



**VIU**  
PhD  
academy  
**GLASS:**  
**From magma**  
**TO THE WINDSHIELD,**  
**PASSING THROUGH**  
**murano**

**PhD Academy Glass: from Magma to the Windshield,  
Passing through Murano**

**September 14-19, 2026**

**Venice International University  
Isola di San Servolo, Venice**

VIU International PhD  
Academy

## **Glass: from magma to the windshield, passing through Murano**

September 14-19, 2026

Venice International  
University

Scientific Coordinator:

Bernardo Cesare,  
University of Padova

VIU Global Challenges  
Initiative

Glass (silicate melt) is fundamental in Nature: it shapes Earth's surface with volcanoes, modifies our planet with magma transfer, allows plate tectonics and Earth dynamics. Glass is fundamental in Material Sciences and Technology: we are surrounded by glass of diverse types, from the common float glass of windows to the sophisticated optical fibers to hi-tech glasses with properties considered unthinkable just a few years ago. Glass is fundamental in the Arts and Cultural Heritage: it has always attracted for its combination of beauty and practical use throughout the last five millennia or more of human history. With time, artistic glassmaking has reached the highest aesthetic peaks. Glass is fundamental to Venice, where the island of Murano has been the world capital of glassmaking for over 1,000 years. The circle is completed as glass is returned to nature in the form of sea glass, slowly fading into the ocean where its story ends.

The Academy will cover the Glass topic in a multidisciplinary way and from various viewpoints such as geology, volcanology, industry and technology, archaeology and history, and science and art of artistic glass making. The Academy will also include teaching and development of key transferable professional skills such as science communication.

This PhD Academy is led by:

- University of Padova
- Boston College
- Duke University
- Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München

This PhD Academy contributes directly to the VIU Global Challenges Initiative, which aims to stimulate knowledge, understanding, and skills related to major societal challenges faced by humankind today.

### **Faculty**

Bernardo Cesare, University of Padova  
Ethan Baxter, Boston College  
Dorian Canelas, Duke University  
Donald Dingwell, Ludwig Maximilians Universität  
Kai-Uwe Hess, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität  
Roberto Ragazzoni, University of Padova and INAF  
Claudia Romano, University of Roma Tre

Guido Giordano, University of Roma Tre  
Simone Tiozzo, Stazione Sperimentale del Vetro  
Maria Antonia Barucco, Iuav University of Venice  
Elti Cattaruzza, Ca' Foscari University of Venice  
Francesca Veronese, Musei Civici di Padova  
Ilda Mannino, Venice International University

### Topics

Each day will include lectures/workshops led by faculty as well as dedicated time for PhD students to workshop a question, method, or chapter.

The PhD Academy will include topics such as:

- Natural Glass  
origin of silicate melts in the earth; geological glasses: lava and obsidian to volcanic glass and ash; uncommon natural glasses: fulgurites, pseudotachylites, impactites; studying glasses to unravel the history of the Earth, Moon and rocky Planets and the Solar system.
- Man-made glass  
industrial to hi-tech glasses: properties and production; priorities in industrial glassmaking; characterization and analysis of industrial glasses (with the support of Stazione Sperimentale del Vetro – Murano).  
glass and Cultural Heritage: historical and archaeological aspects; production and main trade routes; glass in Museums; glass and Venice (with the support of Murano glassmakers, Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere e Arti, Le Stanze del Vetro, Centro Studi del Vetro).
- Transferable skills: writing, negotiation, science and money, and peer review process.

### Learning outcomes for participants

Participants will learn about the multi-faceted nature of glass, about the various ways of approaching this material from the production, technology and analytical viewpoints. They will learn about the very different histories of glassmaking from the human and the geological perspectives. They will also learn transferable skills relevant to their professional and scientific career development, with emphasis on Science Communication through storytelling and filmmaking.

### Who can apply?

This international PhD Academy is offered to PhD students, post-docs, and early career researchers working in the interdisciplinary fields of Geosciences, Chemistry, Engineering, Material Sciences, Physics, Archaeology, Archaeometry, Art History, Sculpture, Visual Arts.

Open to candidates from all the VIU Member Institutions; applications from excellent candidates from non-member institutions will be also considered and evaluated.

### Fees & Grant Support

Full fee waiver scholarships are available for students from VIU member institutions. In addition, grant support is available to support partially or fully the costs of international travel. Accommodation is provided free of charge. The participation fee for students of non-member institutions is Euro 1250 incl. VAT). The fee is inclusive of tuition, course materials, accommodation, lunches, social events, and taxes. Students from non-member institutions are not eligible for VIU grant support. VIU Alumni are eligible for a reduced fee.

### Call for applications

**February 25– May 15, 2026**  
via the VIU website

Applicants must submit the (1) application form, (2) a letter of motivation – which should include a short bio and a brief description of the candidate's research project, (3) a curriculum vitae and (4) a photo.

Selected participants will be asked to present a research question, methods, or chapter for feedback from their peers and faculty (using PowerPoint or similar presentation mechanism)

For further information: [phdacademy@univiu.org](mailto:phdacademy@univiu.org)

## **VIU International PhD Academies**

Venice International University is a consortium of 23 institutions, representing 14 countries throughout the world.

The mission of VIU is to foster cooperation among VIU member institutions while facilitating the exchange of knowledge and ideas, by developing, promoting, and organizing joint academic, research and training/capacity-building program. Students from non-member universities may participate in selected academic programs.

The academic programs at VIU are distinguished by a markedly interdisciplinary approach to the topics, and by the international perspectives that the participants contribute to the discussions. The VIU campus is on the island of San Servolo in Venice, Italy.

Venice International University holds two/three International PhD Academies each year. They are intensive training opportunities open to PhD candidates from the member universities of VIU.

A PhD is the highest diploma awarded by universities in the world, and PhDs are naturally expected to take on major responsibilities in their professional life. Apart from the disciplinary scientific skills acquired during doctoral study and research, it is the ability to respond to the requirements of creativity, innovation, and project management, that produce the significant added value of a doctoral degree.

Whether they will work within or outside academia, PhDs must be able to develop a forward-looking vision of the challenges they have to face. The interdisciplinary approach of all VIU activities is adopted also in the PhD Academy, where the participants have the opportunity to meet their peers from all over the world, and to tackle transversal topics.

[www.univiu.org/study/phd-academy](http://www.univiu.org/study/phd-academy)

## **Location**



## **Venice International University**

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