

A map of the Silk Road routes across Asia, Europe, and Africa, embroidered in gold and blue threads on a light-colored fabric. Two bundles of gold thread are visible in the top left and bottom right corners.

Transparent Journeys along the Silk Roads: Glass and Connectivity across Central Asia and Beyond

International Conference
14–16 May 2026,
UCL, London

PROGRAMME

DAY 1

- 09:00 Registration
- 09:00 Optional free view of the British Museum's Hawaii exhibition (pre-booked)
- 10:00 Optional tour of BM science labs (pre-booked)
- 10:00 Optional handling session - Egyptian glass in the Petrie Museum
(pre-booked)
- 13:30 Registration closes

13:50 – 17:00 Session 1

UCL Institute of Archaeology, 31-34 Gordon Square, WC1H 0PY | Room G6

Chair: Ian Freestone (AHG, UCL)

- 13:50-14:00 Introduction
- 14:00-14:40 The importance of glass for the study of the Silk Roads: changing perspectives
Julian Henderson, University of Nottingham
- 14:40-15:00 Glass beads of the Fergana valley in the system of cultural exchanges along the Great Silk Road
Zamira Koraeva, Samarkand Institute of Archaeology
- 15:00-15:20 Scientific Analysis of Early Islamic Glass from the Ush-Tur Site in Xinjiang: Provenance and Technology
Anqi Chen, Peking University
- 15:20-16:00 Coffee and tea break

- 16:00-16:20 Metal-in-Glass Beads across Central Asia: A Regional Review (1st millennium CE)
Agnes Puiyee Sung, Chinese University of Hong Kong
- 16:20-16:40 From England to China and back: exploring the connections between 18th century glass workshops
Kirill Vlasov, University of Aberdeen, University of Bristol
- 16:40-17:00 Tracing Central Asian Islamic plant-ash glass: Sr–Nd isotope insights
Qin-Qin Lü, University of Cambridge
- 17:00 Close of Session
- 17:00** Poster session, Room 612, Institute of Archaeology
- 18:00** Wine reception, Room 609, Institute of Archaeology

DAY 2

9:30 – 12:30 Session 2

UCL Central House, 14 Upper Woburn Place, WC1H 0NN | Lecture Hall 225

Chair: Daniela Rosenow (AHG, Oxford University)

- 9:30-10:10 Glass circulation along the Silk Road: a view from South Asia
Laure Dussubieux, Field Museum, Chicago
- 10:10-10:30 Northern Wei blue — Localized production of sodium calcium glass in Northern China from the 4th to the 6th century AD
Yanqin Jia, Shanxi University, Datong Museum
- 10:30-10:50 Chemical analysis of glass beads excavated in the Eurasian Steppe
Tomomi Tamura, Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties
- 10:50-11:30** Coffee and tea break
- 11:30-11:50 Central Asian glass bangles in the Persian Gulf
Charlotte Nash-Pye, The British Museum, University of Kent
- 11:50-12:10 Shifting the focus to production: new evidence from Pabalugala
Mangala Katugampola, University of Kelaniya
- 12:10-12:30 Edges of Connectivity: Access to Silk Road exchange in the Northern Netherlands and Lower Saxony. A Case Study of Zweeloo and Rasquert
Nina Schreuder, University of Groningen
- 12:30-14:00** Lunch

14:00 – 17:00 Session 3

Chair: Andrew Meek (British Museum)

- 14:00-14:40 Glass vessels travelling East
Brigitte Borell, University of Heidelberg
- 14:40-15:00 Glass Beads and Trans-Peninsular Connections: New Evidence from Excavations at Khao Thalung Archaeological Site, Chumphon Province
Putsadee Rodcharoen, Silpakorn University
- 15:00-15:20 Glass from India - Provenance and Manufacture study of archaeological glass unearthed from the Southern Route of the Silk Road in Xinjiang, 1st BCE-4th century CE
Qian Cheng, National Centre for Archaeology, Beijing
- 15:20-16:00** Coffee and tea break
- 16:00-16:20 The introduction and distribution of Indo-Pacific beads in China's mainland from the mid-1st millennium BCE to the 1st millennium CE
Siwen Xu, University of Chinese Academy of Sciences
- 16:20-16:40 From the Middle East to the Caucasus to Berlin – a journey of medieval glassware through the centuries
Sujatha Chandrasekaran, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin
- 16:40-17:00 Zircons, Hafnium Isotopes and Silk Road Glass: New Paths to Provenance
Gry Barfod, Cobb Meadow Research, USA
- 17:00 End of Session

Evening Conference dinner (pre-booked; additional fees apply)

DAY 3

9:30 – 13:00 Session 4

UCL, Wilkins Building, Gower St, WC1E 6BT | Gustave Tuck Lecture Theatre

Chair: Michael Charlton (UCL)

- 9:30-10:10 Urban centres as stepping stones along the Silk Roads
Nadine Schibille, IRAMAT-CEB, UMR7065, CNRS / Université d'Orléans
- 10:10-10:30 Following glass in the Indian Ocean trade: a preliminary study on glass items from the site of Banbhore (Sindh, Pakistan)
Luca Furno, University of Bologna

- 10:30-10:50 A Medieval Glass Production Site Discovered at Kashgar, Xinjiang
Shan Huang, Renmin University
- 10:50-11:30 Coffee and tea break
- 11:30-12:10 Study of Faience in the Bronze Age Xinjiang, China: Origins, Transmission, and Localization
Nian Liu, Key Laboratory of Archaeological Sciences and Cultural Heritage, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
- 12:10-12:30 Adoption and Development of Glass Culture in Central Asia
Takako Hosokawa, Tokyo Gakugei University
- 12:30-12:50 Glass recipes in Motion - Chemical evidence for circulation in Central Asia
Valerie Jing Yeung, UCL
- 12:50 Concluding Remarks

Afternoon (exact times to follow): Optional conference related activities
(book at the registration desk on Monday, 14 May)

Visit to BM - self-guided with Chen Chen's glass map and commentary

BM Gallery talk - Ian Freestone and Chen Chen

Visit to the Institute of Archaeology Materials analysis laboratories w. Michael Charlton

POSTERS

On the Spread of Central Asian Glasswares along the Silk Roads

Maliya Aihaiti, the Palace Museum, Beijing

Chemical and Mineralogical assessment of potential frit from Akhsiket, Uzbekistan

Marcel Frenken and Thilo Rehren, STARC – The Cyprus Institute

Two glass bowls from the Chermedil Necropolis, Azerbaijan

Elif Hanar, Mardin Artuklu University

New trace element data on Sasanian glass from the collections of the British Museum

Yuewen Jin et al, Institute of Archaeology, Chinese Academy of Social Science, Beijing, China

Glass Beads in Early Medieval Walila, Morocco: North Africa in the international trade network

Veronica Occari et al, UCL, KU Leuven

Compositional analysis and origins of Warring States beads in the collections of the British Museum

Valerie Jing Yeung et al, UCL