



FIRST CIRCULAR

What Future for the Past?

At the Crossroads of Tradition and Innovation

Broadening Horizons 8 | University of Milan | 8th – 12th February 2027

We are pleased to announce Broadening Horizons 8 (BH8), the eighth edition of an international conference series organised by and dedicated to graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and early-career scholars working on the archaeology and cultural heritage of south-western Asia (in alphabetical order; Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Cyprus, Georgia, Iraq, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen), Egypt, and Sudan.

The conference welcomes papers on pre-historical, pre-classical, and classical Western Asian archaeology, Phoenician and Punic archaeology, Egyptology and Nubian studies, history, ancient languages and religions, art history, the use of scientific methods, social science, computer applications, and data science for the investigation and reconstruction of the past, and on the protection, promotion, and communication of Cultural Heritage.

The conference theme *What Future for the Past? At the Crossroads of Tradition and Innovation* invites reflection on the challenges and opportunities facing the study and preservation of the human past at a moment of profound global change. It promotes intergenerational dialogue and the exchange of methodological, conceptual, and disciplinary expertise across a broad range of fields, including archaeology, history, philology, anthropology, cultural heritage studies, and related disciplines. BH8 will be hosted at the Department of Literary Studies, Philology and Linguistics, University of Milan, across five days in a hybrid format (in-person and online).



BH8

CONFERENCE STRUCTURE:

BH8 will be structured in five parallel thematic sessions, each featuring invited keynote lectures from distinguished international scholars.

- 1. The Human - Environment Nexus.** This session explores human-nature relationships through palaeoclimate, landscape modification, resource use, and environmental change. We welcome papers addressing these themes via geoarchaeology, GIS and remote sensing, palaeobotany, archaeozoology, and textual and iconographic evidence.
- 2. Equality, Minorities, and Inclusivity.** This session will examine how past societies constructed and contested social differences, with attention to gender, ethnicity, minority identities, and the expression of social prestige through material culture, art history, philology, and anthropology.
- 3. Cult(s), Culture(s), and Daily Life Practices.** This session will explore cultural representation cultic activities, artistic and symbolic expression, funerary practices, and everyday behaviours, exploring how objects, spaces, and practices created and conveyed meaning in domestic and ritual contexts.
- 4. Technology, Economy, and Innovation: Past and Future in the Mirror.** Investigates artisanal know-how, craft techniques, production networks, and trade systems in ancient economies, welcoming contributions that combine detailed technical studies with broader economic analysis, including digital and computational approaches.
- 5. Heritage: From Memories to Valorisation.** Examines cultural heritage as a dynamic process, from archival records and museum collections to digitisation, community engagement, public archaeology, and the ethical and political dimensions of heritage valorisation.

CALL FOR PAPERS AND POSTERS:

We welcome abstracts (c. 200 words) for 20-minute papers and for posters (A0/A1 format), submitted in English via the conference website. The conference is particularly committed to inclusivity: participation is free of charge for researchers from or based in the SWANA region, and the hybrid format supports access for those facing financial or mobility constraints.

KEY DATES:

- Abstract submission deadline: 15th September 2026
- Notification of acceptance: 15th October 2026
- Early bird registration deadline: 30th November 2026
- Conference dates: 8th – 12th February 2027

For full details including registration fees, visa invitation letters, participation certificates and conference proceedings please visit the conference website www.broadeninghorizons8.it

For any inquiries, please contact us:

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