

**Project Proposal Application**

To be completed by the lead proposed supervisor,  
with input from the non-HE Partner Organisation(s).



**Arts and  
Humanities  
Research Council**

<b>SECTION 1: PROJECT SUMMARY AND APPLICANT DETAILS</b>			
<b>Proposed Project Title:</b>	Edition of unpublished Greek documents from the Papyrus Collection of the Austrian National Library		
<b>Project Summary:</b> <i>(Maximum 100 words)</i>	This project focuses on the decipherment, translation and commentary of a group of hitherto unpublished Greek texts written on papyrus from Egypt, housed at the Austrian National Library. Dated to the Ptolemaic and Roman periods (III BC-AD IV), the texts concern the socio-economic life of a number of Egyptian communities. The aim of this project is twofold: first, to make accessible to scholars, for the first time, new documents, which can be used for further study; second, to get an insight into the lives of the lower strata of society for Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt, and for antiquity more broadly.		
<b>Host University:</b>	Newcastle University		
<b>Name of Non-HE Partner Organisation(s):</b> <i>(Add more lines if needed)</i>			
1. Austrian Academy of Sciences			
2. Austrian National Library			
<b>Contact(s) at Non-HE Partner Organisation(s):</b> <i>(Add more lines if needed)</i>			
Name:	Prof. Thomas Kruse	Email:	thomas.kruse@oeaw.ac.at
Name:	Prof. Bernhard Palme	Email:	bernhard.palme@univie.ac.at
<b>Primary AHRC Subject Area:</b> <i>Select one subject area from the list here. Do not add or amend subjects - there will not be a corresponding Subject Area panel to assess the application.</i>	Classics		
Does the project include a Creative Practice component?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Do you consider the project to be interdisciplinary?

YES

NO

**If you consider the project to be interdisciplinary, please state why:**

*(Maximum 100 words. Note, all applications will be assessed by the appropriate **primary subject area** cross-institutional panel.)*

## SECTION 2: PROJECT PROPOSAL AND CASE FOR SUPPORT

**Please provide full details of the proposal and make your case for support below:**

*(Maximum 750 words)*

This project focuses on the decipherment, translation and commentary of a group of twenty-five texts written on papyrus from Egypt, housed in the Austrian National Library. These texts, in ancient Greek, are dated to the Ptolemaic and Roman periods (III BC-AD IV) and concern various aspects of the society and economy of a number of Egyptian communities. The exact chronological span and content of the papyri are unknown, as these texts have never been studied before. As part of the project, the student will date the texts either paleographically or on the basis of historical references or formulas, when available. The papyri from Egypt are a unique source of written evidence. The bulk of the surviving papyri are documents in ancient Greek mostly dated to the Ptolemaic and Roman periods (III BC-AD VII), when Greek was the language of the administration. Documents include private letters, contracts, accounts, registers, edicts, and other administrative and legal texts that permit us to study several aspects of society and culture, including the role and extent of literacy among different groups of the population, the nature of the socio-economic structure, the cultural interactions between groups of different socio-economic, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds. No other type of written source from the ancient world allows us to explore such topics to the level of detail and depth that is possible for Egypt.

The aim of the project is twofold: first, to make accessible to scholars, for the first time, new documents, which can be used for further study; second, to provide a historical study to shed new light on key aspects of society for Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt, and for antiquity more broadly.

The edition of unpublished texts provides a fundamental service to the scholarly community as it makes accessible new information, invaluable for improving our knowledge and understanding of past societies. Indeed, since papyri allow us access to the everyday lives of non-elites, this project contributes to the more diverse study of antiquity.

A very high number of unpublished papyri are scattered among several collections in Europe and the US and only a few people in the world have the skills to read and translate these documents. This CDA would enable a student with excellent knowledge of ancient Greek to receive training in a highly specialised and rewarding research field, papyrology. The regular publication of unpublished papyri shows how important this field of study is and how greatly it contributes to expanding our knowledge of the ancient world, as can be seen by the numerous historical surveys that are conducted on the basis on the papyrological evidence (e.g. Monson 2012; Boozer 2021).

The study of the new texts will be integrated with the information provided by other published contemporary texts from Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt.

The project will be carried out in two main stages: decipherment and translation of the texts; historical and linguistic commentary.

During the first stage, the student will be in Vienna and will focus on deciphering and translating the texts. This will be done by autoptic examination of the papyri and using high-resolution scan images. The typical formulaic nature of many documents, which can be compared to contemporary ones of the same type, and the availability of high-resolution and infra-red images will facilitate the reading and reconstruction of the damaged sections. Training and advice will be provided by the whole supervisory team.

