2027 Classical Summer School Program Guidelines

This five-week program provides middle school and high school teachers of Latin or the ancient world, qualified graduate students in Classics or related areas, and college/university faculty with an in-depth understanding of the city of Rome through a careful examination of its topographical history and archaeological record.

What began as a cluster of Iron Age huts on a hill overlooking the Tiber River eventually grew to become the capital of a vast and multicultural empire that stretched across the Mediterranean basin. Rome's development reflects a complex relationship with other peoples who inhabited the Italian peninsula, in particular Greeks and Etruscans. The city was periodically transformed as it expanded with the influx of newcomers and was continuously rebuilt following moments of human-made and natural crises. This program gives participants a comprehensive understanding of that process, looking at ancient Rome's urban setting from the early Republican period through late antiquity, and considering the contiguous development of some of its neighbors in the Italian peninsula. Through close examination of a wide variety of evidence that includes architecture, visual representations, daily-life objects, epigraphy, and textual sources, participants obtain a deep understanding of the broader history of Rome as well as the individual experiences of a wide range of ancient peoples who inhabited the empire.

In 2027, the program will focus primarily on the city of Rome, with additional explorations of Etruria and the Bay of Naples. The first week will be based in Rome and will incorporate field trips to important Etruscan sites and early Latin colonies. The program then moves to the Bay of Naples during the second week, to explore the cities buried by Vesuvius in 79 CE and the important archaeological collections in local museums. We then move back to Rome for the last three weeks to focus on a topographically oriented study of the city, complemented by a few day trips to key sites in the region of Latium.

Director
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2027 Program Dates
Sunday, June 20–Friday, July 23, 2027

Application Deadline
Tuesday, December 15, 2026, 11:59 PM EST.
Letters of recommendation must be submitted by this deadline to receive full consideration.
Notification of acceptance: mid-February 2027
Notification of AAR scholarships: Early March 2027

The Course
The program of the Classical Summer School focuses on the development of the ancient city of Rome from its earliest settlement through late antiquity in parallel with other contiguous regions in the Italian peninsula, namely Etruria and the Bay of Naples. Week 1 includes skill workshops, visits to sites that trace the development of early Rome, and field trips to Etruscan sites and early Roman colonies. In Week 2, the course moves to the Bay of Naples to study the urban centers

there, such as Pompeii and Herculaneum, and their cultural, political, and economic connections with Rome. Weeks 3–5 focus on Rome itself, providing an introduction to the material culture and topography of the city. Along with examining the better-known sites such as the Forum and the Palatine Hill, and iconic monuments such as the Colosseum and the Pantheon, we will explore lesser-known parts of the ancient city, sites that are often hidden behind locked gates and below the modern streets. This stage of the course also focuses on museum collections, to explore the side of ancient Roman art and material culture that has been preserved through archaeological excavations. Further visits to sites in Rome's hinterland, including Palestrina, Ostia, and Tivoli, complement the daily study within the city.

From this series of visits to sites and museums during the five-week program, participants will develop an intimate knowledge of Rome and its ancient monuments, as well as Rome's neighbors. A key aim throughout the program is the development of participants 'skills in analyzing and interpreting archaeological sites, urban spaces, architecture, and artifacts. Classroom and on-site lectures and seminars will relate the material of the course to its historical and social contexts, while pedagogical workshops will consider how teachers can bring this material into their classrooms. The course focuses on in-depth examination of architecture, sculpture, painting, the 'minor 'arts, and inscriptions, which will be contextualized with assigned readings from primary texts and modern scholarship. Additionally, participants will develop presentation skills by teaching a monument or aspect of ancient Roman topography, literature, history, art/architecture or pedagogy of interest to them or relevant to their own research.

While in Rome, program participants will have full access to the Arthur & Janet C. Ross Library of the American Academy, where there are excellent resources on the history, topography, and archaeology of the city of Rome and ancient Italy, and to the Norton-Van Buren Archaeological Study Collection.

