



European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI-PL) workshop:

Holocaust Egodocuments: Research and Challenges

11-13 October 2026, Łódź, Poland

Call for applications

Personal documents were identified as a distinct research category over 70 years ago by the Dutch historian and Holocaust survivor Jacques Presser. As a researcher documenting the fate of Dutch Jews during the war, he encountered the stories of both survivors and perpetrators. In his pioneering research on the wartime experiences of Jews in the Netherlands, published in the monumental work *Ondergang (Ashes in the Wind)*, he relied heavily on personal accounts, recognizing a unique testimony to the human dimension of the tragedy. Even then, he drew attention to the immense value of such sources, which were often dismissed by researchers as too subjective and literary compared to traditional official documentation. The term quickly garnered interest among researchers and gradually entered the mainstream of scholarship, including the history of the Holocaust.

Contemporary research on egodocuments in the context of the Holocaust and World War II is undergoing dynamic development, part of a broader “biographical turn” and interest in history from below. Egodocuments allow us to understand how individuals constructed their identities in relation to a world engulfed in crisis and how they coped with the trauma of wartime experiences.

During the workshop, we would like, among other things, to analyze and discuss the following issues:

- I. **Methodology and hermeneutics:** How can we interpret subjective personal accounts while maintaining scholarly integrity? How can we study “silence” and what remains unexpressed in wartime narratives?
- II. **Typology and form:** Are traditional categories (diary, letter, memoir) sufficient? How can we incorporate less obvious forms into our research, such as almanacs, marginal notes, or visual documents?
- III. **Collection and processing:** What ethical and practical challenges are associated with working in Holocaust archives? What archival practices should be used to restore a voice to marginalized communities?
- IV. **Personal documents in the age of digital humanities:** What possibilities do geographic information systems (GIS) and “deep mapping” offer for visualizing wartime trajectories? How does Linked Open Data (LOD) allow us to connect personal stories with a broader historical context?

The workshops will be interdisciplinary in nature, and one of their goals is to bring together people at different stages of their academic careers.

We invite master's students, doctoral candidates, and advanced researchers to participate. We are committed to the free exchange of knowledge and experience, discussion of challenges, and future collaboration that transcends the boundaries of the historical discipline. We invite you to submit proposals for full papers, practical sessions, and presentations of ongoing projects.

Practical Information

The workshop language is English.

The submission deadline is July 31, 2026. Incomplete submissions and those received after the deadline will not be considered.

The organizers will cover participants' accommodation and travel expenses (up to 300 euros for participants from Europe and 800 euros for participants from other continents).

The **application package** consists of:

- An abstract of the paper/presentation/session and a brief description of the participants' interests (maximum 2 pages)
- A short academic biography (maximum 1 paragraph)
- A letter of recommendation is requested for master's and doctoral students

Please submit the application package as a single .pdf file to: ehri-pl@uni.lodz.pl

Selected participants will be notified by email **by August 15, 2026**.

The event is organized by the Philip Friedman Centre for Jewish Studies at the University of Łódź in collaboration with the Polish Center for Holocaust Research, The Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, and the Center for Self-Narratives at the University of Łódź.



The workshop is organized within the framework of EHRI-PL and co-funded with resources from the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage for the task 'Ongoing Activities of the Polish National Node of EHRI-PL – the EHRI-ERIC consortium, implemented by the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute [JHI] for the years 2025–2027 in cooperation with national partners.'

