VACANCY
PHD STUDENT IN HISTORY
“NATURALNESS, TRADITION AND QUALITY OF MEAT PRODUCTS DURING THE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURIES.”

POSITION
The research group Historical Research into Urban Transformation Processes (HOST) is seeking a full-time (100%) position for a Doctoral student (PhD Student) in the area of the history of consumption. The position is offered as part of an inter-disciplinary project and involves the preparation of a doctoral thesis in History, focusing on “Naturalness, tradition and quality of meat products during the 18th and 19th centuries.”

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
In recent decades social and economic historians have devoted increasing attention to understanding consumption cultures in the past (De Vries 2008, Trentmann 2016). As a result, a rich historical literature has emerged that studies the changing meanings, conventions of valuation, and cultural frameworks which helped to bring eighteenth- and nineteenth-century consumers in large numbers towards the market for consumer goods. Yet, this historiography on consumer change in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries has predominantly concentrated attention on the study of novelties and durables. Relatively little attention has thus far been paid to the question how the cultural and intellectual frameworks of consumer demand for traditional consumables – such as meat – were influenced by the profound transformations wrought by liberalization, industrialization and the transport revolution on the supply and distribution of these commodities. By contrast, most studies of meat in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have tended to focus on issues of provisioning, ecology and safety more closely related to the production process than to consumer aspirations and motivations. This project aims to study how the ways in which the appreciation of meat, and the intellectual and cultural frameworks governing this appreciation, was transformed in Belgium during the transition towards an industrial, capitalist market for animal products. It thus aims to contribute to our understanding of the relation between innovation and tradition in food history, and to the interaction between consumption and production – issues central to important debates in social, cultural, and economic history.

JOB DESCRIPTION
- Preparation of a doctoral thesis in the field of history on the topic of “Naturalness, tradition and quality of meat products during the 18th and 19th centuries.”
- Active participation in the research activities of the HOST research group (bi-weekly seminars), and a limited contribution to teaching at the History department.

REQUIREMENTS
- You hold a master degree in history or a related field in the social sciences with experience in historical research. Students who have not yet graduated, but will do so in September 2018 are also welcome, and encouraged, to apply.
- You are able to work with archival sources from the 18th and 19th centuries, both printed and handwritten, and in French and Dutch.
- You are able to do independent, autonomous research with the guidance of your supervisor, but you are also able to work collaboratively in a research team.
- You are able to produce high-quality scholarly work in Dutch and English.

**JOB OFFER**
- A full-time doctoral scholarship for four years (which has to be renewed each year after positive evaluation).
- The start date of the scholarship will be October 1, 2018.
- A collaborative and stimulating work environment within a dynamic research group on social and urban history.

**RESEARCH CONTEXT**
The research will be carried out in the context of an interdisciplinary project under the guidance of prof. dr. ir. Frédéric Leroy (IMDO). The supervision of this (historical) PhD will be by prof. dr. Wouter Ryckbosch (HOST). More information on what doing a PhD at the VUB involves can be found at: [http://www.vub.ac.be/en/phd](http://www.vub.ac.be/en/phd).

**HOW TO APPLY**
Applications should be submitted before **August 16th, 2018** by e-mail to **wouter.ryckbosch@vub.be**. Your application should include:
- A motivational cover letter,
- A complete CV
- Full transcript of grades
- A pdf file of your MA thesis.

Shortlisted candidates will be notified on August 20th. Interviews will take place in the final week of August or the first week of September.

For more information, contact **wouter.ryckbosch@vub.be**.