



Call for Applications: 3 years PhD position in the history of late medieval astronomy in Europe

[ALFA](#) is an ERC funded project (2017-2022, 60 month, Consolidator grant 2016 agreement 723085) dedicated to the study of Alfonsine astronomy which flourished in Europe from the second half of the 13th century to the middle of the 16th century.

Relying on approaches from the history of astronomy, history of mathematics, and history of manuscript cultures to study astronomical tables, instruments, theoretical and mathematical texts, *ALFA*'s main objectives are to:

- Retrace the development of the corpus of Alfonsine texts from its origin in the second half of the 13th century to the end of the 15th century by following, on the manuscript level, the milieus producing and using these codices;
- Analyse Alfonsine astronomers' practices, their relations to mathematics, to the natural world, to proofs and justification, and their intellectual and social contexts and audiences;
- Build a meaningful narrative showing how astronomers in different milieus with diverse practices shaped, also from Arabic and Hebrew materials, an original scientific scene in Europe.

ALFA works in a deeply collective manner. [Mathieu Husson](#) (PI, CNRS- Observatoire de Paris), José Chabás (Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona) and Richard Kremer (Dartmouth College, USA) constitute its advisory board. Around them a local team of 3 post-docs, 3 PhD students and a digital humanities IT expert, based at the Paris observatory, will work with a team of international collaborators comprised of 10 specialists of the history of late medieval astronomy in Europe. Finally a team of external experts from neighbouring fields will consult with *ALFA* in order to enrich its methodological and theoretical dimensions and to help design the digital tools.

ALFA invites **application for a 3 year doctoral position** expected to start on **October 1, 2017** or as soon as possible thereafter (CNRS-contract, according to CNRS policy 1758 Euros gross per month). This position will be hosted at the Observatoire de Paris (ED 127) inside the history of science team (dir. Michela Malpangotto) of the SYRTE Laboratory (UMR 8630).

The successful candidate will work as part of the local team and will spend most of his/her working time on his/her research project in the context of this collective, international project. He is expected to participate in the publications of the project and will be encouraged to take part in the conception of scientific events relevant to his research (workshops and seminars). He will have also dedicated research funds especially for travel to relevant European libraries. In line with *ALFA*'s (first) objective this PhD research project should enhance our understanding of the formation of the corpus of Alfonsine texts. Different approaches are possible to achieve this aim. They include: the critical edition of key works of Alfonsine astronomy and or an in-depth study of a selected corpus of manuscripts (linked to a specific production milieu, to a pertinent collector, or to the diffusion or teaching of specific Alfonsine works). These studies should be connected to more general questions regarding the history of astronomy (technical contents of texts and the elements described in them, establishment and connection of different milieus fostering Alfonsine astronomy, specificity and overlap of these milieus in term of manuscript and astronomical practices). Complementary approaches may be considered in particular





Shaping a European Scientific Scene: Alfonsine Astronomy

regarding the history of manuscript cultures (typology of astronomical multiple-text manuscripts, visual organisation of the codex, manuscripts as performative objects).

To qualify for the position, candidates are required to have completed their Master's degree in either sciences, history of sciences or medieval history. During the PhD it will be possible for the successful candidate to complete her/his training according to his/her needs in Latin philology, codicology, palaeography, history of astronomy and history of mathematics. Acquired competences in these domains will be appreciated. A good control of spoken and written English is also important in order to be able to interact fruitfully with the international team of the project.

Applications should be sent no later than May 14, 2017 to Matthieu Husson (matthieu.husson@obspm.fr). They shall include: a short CV (2 p. max), contact information for two possible external referees (name, institution, email contact), a short research proposal (3-4 p. max), a written sample of academic work (e.g. Master thesis and/or a recent paper on it).

Review of applications will start on May 15, 2017 and the **result will be published on June 15, 2017**.

For further information you are warmly encouraged to contact Matthieu Husson (matthieu.husson@obspm.fr).