During the second stage, the student will focus on the linguistic analysis and historical commentary of the texts. Once the type of the documents has been identified, the data included in these documents will be integrated with the information available from other contemporary evidence of the same type.

As part of this analysis, a database will be developed, which will complement and eventually feed into two main online databases already in place - Trismegistos Texts (<https://www.trismegistos.org/index.php>) and papyri.info (<https://papyri.info>). The database will facilitate quantitative and qualitative analyses of the data. "Data mining" techniques will be used to extrapolate and compare relevant data. Support in designing and producing the database will be provided by the Research Software Engineering Team at Newcastle University. The database will be free and available online, using the institutional repository, data.ncl.

**Provide details of any resources and facilities, including equipment, fieldwork, training, etc., that will be required to complete the project successfully. NBC has limited Research Training Support Grant funding, which may affect the feasibility of high-cost projects. Please note where you might also secure additional funding, (e.g. partner organisations; department or school).**

**Include estimated costs:**

*(Maximum 200 words)*

N/A

**Outline the arrangements for communication between the non-HE partner organisation and the academic host institution in regard to project management and monitoring academic progress:**

*(Maximum 200 words)*

The whole supervisory team will meet on a monthly basis, mainly via Zoom, to discuss the student's progress and any questions that might have emerged in relation to the project. The PhD student will meet with their two Newcastle supervisors, whether in person or remotely, every two weeks. These meetings will be recorded on Newcastle University's NU Reflect platform and signed-off by the supervisors. During the time in Austria (two six-month periods in Years 1 and 2), four meetings will be scheduled with the entire panel (two for each three-month period) to monitor the student's progress. The Newcastle supervisors will keep in touch with the student once a month as per Code of Practice; informal contact will be kept daily via email or Zoom. While the student is in Newcastle, the colleagues in Austria will be involved at least in one meeting, again as per CoP.

**What benefits will there be for the candidate and the non-HE partner organisation as a result of your collaboration?**

*(Maximum 300 words)*

1. The student will have the opportunity to work on unpublished papyri from Egypt. This will provide them with a unique set of research skills, such as the ability to decipher ancient Greek scripts in different hands and write a linguistic and historical commentary. The student will have access to a distinctive set of expertise, as provided by the supervisory team, namely, papyrology, philology, linguistics, and ancient history. They will receive papyrological training by Professors Kruse and Palme as well as additional training in papyrus conservation, and support in publishing editions of papyri in dedicated academic journals. The revised doctoral dissertation will result in a monograph, to be published in the *Corpus Papyrorum Raineri* series, which has been publishing the Vienna papyri since 1895. The collaboration between Newcastle University and the partner institutions will support the student in producing a highly ambitious piece of work, whose research outputs would enable analysis of the non-elites, thus contributing to a more reliable study of antiquity. Finally, the research stay in Austria will hone

the student's German, which is indispensable for the study of the ancient world.

2. The idea of a project in collaboration with the Austrian Academy of Sciences and the Austrian National Library originates from conversations between the lead supervisor, Micaela Langellotti, and Thomas Kruse on the possibility to train talented young scholars in reading Greek papyri. Indeed, given the lack of trained papyrologists world-wide, thousands of papyri are still unpublished. The CDA scheme will provide the student with the unique opportunity to receive specialised training in papyrology from two world-leading papyrologists, Professors Kruse and Palme. The project will thus greatly benefit the partner institutions as it will facilitate the publication of a number of unedited Greek papyri, housed at the Austrian National Library, which have long awaited investigation.

**State what financial (if any) or in-kind contribution the non-HE partner organisation will be making over the duration of the award:**

*(Maximum 100 words. A financial contribution is **not** a requirement. However, the AHRC expect that **non-HE partners based overseas** will make a financial contribution to the costs of the student's return travel and accommodation when visiting.)*

The student will be provided with suitable workspace and IT access. They will receive supervision and guidance from Professors Kruse and Palme as well as dedicated training sessions in papyrus conservation and online editing. The partner institutions will contribute to the reimbursement of the student's travel expenses during their visits and help them find a suitable short-time accommodation.

**Describe the nature of the collaborative arrangement and the activities the candidate will be undertaking with the non-HE partner organisation:**

*(Maximum 300 words)*

The PhD student will be based at Newcastle University, but will spend two six-month periods in the library of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. The papyri are physically kept in the Austrian National Library, but researchers affiliated with the Academy have regular access to them and work collaborations are in place between academic staff belonging to the two institutions, who regularly deliver world-leading research outputs in the field of papyrology. During the first six months, scheduled for the end of Year 1, the student will have access to the research resources relevant to the study of the papyri that will be part of their thesis. The National Library will provide high-resolution scan images of the documents and the student will also have access to the original papyri, for first-hand inspection when necessary. Under the supervision of Professors Kruse and Palme, the student will produce a first transcription of the papyri.