2027 Classical Summer School
The 5-week session begins when participants arrive in Rome on Sunday, June 20, 2027 and concludes with a final dinner on the evening of Friday, July 23, 2027. Participants must plan to arrive in Rome by midday on Sunday, June 20 for an afternoon orientation and depart Rome no earlier than the morning of Saturday, July 24. Students are expected to be present for the duration of the Classical Summer School and should not be absent from the program for any reason other than emergencies or illness. The course typically runs Tuesday to Saturday, with Sundays-Mondays and one long weekend available for participants' personal travel, rest, and free time.

Admission
Enrollment is composed of middle school and high school teachers of Latin or the ancient world, qualified graduate students in Classics or related areas, and college/university faculty. If the number of applicants is considerably high, preference will be given to teachers and graduate students. **All applications for admission must be received by 11:59 pm EST December 15, 2026**.

Important Program Requirements
Please be aware that the Classical Summer School is conducted largely on site in Rome and elsewhere in Italy. Participation in the program requires significant physical exertion due to long,

strenuous walks and occasional steep climbs, sometimes over uneven terrain; standing in the hot sun at archaeological sites; and standing for prolonged periods of time in museums. The months of June and July are hot in Rome, with temperatures often in the 90s and occasionally exceeding 100 degrees Fahrenheit. For example, in 2025, participants walked on average 20,000 steps per day, and the average temperature was 88F, but with several consecutive days of heat over 95F. Program days typically start at 8am and end by 5pm with a break before dinner. **Please consider carefully whether you have the physical and social capacity to undertake this intensive program before applying.**

The cuisine of Italy is well known and much loved; however, if you cannot eat an Italian diet, this program cannot always accommodate other dietary requests. We will endeavor to accommodate vegetarians, vegans, and specific intolerances and allergies, but please be aware that our ability to accommodate dietary constraints is contingent upon our local restaurant partners.

Scholarships for 2027

Several scholarships are awarded by the American Academy in Rome upon recommendation of the Classical Summer School Director and scholarship committee. These do not require a separate application. There is a section on the application where applicants can indicate a preference to be considered for these awards.

Numerous local classical organizations support study at the American Academy in Rome. Check with your local classical association, school, or department for opportunities.

Applicants are solely responsible for finding and applying for financial aid. Every applicant must submit a full Classical Summer School application by December 15, 2026, regardless of any scholarships or other awards being sought.

Passport and Visas

If you do not already have a valid passport, we advise that you apply for one immediately. The passport agency is experiencing delays, so please leave adequate time to process your application. Note your passport must be valid for at least three months beyond the date on which you plan to leave the European Union.

If you are on a visa in the US, please consider whether you will be permitted to leave the country and return. Likewise, if you are not a US citizen, please check the visa requirements for your entry into Italy.

Program Costs

The program fee of $5,000 includes tuition, accommodation, some meals, and the cost of trips to sites included in the program (including transportation to sites). Participants without sources of funding are eligible for an American Academy in Rome scholarship (minimum of $1,500). While we work to provide scholarship support for all participants, high school teachers will receive priority.

The program fee does not include airfare, personal expenses (or additional, unplanned expenditures), some lunches/dinners, any travel not directly related to the program of the Classical Summer School, nor expenses such as laundry, tips, amusements, or shopping.

Successful applicants will be asked to pay a non-refundable deposit of $200 to hold their place. The program fee must be paid in full by May 1, 2027. Payment instructions will be provided upon confirmation of program participation.

Accommodation

During the first two weeks of the program, participants will be housed in hotels inside and outside of Rome in double rooms (two beds in a shared room). For the last three weeks of the program, participants will be housed in shared apartments in Rome, with individual rooms and shared common spaces and bathrooms. The apartments have fully equipped kitchens and washing machines.

Accommodation is only available between the program dates of June 20 (arrival) and July 24 (departure). It is not possible to pay for additional days. Please plan to arrive by midday on Sunday, June 20 for orientation. Departure should take place no earlier, and no later, than Saturday, July 24.

The program will provide some lunches for excursions and site visits, and some dinners. While in Rome, participants will have access to a shared kitchen if they wish to cook their own meals when meals are not included. Please note: while we endeavor to accommodate the dietary restrictions of participants, it may not be possible to accommodate all requirements.

Applications

The Classical Summer School has an online application process. The deadline for all application materials is **December 15, 2026**. For questions about the Classical Summer School, please email Dr. Gretel Rodríguez, cssdirector@aarome.org