

Sebastiano Munini | PhD Student & Research Fellow

Rome, Italy

☎ +39 333 761 0072 • ✉ sebastiano.munini@istc.cnr.it

About Me

I am a first-year PhD candidate in Cognitive Psychology at Sapienza University of Rome, Italy, and a research fellow at the Institute for Cognitive Sciences and Technologies, part of the Italian National Research Council, CNR. At the Judgment, Argumentation and Decision-Making Lab (JADE), I study the cognitive and behavioral mechanisms that sustain cooperation and prosocial behavior in social dilemmas, particularly those arising in healthcare and environmental sustainability. Using integrated experimental and quantitative methods, I design and test behavioral interventions such as nudges and boosts that align individual well-being with collective outcomes.

Education

Sapienza University of Rome **Rome, Italy**
PhD in Psychology and Cognitive Science *Oct 2024–Present*

- Supervisor: Prof. Fabio Paglieri; Co-tutor: Prof. Fabio Ferlazzo
- Focus: experimental research on norm-nudging interventions, investigating how social and moral norms shape cooperative and prosocial behaviour across domains

University of Padua **Padua, Italy**
MSc in Applied Cognitive Psychology *Oct 2020–Apr 2023*

- Final grade: **110/110**
- Thesis: *Framing in Charitable Giving: How perceived costs and benefits influence donations*

Radboud University **Nijmegen, The Netherlands**
Erasmus Exchange Programme *Aug 2018–Feb 2019*

Sapienza University of Rome **Rome, Italy**
BSc in Psychology and Social Processes *Oct 2016–Sep 2020*

- Final grade: **108/110**
- Student Representative in the Department Assembly (2018/2020)

Research & Professional Experience

Institute for Cognitive Sciences and Technologies (ISTC-CNR) **Rome, Italy**
Research Fellow, JADE Lab *01/2024–Present*

- **Experimental design & coordination:** designed and conducted eight behavioural studies on cooperation and prosocial behaviour (topics included norm nudging, public-goods games, and early-childhood altruism), serving as first author on four, second author on three, and co-author on one;
- **Project work:** contributing to multiple national (PRIN) and European (Horizon) projects (PERYCLES, COOPDEV, B-Hu-Well, ICRAS) (see Projects section for details).
- **Technical & data skills:** programmed tasks on "Qualtrics"; cleaned and analysed behavioural datasets in R.
- **Scientific writing:** developed ethics applications; produced progress reports for funders; wrote full sections in English (Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion); prepared reviewer response letters leading to two acceptances; peer-reviewed submissions for the journal "Sistemi Intelligenti".
- **Dissemination:** presented research findings at national and international conferences (ICT 2024, AISC 2024).

ISTC-CNR

Research Intern, JADE Lab

Rome, Italy

09/2023–03/2024

- **Experimental design:** developed an experimental proposal for the COOPDEV project that was later adopted for implementation.
- **Scientific writing:** co-wrote the Introduction and Discussion sections for manuscripts on the attraction effect and ostracism.

Sapienza University of Rome

Scientific Visitor, Laboratory of Cognitive Ergonomics

Rome, Italy

05/2023–Present

- **Scientific training:** received mentoring in experimental methodology and critical analysis of decision-making literature.
- **Data management:** assisted with cleaning and analysing large behavioural datasets (Markov Decision Task).

University of Padua

Research Intern, Department of Developmental Psychology and Socialization (DPSS)

Padua, Italy

05/2022–09/2022

- **Experimental design:** conceived, designed, and ran an experiment on framing strategies to foster charitable donations (collected data for master's thesis project).
- **Theoretical analysis:** investigated evolutionary, economic, and psychological determinants of altruism and cooperation.
- **Literature review:** conducted an in-depth review of framing effects, heuristics, and biases in charitable giving.

Ongoing & Completed Projects

Contributing to multiple national (PRIN) and European (Horizon) projects, including:

COOPDEV – Cooperation Nudges for Sustainable Development (PRIN 2022 · 24 months)

- **Focus:** experimental identification and testing of behavioural nudges that foster cooperation in large-scale environmental dilemmas.
- **My role:** designed and implemented a full experimental study on waste sorting behaviour (first author); managed all phases of the study (experimental design, ethics application, "Qualtrics" implementation, data collection); presented preliminary findings (ICT 2024); ongoing manuscript preparation.

B-Hu-Well – Boosting Human Well-Being with Behavioural Insights (PRIN PNRR 2022 · 24 months)

- **Focus:** develop 'boost' interventions to enhance health-related decision making, cooperation, and patient–clinician communication.
- **My role:** contributed to the design of an ongoing experiment on how people evaluate medical information (accuracy vs. truthlikeness); currently preparing experimental stimuli and implementing the study in Qualtrics.

