

Call for Applications

Doctoral Fellowships

Postdoctoral Fellowships

Application Deadline: 31 January 2023

The Maimonides Centre for Advanced Studies (MCAS) at Universität Hamburg would like to invite researchers to apply for its junior fellowship programme for the academic year **1 October 2023 to 30 September 2024**.

The Maimonides Centre for Advanced Studies at Universität Hamburg

The Maimonides Centre for Advanced Studies is a Humanities Research Institute at Universität Hamburg led by Prof. Dr Giuseppe Veltri and funded by the German Research Foundation. MCAS's central aim is to explore and research scepticism in Judaism in its dual manifestation as both a purely philosophical tradition and a more general expression of sceptical strategies, concepts, and attitudes in the cultural field.

Topic: (Jewish) Scepticism as a Strategy and Challenge in Past and Present

Though scepticism is often discussed as the philosophical doctrine that we cannot have knowledge about a specific domain, it can also be taken in a much broader sense. According to this broader conception, scepticism is a general attitude to life and enquiry that comes with a range of different tactics and strategies. A sceptic in this broader sense questions and attacks all dogmatic convictions by pointing out their dependence on dubious assumptions or their reliance on fragile and vulnerable methods of argumentation.

MCAS's research during the previous year has shown that this broader type of scepticism is an important element of Jewish life and culture, which—for various reasons—is particularly shaped by controversies and dialectical disputes. In its last year, MCAS thus seeks to focus on the specific operation of sceptical thoughts and strategies in Judaism and beyond, thereby highlighting both the difficulties created by a sceptical attitude and its often innovative and critical force.

Accordingly, typical questions to be pursued this year are: To what (argumentative or rhetorical) end and how do (Jewish) philosophers and theologians return to sceptical considerations and what are their implications? What is the significance of stories about sceptics or accusations of scepticism in religious discourse? How is scepticism manifested in visual and literary sources and how is it employed to convey meaning and messages to the audience? How exactly and with respect to which sources is scepticism harnessed as a tool to challenge an opponent or authority in politics and social discourse?

These questions can be addressed from the point of view of several disciplines, such as Jewish studies, philosophy, history, literature, the arts, and cultural anthropology. The successful candidate's project should resonate productively with the annual topic as described.

Junior Fellowships (PhD and Postdoc)

Junior fellowships are awarded to advanced PhD students and postdoctoral researchers (within four years of receipt of PhD) in Jewish studies, history, philosophy, Islamic studies, religious studies, or related fields in the humanities. PhD students must have obtained an MA degree at the time of their application. Postdoctoral candidates must be in possession of a doctoral degree at the time of their application.

- Fellowship period: 12 months (1 October 2023 to 30 September 2024)

Successful applicants will be asked to take up residence in Hamburg, to carry out research at MCAS, to actively attend events at the centre, and to take part in the centre's activities, such as contributing to the *Encyclopaedia of Scepticism and Jewish Tradition* or the *Maimonides Review of Philosophy and Religion*.

Funding

Funding is subject to the terms and conditions of MCAS's regulations, following suggestions made by Universität Hamburg. Rates and allowances are as follows:

- PhD Junior Fellows receive 1,365 EUR per month, plus a research allowance of 103 EUR per month, travel allowance (one round trip), and—where applicable—a child allowance.
- Postdoctoral Junior Fellows receive 1,750 EUR per month, plus a research allowance of 103 EUR per month, travel allowance (one round trip), and—where applicable—a child allowance.

MCAS also provides working spaces, IT equipment, and access to various libraries.

Application Procedure

Applicants are requested to submit the following documents in English **in one PDF file**:

- A completed application form ([link: PDF](#))
- A research proposal of two to three pages, including the project's relationship to the annual topic, the *status quaestionis* of the chosen topic, the candidate's prior research that is relevant to the proposed topic, a detailed programme of work including a timetable, and a description of the expected form of the outcome of the project
- A full CV and up-to-date publications list (max. 5 pages)
- A transcript of records/master's certificate (PhD fellowship) or PhD diploma (postdoctoral fellowship)

In addition, two letters of recommendation (for the PhD fellowship, one of the letters must be written by the candidate's PhD supervisor) must be sent directly to MCAS by the referees.

Applications and recommendation letters must be submitted via email **by 31 January 2023** to maria.wazinski@uni-hamburg.de.

Acceptance letters will be sent out at the beginning of March 2023.

MCAS aims to increase the number of women in advanced academic positions and strongly encourages women to apply.

For further information and questions, please contact MCAS's academic coordinator Maria Wazinski:

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