Valeria Piras

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ERC: SH3_9 / SH8_1 / SH8_6

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

RESEARCHER, III LEVEL
15/11/2023 – ongoing

- **INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY, NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL OF ITALY (CNR-ITD) -** GENOA, ITALY
  - **Research Projects:**
    - Scientific Coordinator of CNR activities in: *"RE-STIAMO INSIEME!"* – Municipality of Bergamo, Family Centre "Rita Gay" (Department for Family Policies, Presidency of the Council of Ministers – public call "Insieme si vince" for projects preventing and countering sexual violence against minors – Action C: Digital education). Scientific collaboration agreement between CNR-ITD and CED – Centro per l'Educazione al Digitale A.P.S.; CNR-ITD scientific lead: Valeria Piras. Agreement start date: 06-08-2026. End date: 05-08-2027.
    - Participant in: *RAISE PNRR Project – Robotics and AI For Socio Economic Empowerment (RAISE) – "RAISE for Schools" project (EC NexGenerationProject, MoE, SPOKE 5 Training – P6 Basic AI&Robotics skills for secondary students).* Project code: ECS00000035. Start date: 30-09-2022. End date: 30-06-2026.
    - Participant in: *SCHOOLWISE - Building Data Wisdom and Governance in Schools for Evidence-Informed Educational Improvement* - DUS.AD007.260 - Erasmus+ -ERASMUS-EDU-2025-PIFORWARD(FORWARD-LOOKING PROJECTS) - GA N. 101259617

Research and development activities in critical and feminist pedagogy, gender education and comprehensive sexuality education, futures studies in education and critique on digital technologies in education. My work develops methodological approaches and tools based on futures-oriented, speculative and human-centred design for secondary schools, using futures methods to foster critical reflection on the non-neutrality of digital technologies, relationships, consent and gender in offline and digital environments.

In particular, I was responsible for:

- co-designing and piloting, within the "RE-STIAMO INSIEME!" project (Municipality of Bergamo), sexuality and relationships education workshops based on futures methods, carried out in lower and upper secondary schools in Bergamo, with a focus on relationships, consent and gender-based violence in digital environments;
- designing the organisation (spaces and activities) of an online community for upper secondary school teachers called STACY – Secondary TeAcher CommuniTY, dedicated to developing critical approach towards digital technologies through futures thinking;
- conceiving and developing an educational toolkit for secondary schools on the Backcasting method, for running futures workshops in the classroom;
- designing the workshop programme InspAIr (25 hours), aimed at developing a critical culture of digital innovation through speculative design practices and hackathons, addressed to lower and upper secondary school students and teachers.

• systematic review of the literature on futures-oriented methods applied to education, comprehensive sexuality education, critical digital and media literacies and contribution to the scientific dissemination of results;
• writing project proposals for European (ERASMUS+, CERV-DAPHNE) and national (Prospettive+, PRIN) funding programmes.

The results of this research activity are reported in the following publications: **1 edited book (2026), 4 conference proceedings papers (2025; 2026), 3 book chapters (2026), 1 poster presentation (2024), 1 article in an international journal (2026).**

RESEARCH FELLOW
02/01/2020 – 01/01/2021

- **INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY, NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL OF ITALY (CNR-ITD) -** GENOA, ITALY
- **Project:** Presente Digitale – A CNR portal created to provide secondary school teachers with free online training on key topics of digital culture. Project code: DIT.AD005.001. Start date: 31-12-2017. End date: 30-12-2021
- **Duration:** 12 months

Research activities in the field of Educational Technology and online education, with particular reference to the role of communication design in innovating online teaching and learning processes. In particular, I was responsible for:
- designing models and criteria for online course design;
- developing multimedia content for online teacher training programmes;
- research on the integration of instructional design and communication design.

The results of this research activity are reported in the following publication: monograph ***Come disegnare un corso online. Criteri di progettazione didattica e della comunicazione [How to design an online course: Instructional and communication design criteria]*** **(2020)**.

PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION CONTRACT AS "COMMUNICATION DESIGNER SPECIALISING IN MEDIA PRODUCTION FOR EDUCATION"
30/03/2022 – 30/10/2022

- **UNIVERSITY OF GENOA -** GENOA, ITALY
- **Unit**: E-learning Office
- **Duration**: 7 months

Collaboration with the E-learning Office of the University of Genoa in the field of Educational Technology. In particular, I was responsible for:
- designing and producing educational materials to support teaching and learning processes;
- supporting the design of online courses and the development of educational content for the University's disciplinary courses.

PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION CONTRACT AS "COMMUNICATION DESIGNER SPECIALISING IN MEDIA PRODUCTION FOR EDUCATION"
10/07/2020 – 10/01/2022

- **UNIVERSITY OF GENOA -** GENOA, ITALY
- **Unit**: E-learning Office
- **Duration**: 18 months

Collaboration with the E-learning Office of the University of Genoa in the field of Educational Technology. In particular, I was responsible for:
- designing and producing educational materials to support teaching and learning processes;
- supporting the design of online courses and the development of educational content for the University's disciplinary courses.

PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION CONTRACT AS "COMMUNICATION DESIGNER SPECIALISING IN MEDIA PRODUCTION FOR EDUCATION"
15/11/2018 – 15/05/2020

- **UNIVERSITY OF GENOA -** GENOA, ITALY
- **Unit**: E-learning Office
- **Duration**: 18 months

Collaboration with the E-learning Office of the University of Genoa in the field of Educational Technology. In particular, I was responsible for:
- designing and producing educational materials to support teaching and learning processes;
- supporting the design of online courses and the development of educational content for the University's disciplinary courses.

UNIVERSITY TEACHING

ADJUNCT LECTURER (TEACHING CONTRACT)
01/10/2026 – ongoing

• **UNIVERSITY OF GENOA, Department of Education Sciences (DiSFor) -** GENOA, ITALY
• **Single Cicle Master's Degree in Primary Education – Course: Media and Technology Lab for Education**
• **Duration:** 64 hours

Teaching activities on the informed and critical selection and use of media and digital technologies in teaching, aimed at developing a critical approach to digital technologies in primary education, with particular attention to:

- methods and criteria for the informed selection of media and digital technologies according to educational goals and learning contexts;
- critical analysis of the pedagogical, ethical and social implications of digital technologies in primary school;
- design of teaching activities that integrate media and technologies in a meaningful, inclusive and age-appropriate way;

- development of pre-service teachers' digital and media literacy competences, as a basis for fostering critical thinking about technology in their future pupils.

TEACHING ASSIGNMENT
10/07/2026 – 21/07/2026

- **UNIVERSITY OF TURIN** - TURIN, ITALY
- **MASRA Master – Master's Programme in Socio-Environmental Sustainability of Agri-Food Networks**
- **Duration:** 10 hours

Design and delivery of a teaching workshop on developing futures-oriented methodologies for decision-making in agri-food systems, focusing on:

- application of speculative design and futures methods to sustainability education;
- participatory construction of future scenarios based on existing data;
- support for informed, long-term-oriented decision-making processes;
- development of critical and systemic thinking regarding socio-technological and environmental transformations.

ADJUNCT LECTURER (TEACHING CONTRACT)
01/09/2025 – 31/03/2027

- **UNIVERSITY OF GENOA, Department of Architecture and Design (DAD) -** GENOA, ITALY
- **Master's Degree in Product and Event Design – Course: Videographics**
- **Duration:** 20 hours

Design and delivery of teaching activities in the field of audiovisual communication, with particular attention to:

- design processes of audiovisual content for representing and communicating complex phenomena;
- development of video editing and animation skills;
- use of audiovisual language as a tool for analysis, communication and learning;
- design of learning experiences oriented towards communication design.

ADJUNCT LECTURER (TEACHING CONTRACT)
02/09/2024 – 31/03/2026

- **UNIVERSITY OF GENOA, Department of Architecture and Design (DAD) -** GENOA, ITALY
- **Master's Degree in Product and Event Design – Course: Videographics**
- **Duration:** 20 hours

Design and delivery of teaching activities in the field of audiovisual communication, with particular attention to:

- design processes of audiovisual content for representing and communicating complex phenomena;
- development of video editing and animation skills;
- use of audiovisual language as a tool for analysis, communication and learning;
- design of learning experiences oriented towards communication design.

TEACHING ASSIGNMENT ON "ANTICIPATORY AND PROSPECTIVE THINKING: THEORIES AND PRACTICES IN EDUCATION"
25/01/2025

- **IANUA – SCHOOL OF ADVANCED STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF GENOA -** GENOA, ITALY
- **Duration:** 6 hours.

Delivery of a workshop on the use of critical design and futures-oriented methods to support participatory medium- and long-term decision-making processes.
- Design of activities based on speculative design and backcasting approaches;
- facilitation of activities with IANUA students.

TEACHING TUTOR
10/02/2020 – 14/02/2020

- **POLITECNICO DI MILANO – SCHOOL OF DESIGN** – MILAN, ITALY
- **Master's Degree in Communication Design, Politecnico di Milano – Speculative Design Workshop led by Nik Baerten (Pantopicon).**
- **Duration:** 40 hours.

Support to workshop activities on Futures-Oriented Methods, with particular attention to:
- supporting students in exploring future scenarios through speculative design;
- developing critical thinking and design skills oriented towards complexity.

