

An invitation to the Fediverse for Neo-Latinists



Looking for a new community town square

As Twitter/X has turned from *forum* into *popina*, scholarly communities are looking for a new platform to connect, interact, communicate, support one another, share news, ideas, and materials of interest. The Neo-Latin community is no exception: especially in the case of a relatively small discipline, it's vital to build networks and stay connected beyond our conferences and occasional meetings. Social media is an effective way to achieve this.

Why join the Fediverse?

Several Twitter alternatives exist, but here's why you should consider the Fediverse:

- It's as suitable for scholarly communication as Twitter. You can follow accounts of interest, mention other accounts in replies, and use hashtags so people who don't yet follow you can discover your posts.
- It's open and cannot be bought by a single person.
- It's free, so you don't have to pay with your personal data.
- It's a non-commercial third space, so you see what you choose to see – without ad-cluttered timelines.
- Your timeline is not dictated by algorithms that favour certain posts or accounts over others, and it doesn't boost hate speech or polarizing content for profit-driven reasons.
- It's highly customizable. You can passively follow accounts, you can interact by liking, boosting or replying, or post your own content to share what you're working on or seek help. In essence, the Fediverse can be what you want it to be: a mailing list, a forum, or a chat.

How to join the Fediverse?

Here's a brief guide to getting started with the Fediverse via Mastodon:

1. **Choose any Mastodon instance.**¹ Select an instance accepting new members. Here are a few options:
 - a. <https://mastodon.social>: the largest and most general instance
 - b. <https://hcommons.social>: focused on the Humanities
 - c. <https://fedihum.org>: focused on Digital Humanities

Any of them is fine. It's also relatively easy to move from one instance to another, in case you find one that suits you better. To create an account, you'll need an account name, an email address and a password.

2. **Say 'Hello' to the Fediverse (optional).** Once your account is set up, it's good practice to write an introductory post. Mention who you are and your interests. Be sure to use

¹ Think of an instance as a server running the Mastodon software. Instances can define specific rules to ensure members feel safe and comfortable. You register with an instance but can follow basically any account regardless of the server. A list can be found here: <https://instances.social/list>.

hashtags, so people with similar interests can find you. So use in your first post the hashtag *#introduction* and use hashtags for your fields of interest, e.g. *#renaissance*, *#neolatin*, *#erasmus*, *#philology*, *#palaeography*, or, in view of the [IANLS conference in July 2025](#), *#IANLS25*.

3. **Curate your timeline.** Follow accounts and hashtags relevant to your interests. Use Mastodon's search function to find accounts, such as *@digneolatin@hcommons.social* for updates on digital Neo-Latin studies. As you go on, you will find other interesting accounts. Follow them and mention them in your posts (just writing "*@account_name*"), when relevant.
4. **Boost visibility.** Remember: You're the algorithm. "Boost" posts you find useful to increase their visibility. "Favorite" posts to show appreciation (favorites do not boost visibility).
5. **Join special interest groups.** Follow and mention accounts like *@neolatin@a.gup.pe* or *@renaissance@a.gup.pe*. These accounts automatically boost posts where they are mentioned.
6. **Use Mastodon on your mobile devices.** There are good mobile clients for Mastodon such as Tusky (<https://tusky.app/>) for Android or Ice Cubes for iOS (<https://apps.apple.com/de/app/ice-cubes-for-mastodon/id6444915884>).

Now you're all set! Follow accounts you find interesting, post about your research, and share your questions, ideas, job advertisements, or calls for papers!

See you in the Fediverse! 😊

Alexander Winkler
ORCID: [0000-0002-9145-7238](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9145-7238)
Mastodon: [@awinkler@openbiblio.social](https://openbiblio.social/@awinkler)

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