During the second six-month period, scheduled for the end of Year 2, the student will carry out a close inspection of the papyri to finalise their transcription and complete a draft of the linguistic and historical commentary. The student will work again under the supervision of Professors Kruse and Palme, and will be able to liaise with the other scholars based in the Academy, such as Drs. Dolganov, Morelli and Paganini, all expert in papyrology and ancient history. In addition, the student will receive dedicated training in papyrus conservation, which is a unique trait of this CDA that will enhance the student's employability also beyond academia. In addition, they will receive training in editing papyrological texts on line. The study period in Austria will allow the student to develop highly technical skills, working alongside world-leading papyrologists in an international research environment.

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<b>SECTION 3: SUPERVISION AND EXTERNAL ADVISORS</b>
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<b>Primary (or Co-) Supervisor: Dr Micaela Langellotti</b>
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School or Department:	School of History, Classics and Archaeology	Email Address:	micaela.langellotti@ncl.ac.uk
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<b>Secondary (or Co-) Supervisor: Prof. Athanassios Vergados</b>
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School or Department:	School of History, Classics and Archaeology	Email Address:	athanassios.vergados@ncl.ac.uk
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<b>Name of the Advisor based at the Non-HE Partner Organisation: Professors Thomas Kruse and Bernhard Palme</b>
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Organisation/Institution:	Austrian Academy of Sciences	Email Address:	thomas.kruse@oeaw.ac.at
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Organisation/Institution:	Austrian National Library	Email Address:	bernhard.palme@univie.ac.at
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<b>Name of Additional Internal or External Advisors or Academic Supervisors, if any:</b>
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Organisation/Institution:		Email Address:	
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<b>Explain how the expertise of the supervisory team and external advisor(s) will allow them to support the proposed project and the selected candidate:</b> (Maximum 500 words)
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The supervisory team reflects the highly specialised set of skills that underpin the project and the distinctive expertise at the School of History, Classics and Archaeology (HCA) at Newcastle and at the Austrian institutions.

Dr Micaela Langellotti (Classics) specialises in the social, economic and cultural history of Egypt under Ptolemaic and Roman rule, including first-hand study of Greek documents written on papyrus. Recent relevant publications include her 2020 monograph on village life in Roman Egypt, based on the study of an archive of documents written on papyrus. She received training in Greek papyrology and ancient history during her first degree and MA (including two Summer Schools in Papyrology in Florence, Italy) and during her PhD, working on unedited papyri from Florence and Oxford. She recently published thirteen unedited papyri from Oxyrhynchus, which appeared in the *Oxyrhynchus Papyri* volume 84 in 2019, and is currently preparing the edition of thirty papyri housed at University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She served on the supervisory team of one NB-funded student, who completed successfully in 2022. Between January and June 2023, she supervised a visiting PhD student working on Roman Egypt. She acted as external examiner of one doctoral dissertation and as internal examiner of three doctoral dissertations.

Professor Athanassios Vergados (Classics) specialises in papyrology, ancient Greek poetry from the archaic to the imperial eras, and ancient etymology and linguistic thought. He has received training in papyrology (Seminar of the American Society of Papyrologists) and has published editions of documentary papyri (Vergados 2009, 2011/ Vergados and Papathomas 2022),

articles on papyrologically transmitted literary works (Vergados 2012, 2013, 2017, 2019), and is preparing, with Amphilochios Papathomias, the edition of thirty papyri housed at Columbia University. He has supervised one PhD student through to completion, is currently supervising two PhD students, of whom one is NB-funded, is serving as external supervisor for a PhD project at the Open University of Cyprus, and has experience as external examiner of research master's and doctoral theses in the UK, Germany, and Italy. He served as PGR Director in HCA (2019-2021), hence familiar with the CoP.

Professor Thomas Kruse is head of the Research Group Ancient Legal History & Papyrology of the Austrian Archaeological Institute of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, which focuses on the study of ancient legal history using documents written on papyrus. He is a very experienced supervisor and a word-leading expert in papyrology and ancient history. His publications include a ground-breaking study of the royal scribe in Roman Egypt as well as numerous editions of papyri, articles, chapters, and edited volumes on the administration, law and society of Egypt in the Ptolemaic and Roman periods.

Bernhard Palme is Professor of Ancient History and Papyrology at the University of Vienna as well as Director of the Department of Papyri and Papyrus Museum at the Austrian National Library. He has published widely in the fields of papyrology, mainly editions of Greek papyri from Roman and Late Roman period and papers on Romano-Egyptian administration.

