Judith Olszowy-Schlanger studied Hebrew as well as Semitic and Ancient Near Eastern Languages in Paris (Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales and École des Langues Orientales Anciennes). She obtained her PhD at the University of Cambridge in 1995, where she worked under the supervision of Geoffrey Khan on Karaite marriage documents from the Cairo Genizah, and was a member of St. John's College. Between 1995 and 1998, she was a Mary Ewart Junior Research Fellow at Somerville College, Oxford. Throughout her career, she benefited from the guidance in Hebrew palaeography by Colette Sirat. In 1999, upon Colette Sirat's retirement, she was appointed a senior researcher in Hebrew Palaeography section of the Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes (CNRS), and, in 2002, she joined the École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris, as a Professor in Hebrew Palaeography and Manuscript Studies. In 2016, she was elected a Corresponding Fellow of the British Academy.

In 2010-2014, she was President of the European Association for Jewish Studies. She is a member of various learned societies and editorial boards.

Her research concerns medieval Hebrew palaeography and codicology, legal documents, Cairo Genizah Studies, Hebrew Book History, Hebrew linguistic tradition, and intellectual contacts between Jews and their non-Jewish neighbours. Her main publications include Karaite Marriage Documents from the Cairo Geniza. Legal Tradition and Community Life in Mediaeval Egypt and Palestine (1998), Les manuscrits hébreux dans l'Angleterre médiévale (2003), Hebrew and Hebrew-Latin Documents from Medieval England: a Diplomatic and Palaeographical Study (2015). She is the head of the international project Books within Books, whose aim is to find, digitize, study and describe fragments of medieval Hebrew manuscripts reused to strengthen bindings of other books and notarial files, preserved in various libraries and archives across Europe, in Israel and in the USA.