ICRAS – Interventions for Community Resilience to Environmental & Health Risks (National grant)

- **Focus:** theoretical modeling, laboratory studies, and agent-based simulations to strengthen community resilience through nudging and strengthening.
- **My role:** contributed to design discussions; conducted a literature review on transparency and perceived fairness in public investment in collective healthcare resources; implemented experimental paradigms on "Qualtrics"; supported data management and preliminary analysis; drafted project deliverables and reporting documents.

PERYCLES – Participatory dEmocRacY that sCaLES (Horizon Europe · 36 months)

- **Focus:** design and deploy open-source digital deliberation platforms for inclusive and scalable citizen participation.
- **My role:** participated in, and represented JADE lab at the project's kick-off meeting; explored relevant literature and books on the topic and presented key insights to the research team; proposed experimental designs on how social information can influence voting behavior on digital democracy platforms.

Selected Publications and Works in Progress

Published:

- Munini S., Paglieri F., Sapienza A., Negri M. (2024). Picking Your Friends is a Risky Business: Psychological Impacts of Social Exclusion and Teammates Selection in a Cyberball Game with Middle School Students.

Under review:

- Marini M., Munini S., Carlino M., Paglieri F. (under review). *Tiny Dictators: Understanding altruism in young children.*
- Marini M., Munini S., Paravani S., Paglieri F. (under review, preprint available). *Ordered to attract: Dynamics of the Attraction Effect in Simultaneous and Sequential Decision Tasks.*

In progress:

- Munini S., Paglieri F., Ansani A., Marini M. *Promoting Waste Sorting with Moral and Social Nudges: The Influence of Perceived Cooperation.*
- Marini M., Munini S., Carlino M., Paglieri F. *Girls Give More, Boys Take Less: Exploring Gender Differences in Preschool Altruism.*
- Munini S., Paglieri F., Marini M. *Understanding cooperation in public good dilemmas for healthcare resources: The role of transparency and trust.* [ICRAS project output]
- Coraci P., Marini M., Munini S., Paglieri F., Cevolani G. *Truthlikeness and accuracy in medical decision making: cognitive biases and communicative challenges.*
- Vecchi A., Marini M., Munini S., Gerna A., Paglieri F. *Perspective-taking in literary reading: How voice and focalization shape identification with fictional characters.*

Conferences & Talks

Conferences:

- **ICT 2024** (International Conference of Thinking, Milan): presented preliminary findings of “Moral and social nudges for promoting cooperation in wicked social dilemmas: a theoretical and experimental investigation on waste sorting behavior” (10/06/2024).
- **AISC 2024** (Italian Association of Cognitive Sciences, Rome): presented full findings of the same study on moral and social nudges and cooperation (18/09/24).
- **AISC 2023** (Italian Association of Cognitive Sciences, Genova): presented “Picking your friends is a risky business: Emotional impacts of social exclusion and player choice in a cyberball game with middle school students” (15/12/2023).

Project Meetings & Talks:

- Presented the experiment proposal at **B-Hu-Well kick-off meeting** (ISTC-CNR, University of Trento CIMEC, Milano Cattolica University), 08/03/2024.
- Presented the experiment proposal at **COOPDEV kick-off meeting** (ISTC-CNR, Milano Cattolica University, Milano Bicocca University), 17/11/2023.
- Presented the master’s thesis “Framing in Charitable Giving: How perceived costs and benefits influence donations” at ISTC-CNR research groups, 09/10/2023.

Teaching / Seminar:

- Delivered seminar “**Green nudges: the role of behavioural incentives in tackling the climate crisis**” at SIBIL Lab series (collaboration ISTC-CNR and Roma Tre University), 10/04/2025.

Technical Skills

- **R and RStudio** (Intermediate): data cleaning, manipulation, and visualization; statistical analyses including t-tests, ANOVA, linear regression, logistic regression, Kruskal-Wallis, generalized linear models, and mixed-effects models; assumption checking (normality, reliability with Cronbach’s alpha); data visualization with ggplot2.
- **Jamovi** (Intermediate): performing the same range of analyses as in R; used for complementary statistical

analyses and visualization.

- **Qualtrics** (Proficient): design and implementation of complex experimental paradigms across multiple research projects; advanced survey logic, randomization, and data export.
- **Data management**: handling large behavioural datasets (e.g., Markov Decision Task); data preprocessing and variable coding.
- **Document preparation**: collaborative writing of scientific articles, response letters, project deliverables, and other technical reports (MS Word, Overleaf).
- **Reference management**: Zotero and Mendeley.
- **Other tools**: G*Power (power analysis); Excel (basic data cleaning and management).

Languages

- **Italian**: Native
- **English**: Proficient
- **French**: Basic
- **Spanish**: Basic

References

Dr. Fabio Paglieri—Senior Researcher, ISTC-CNR
fabio.paglieri@istc.cnr.it
+39 06 4459 5234.