

***The (Un)forgotten Viennese.
Conference on the 200th Anniversary of the Death
of Józef Maksymilian Ossoliński***

Vienna, June 18-19, 2026



Call for Papers

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We cordially invite you to participate in the conference **"The (Un)forgotten Viennese. A conference on the 200th anniversary of the death of Józef Maksymilian Ossoliński"** which will take place on **June 18-19, 2026**, in Vienna, hosted by **the Austrian National Library** in Vienna and **the Polish Institute in Vienna**.

The primary goal of the conference is to recall the person and achievements of **Józef Maksymilian Ossoliński (1754-1826) - prefect of the Imperial Library**, political activist, collector, literary historian, translator, and writer, and founder of the **Ossoliński National Institute**. In Poland, Ossoliński is known primarily for this late initiative. The institution he founded functions efficiently to this day, according to his principles. The Polish Parliament has designated **2026 as the Year of Józef Maksymilian Ossoliński**. The Ossolineum's prestige has led, however, to Ossoliński being forgotten as a writer, historian, researcher, and politician. In Austria, he was almost completely forgotten, despite holding an important position at the imperial court. This conference seeks to **restore his memory** and provide a new assessment of his achievements.

Ossoliński is the figure hidden behind his greatest work – the foundation of the Ossoliński National Institute. The Count, through his own stories, contributed to the perpetuation of the incorrect date of birth in scientific literature. He reported 1748 as his birth year, which was untrue. He initiated numerous works, leaving several manuscripts, and the same was true with translations. Only a few works appeared in print during his lifetime. He debuted in the magazine "Zabawy Przyjemne i Pożyteczne" in 1771. In the 1780s, he published an occasional poem related to the death of Countess Jabłonowska's husband (who hailed from the Ossoliński family), alongside **translations** of works by Seneca, Jerzy Ossoliński, and Łukasz Opaliński. His most significant work, **Historical and Critical News on the History of Polish Literature**, was published in 1819. Samuel Bogumił Linde, Ossoliński's librarian in Vienna and author of the first dictionary of the Polish language, translated a fragment of this work concerning Wincenty Kadłubek into German in 1822. The book met with considerable interest. Other works were published in Poland in 1852, and then only a century later.

After the Third Partition of Poland and the deportation of the Załuski brothers' first public Polish library to Russia, Ossoliński decided to collect all written evidence of Polish culture and history to pass them on to future generations. He saw this as an opportunity to **preserve Polish national identity**. He was passionate about **Slavic studies**, and for this reason he also collected Church Slavonic and Czech prints and manuscripts. At that time, there were people similar to Ossoliński in Poland and Central and Eastern Europe - they founded museums, collected national memorabilia, and engaged in politics.

The conference aims to present Ossoliński's work against the background of the processes of the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, as well as the biographies of other people living in that period and representing similar life and creative attitudes, interests, and passions.

We invite proposals for papers that address the life and work of Józef Maksymilian Ossoliński and related topics of the period. The symposium will focus on, but is not limited to, the following thematic areas:

A. Józef Maksymilian Ossoliński – life and work in Vienna;

- B. The literary work of J. M. Ossoliński and other writers of the late Enlightenment in Central and Eastern Europe;
- C. The idea of private patronage and the creation of *pro publico bono* institutions at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries;
- D. Culture and society at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries;
- E. Collecting at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries.

The in-person conference will be held at the **Austrian National Library** (1st day) and the **Polish Institute** (2nd day) - **18-19 June 2026**.

We invite you to submit papers to the following address:

ossolinski.conference@ossolineum.pl AND had-slg@onb.ac.at

The organisers do not anticipate the possibility of online presentations.

Conference languages: **German, Polish** (with simultaneous translation), **English** (no translation).

Presentation time: max. **20 minutes**.

Participation in the conference is **free of charge**. The organisers provide accommodation (2 nights), limited refunds for travel expenses are possible.

Organisational schedule:

- Submission of paper proposals: **31 January 2026**
- Decision on acceptance of papers: **15 February 2026**
- Complete conference programme: **15 March 2026**
- Deadline for registration without paper: **31 May 2026**.

In the case of participation without presenting a paper, we do not cover neither accommodation nor travel expenses.

We look forward to receiving your proposals and welcoming you to Vienna in 2026!

Conference organizers and partners:

- Austrian National Library
- National Ossoliński Institute in Wrocław
- Polish Institute in Vienna
- Faculty of Historical and Cultural Studies at the University of Vienna
- Faculty of Letters at the University of Wrocław
- Faculty of Historical and Pedagogical Sciences at the University of Wrocław
- Scientific Centre of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Vienna

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Please complete the attachment in English and in the language of the paper.

English	Język wystąpienia / Sprache des Vortrags
Name:..... Academic degree: Affiliation:.....	Name: Akad. Titel: Zugehörigkeit:
Title of the paper:	Tytuł wystąpienia / Titel des Vortrags:
Abstract (up to 250 words):	Abstrakt / Zusammenfassung (do 250 słów / bis zu 250 Wörter):
Proposal for inclusion in the thematic panel (please tick one or more boxes) A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐	Propozycja do uwzględnienia w panelu tematycznym (proszę zaznaczyć jedno lub kilka pól) // Vorschlag zur Aufnahme in das thematische Panel (bitte kreuzen Sie ein oder mehrere Kästchen an) A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