1.5 million images of works of art and accompanying

scholarly documentation drawn from the photo archives of five PHAROS member institutions: the Frick Art Reference Library (New York, USA); I Tatti, the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies (Florence, Italy); Fondazione Federico Zeri (Bologna, Italy); Bibliotheca Hertziana – Max Planck Institute for Art History (Rome, Italy); and Deutsches Dokumentationszentrum für Kunstgeschichte – Bildarchiv Foto Marburg (Marburg, Germany). These approximately 1.5 million images include documentation of works from the early modern period in a variety of media (drawings, prints, paintings, architecture, sculpture, decorative arts), primarily from Italy, although countries such as Germany, France, the Netherlands, Poland, the Baltic region, Turkey, and Egypt are also represented.

What kinds of questions could these images be used to explore? Could one, for example, research these archives to analyze the formation and evolution of the art-historical canon? Could these archives be used in support of more global and inclusive histories of art? How, for example, have colonial archives/ organizational systems influenced ideas about the Western canon? What visual, textual, or quantitative information will be meaningful to research? How might the visual and textual information generated as part of this be leveraged in innovative ways? Does the digitization of these images present the potential to raise or address new art-historical research questions?

Answers to these and other questions will be critically important to the development of the PHAROS platform, informing the public-facing interface that will be used to browse the resulting collection of digital images. The goal in integrating researchers into this process is to ensure that the applications built for making these digitized photo archive materials correspond as closely as possible to the needs and expectations of the communities who are accessing them.

At the same time, however, we hope to explore the potentials of advanced computing tools and workspaces for digital image research and analysis.

Selected researchers will collaborate with the PHAROS pilot project for approximately eighteen months. They will be invited to take part in two meetings of the Scholar Advisory Group, with expenses covered by the consortium. The first of these meetings will take place at the Frick Art Reference Library in New York on **February 27–28, 2020**. A second meeting is planned for spring 2021 (exact dates and times to be determined). At these meetings, Advisory Group members will be invited to share their research interests, meet with technical staff working on the pilot project, and contribute to user research activities, for example by participating in user interviews or evaluation of prototype designs for the pilot platform.

Candidates should submit a CV and a statement of interest of no more than 750 words that includes information about fields of expertise as well as areas of research that the applicant is interested in exploring in conjunction with this project by **September 1, 2019**. Proposals are especially welcome from emerging scholars and from researchers interested in the following areas of inquiry:

- The history of photo archives and/or the role of photography in shaping national cultural identities, including non-European nations and archives
- Historiography; the formation and evolution of the art-historical canon and/or the role of photography in the formation of art history as a discipline
- Reception of early modern European art outside of Europe and throughout the world and/or in the 19th and 20th centuries
- Iconographic studies, transmission of iconographic elements or formal motifs (within school or an artist's oeuvre, from painting to prints or vice versa)
- Innovative tools and methods for art-historical analysis, such as computer vision or data analysis or visualization

Questions and proposals can be referred to gridah@getty.edu.



Johann Georg Schütz, Duchess Anna Amalia von Sachsen-Weimar and her friends in the Villa d'Este in Tivoli, Rome, Bibliotheca Hertziana (Bibliotheca Hertziana–Max Planck Institute for Art History, Rome, Photo: G. Fichera)