



International Graduate Conference in Gender History

Naples, 16-18 September 2026

The History of Rights, Equality and Difference(s) from a Gender Perspective

The University of Naples Federico II, in partnership with the University of Naples L'Orientale, Université de Rouen Normandie, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Roma Tre University, and the University of Vienna, and in collaboration with the PhD Programme in Global History and Governance (Scuola Superiore Meridionale, Naples), is launching an International Graduate Conference in Gender History on the theme “The History of Rights, Equality and Difference(s) from a Gender Perspective”. The conference will be held in Naples, 16–18 September 2026.

While gender equality has been formally recognized as a universal human rights principle, its meanings, applications, and limits have varied across historical, cultural, political, and geographical contexts. Historically, gender has played a central role in defining who could claim rights, on what grounds, and with what limitations. At the same time, claims based on gender difference have functioned both as instruments of emancipation and as mechanisms of exclusion.

Using a gender perspective, this Graduate Conference seeks contributions that critically examine how gendered notions of equality and difference have been debated, redefined and experienced in different contexts and by different subjects at a local, national and transnational level, and how they changed in history, since the early modern period and until the 21st century. We are particularly interested in papers that move beyond Eurocentric frameworks and engage with transnational, global, intersectional, and comparative perspectives.

While most scholarship focuses on the last two centuries, we are interested in adopting a long-term perspective, to trace the continuities – and changes – across time and space, and question existing periodizations. In the early modern period, gender difference was central to the organization of households, communities, states, and empires, shaping access to property, labor, and legal standing. During the 19th and 20th centuries, gender structured both the promise and the exclusions of modern rights regimes. Revolutions, Enlightenment thought, the consolidation of nation-states and imperial expansion articulated powerful new languages of natural rights and equality, while at the same time reinscribing gendered hierarchies within state institutions and social life. How has gender functioned as a category of exclusion and as a site of political mobilization and claims-making in different contexts and periods? How have claims to equality challenged or reinforced gendered differences?

Possible themes include, but are not limited to:

- Property, inheritance, and economic rights in comparative perspective
- Family and reproductive rights
- Empire, colonial law, and the historical production of gender inequality
- Gender and rights in anticolonial, nationalist, and revolutionary movements (and moments)
- Suffrage, citizenship, and political participation in comparative and global historical perspective
- International women's rights and human rights during the 20th century

- Social rights, labor, and the gendering of welfare states
- Positive discriminations, affirmative action programs, and quotas
- War and the reconfiguration of gendered rights
- LGBT+ histories and approaches to equality and difference(s)

During the Conference, Ph.D. students will present and discuss their research with scholars of the partner universities.

We invite Ph.D. students (from the second year on) who wish to participate in the Graduate Conference and present their ongoing research to submit their applications by sending a brief CV (max 150 words) and a short presentation, in English, of their proposals (max 500 words) by **April 15, 2026** to the following email address: genderhistory2026@gmail.com.

The Scientific Committee will evaluate the proposals, and acceptance notices will be sent by **May 10, 2026**. Accepted papers must be sent by **August 15, 2026**.

The conference language is **English**.

Keynote speaker(s) will be announced.

Conference presentations should last no longer than 20 minutes. Each presentation will be accompanied by comments from a member of the Scientific Committee.

Food and housing will be provided by the organizing institutions. Unfortunately, we are not able to provide funds to cover travel expenses.

Scientific Committee: Anna Bellavitis (Université de Rouen Normandie), Elisabetta Bini (Università di Napoli Federico II), Daniela Luigia Caglioti (Università di Napoli Federico II), Cristina Carletti (Università di Roma Tre), Simona Feci (Università di Napoli L'Orientale), Alessandra Gissi (Università di Napoli L'Orientale), Carmen de la Guardia Herrero (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid), Margareth Lanzinger (Universität Wien), Michela Fusaschi (Università di Roma Tre), Florencia Peyrou (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid), Domenico Rizzo (Università di Napoli L'Orientale), Emma Sarno (Università di Napoli L'Orientale), Anna Simone (Università di Roma Tre).

Organizing Committee: Elisabetta Bini (Università di Napoli Federico II), Daniela Luigia Caglioti (Università di Napoli Federico II), Giulia Centofante (Università di Napoli Federico II).

The Graduate Conference is funded by the Università di Napoli Federico II (Fondo: Assegnazioni finalizzate ad accordi, convenzioni ed interscambi con Università ed Istituti di Ricerca Esteri), with additional support from the PhD Program in Global History and Governance, Scuola Superiore Meridionale.