#### **SECTION 4: RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT**

**Please provide details about the research environment the selected candidate will be joining and its suitability:**

*(Maximum 500 words)*

Through the CDA scheme, the project proposes the first research collaboration between Newcastle University and two leading non-HE institutions in Europe in the study of Classics and Ancient History. These institutions provide the ideal research environments, resources and staff expertise for a student, who will have the unique opportunity to develop a highly ambitious project of decipherment and historical analysis of unpublished Greek documents. Newcastle University's research profile in textual criticism and historical and linguistic analysis encompasses several subjects and time periods in HCA. In History, Berridge, Clarke and East work closely on documents and commentaries. In Archaeology, Gerrard, Haynes and Webster specialise in the social and economic history of the Roman period, working on artefacts as well as written documents. In Classics, several colleagues have expertise on textual criticism and in the history of the Roman world, including Langellotti, Corcoran, Santangelo, Smith, Vergados, Walter and Wisse, who use a wide range of evidence and approaches. These scholars are convened through three School-wide research strands at Newcastle University: Empires and After, Landscapes, and the Writing of History, which host regular research meetings and workshops. The student will be encouraged to participate in these research activities and will also have the opportunity to attend the weekly research seminars. They will be involved in the work of the PG Forum, which hosts a weekly work-in-progress seminar for PGR students. The student will therefore be able to present and discuss their work-in-progress and interim findings in a number of research venues. They will also be encouraged to present work at conferences.

Beyond the School, the student will have access to the strong scholarly network of the Newcastle Materiality, Artefacts & Technologies in Culture & History (MATCH), a Faculty Research Group focused on the inter- and cross-disciplinary material culture research of the entire human past, convened by Andrea Dolfini (HCA), Bridget Kennedy (Arts and Cultures) and Camilla Bertini (HCA). The student will be able to attend their regular meetings and networking events, which will allow them to exchange ideas and build working relations. They will attend the HaSS Faculty Research training programme and, from Year 2, they will acquire teaching experience, for which they will receive training in house and at Faculty level.

During their time in Vienna, the student will receive advice and papyrological training from Professors Thomas Kruse and Bernhard Palme and will be integrated into the international research environment of both the Academy and the National Library. They will have the opportunity to build research networks with the papyrologists and ancient historians based in Vienna, including Anna Dolganov, Federico Morelli, and Mario C.D. Paganini, who work in the History of Ancient Law and Papyrology Group. They will also be able to attend the research seminars and workshops that are regularly held at the Academy. Overall, the CDA scheme will offer the student the rare opportunity to work into very diverse and international research environments, acquiring highly technical skills and receiving specialised supervision from researchers based at Newcastle and Vienna.



## SECTION 5: RECRUITMENT INFORMATION

In the event that your project is successful it will be advertised on the Northern Bridge Consortium website to aid recruitment: <http://www.northernbridge.ac.uk/applyforstudentship/cda/>

Please therefore complete the following Applicant Criteria so that advertising can begin immediately following the outcome of the competition:

<i>For further information about this Collaborative Doctoral Award and to submit an Expression of Interest, please contact:</i>	
<b>Lead Supervisor (or Alternative Contact):</b>	Dr Micaela Langellotti
<b>Email:</b>	micaela.langellotti@ncl.ac.uk
<b>Expressions of Interest must be received no later than:</b>	TBC
<b>Expressions of Interest must take the following format:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A personal statement outlining skills and experience; a CV</li> </ul>	
<b>Interviews for shortlisted candidates are expected to take place:</b>	TBC

### APPLICANT CRITERIA

*Candidates must also meet the criteria for acceptance on a doctoral programme as set out by the host institution's Postgraduate Admissions Service. The successful candidate will be required to submit a postgraduate application to their host institution following notification that they are to be awarded a conditional CDA studentship, and meet the conditions of the offer of a place on the doctoral programme.*

<b>Education and Professional Qualifications</b>	Essential Criteria	- First class (or high 2:1) degree in Classics, Ancient History, or related discipline, or international equivalent and - MA in Classics, Ancient History, or related discipline with distinction, or international equivalent
	Desirable Criteria	- Training in papyrology - Reading comprehension in German, French or Italian for secondary literature
<b>Research and Impact Experience and Training</b>	Essential Criteria	- A MA thesis that has received a first-class mark (or international equivalent)
	Desirable Criteria	- Experience in editing ancient texts
<b>Professional Practice and Job-related Experience</b>	Essential Criteria	
	Desirable Criteria	

<b>Interpersonal Skills</b>	Essential Criteria	- Ability to work independently and meet deadlines -Ability to collaborate -Independence of thought
	Desirable Criteria	
<b>Other Factors</b>	Essential Criteria	
	Desirable Criteria	