



# LEEDS INTERNATIONAL MEDIIEVAL CONGRESS

Special Thematic Strand:  
**Communities**

5-8 July 2027

The IMC provides an interdisciplinary forum for the discussion of all aspects of Medieval Studies. Proposals on any topic related to the Middle Ages are welcome, while every year the IMC also chooses a special thematic focus. In 2027, this is 'Communities'.



International Medieval Congress, Institute for Medieval Studies  
University of Leeds, Parkinson Building 1.03,  
LEEDS LS2 9JT UK

Tel: +44 (113) 343-3614  
Email: [imc@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:imc@leeds.ac.uk)  
[www.imc.leeds.ac.uk](http://www.imc.leeds.ac.uk)



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The study of communities involves groups of people, their sharedness, and how those groups define themselves and manage challenges over time. They include the individual's experience, place, and change relative to the group. The relationship between the individual and the circle of social actors with whom they interact affects how these groups appear and work as well as how they influence the actions and activities of the individual.

Communities can form across ethnic, linguistic, social, political, professional, spatial, and religious identities. Often these identities intersect, with individuals belonging multiple communities, which could bring advantages or cause conflict and hostility. But how are these groups defined today, and how do we use different methodologies to analyse communities, including multidisciplinary perspectives? Approaches such as the consideration of imagined, embodied, or emotional communities, as well as the concept of 'communities of practice', open up a wider range of research disciplines and areas. Other research questions address how communities emerged and were maintained, their value and legitimacy, the use of memory to consolidate collective identities, how to achieve cohesion, or how different communities impinged on each other.

Key topics across different fields include, but are not limited to:

- Political, religious, confessional, and ethnic communities
- Structures, hierarchies, rules, regulations, administration, and law
- Emotional, imagined, textual, and discourse communities
- Material culture of communities
- Symbols and identifiers
- Language, multilingualism, language learning, and linguistic markers of communities
- Communities of knowledge and practice

- Community of/with God(s)
- Spaces and places, rural and urban, daily life, and living communally
- Travelling and migrating communities
- Commemoration and origins myths, legacies, and the lost and forgotten
- Projection and performance of communal identity
- Chant, song, liturgy, and ritual
- Being part of a community (inclusion/exclusion), legitimacy, values, and cohesion
- Within/without - 'them' and 'us' - exile, outlawry, expulsion, and closed and marginalised communities
- Neighbourliness
- Sense of community and sense of belonging
- Decline and collapse, loss of purpose/focus, and external eradication
- Traditional and innovative communities
- Scholarly and disciplinary communities, medieval and modern
- Communities of violence and disruptive communities
- Non-human communities and non-human social actors

IMC 2027 is the global medieval platform which promotes a broad spectrum of perspectives and critical discussions on medieval studies. We aim to engage scholars working at all geographical scales, from global to local contexts, and across various time periods. The IMC especially welcomes papers that bring in perspectives from under-represented disciplines, regions, and theoretical and conceptual perspectives, in all major languages.

Proposals should be submitted online at [www.imc.leeds.ac.uk](http://www.imc.leeds.ac.uk) from 1 June 2026.

**Deadlines:** Paper proposals: **31 August 2026**;  
Session proposals: **30 September 2026**.



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