BACHELOR'S THESIS CO-SUPERVISOR
Academic year 2020/2021

- **UNIVERSITY OF GENOA, Department of Architecture and Design (DAD) -** GENOA, ITALY
- **Bachelor's thesis "Think about Things. Design, Speculation, Perception and Gamification"**.
- **Student:** Tiziana Iorio.

Co-supervision of a bachelor's thesis on speculative design and futures studies, aimed at designing a digital game-based tool to foster imagination, creativity and the participatory construction of future scenarios, encouraging critical reflection on the implications of emerging technologies.

INVITED CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

INVITED SEMINAR "EDUCATING FOR THE FUTURE, THE FUTURE FOR EDUCATING: ANTICIPATION METHODS FOR DESIGN EDUCATION"
14/04/2026 – 14/07/2026

- **UNIVERSITY OF GENOA – DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN -** GENOA, ITALY
- **Working group of university lecturers in Architectural Technology from several Italian universities**
- **Duration:** 10 hours

Seminar for lecturers on critical design and futures-oriented practices to support decision-making processes for teaching innovation in higher education.

INVITED SEMINAR "VIDEO DESIGN" (2026)
27/05/2026

- **UNIVERSITY OF GENOA, Department of Architecture and Design (DAD) -** GENOA, ITALY
- **Bachelor's Degree in Design, University of Genoa – Seminar on audiovisual design held within the Product Design Studio.**
- **Duration:** 4 hours.

Seminar on audiovisual design as a tool for design research and communication, focusing on:
- representation of complex content through audiovisual languages;
- design of visual narratives in design processes.

INVITED SEMINAR "SPECULATIVE DESIGN TO EDUCATE FOR COMPLEXITY"
30/04/2026 – 07/05/2026

- **DEPARTMENT OF CULTURES, POLITICS AND SOCIETY, UNIVERSITY OF TURIN** – TURIN, ITALY
- **Master's Degree in Communication, ICT and Media – Scenario Production Lab: Methods and Strategies**
- **Duration:** 8 hours.

Workshop-based seminar on Futures Methods to educate for complexity, focusing on:
- use of speculative design and futures thinking to address complex challenges;
- data analysis and processing as a basis for building future scenarios;
- experimentation with participatory methodologies to support evidence-informed decision-making;
- development of competences in anticipation, critical reflection and managing complexity.

INVITED SEMINAR "SHAPING EUROPE'S FUTURE. YOUTH AGORA"
25/02/2026 – 16/03/2026

- **UNIVERSITY COLLEGE DUBLIN (UCD)**
- **Project**: Erasmus+ Partnership Cooperation "EU Immersive. Shaping Europe's Future" Grant Agreement N. 101185236 (https://immersive-europe.eu/)
- **Duration:** 7 hours.

Online multi-stakeholder seminar on the use of strategic foresight and futures-oriented methodologies to explore the role of European values in technological innovation and to foster critical and digital competences and participatory, medium-to-long-term decision-making processes.

INVITED SEMINAR "SPECULATIVE DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION"
05/12/2025 – 12/12/2025

- **UNIVERSITY OF GENOA, Department of Architecture and Design (DAD) -** GENOA, ITALY
- **Bachelor's Degree in Design – Course: Sustainability of Processes and Products**
- **Duration:** 8 hours

Workshop-based seminar on applying futures-oriented approaches to sustainability education, with particular attention to:

- use of critical and futures-oriented design to explore future scenarios and critically analyse the challenges of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- participatory construction of alternative scenarios to support systems thinking and critical reflection;
- promoting the role of critical design in processes of social, environmental and organisational transformation.

INVITED TALK ON FUTURES-ORIENTED METHODS IN EDUCATION (SPECULATIVE DESIGN)
26/09/2025

- **DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY (DCU)**
- **Project**: SCoTENs funded "FuturesNow" project
- **Duration:** 1 hour.

Invited talk on futures-oriented methods in educational contexts.

- Theoretical presentation on futures methods in education;
- Presentation of case studies piloted in Italian secondary schools within the RAISE project.

INVITED SEMINAR "ANTICIPATORY THINKING AS A METHOD FOR INNOVATING UNIVERSITY TEACHING PRACTICE"
11/07/2025 – 11/07/2025

- **UNIVERSITY OF GENOA -** GENOA, ITALY
- **Working Group on Teaching and Learning Techniques (GLIA), a network of lecturers committed to developing and testing teaching innovation practices at the University.**
- **Duration:** 4 hours.

Seminar for lecturers on critical design and futures-oriented practices to support decision-making processes for teaching innovation in higher education.

INVITED SEMINAR "VIDEO DESIGN" (2025)
13/05/2025 – 14/05/2025

- **UNIVERSITY OF GENOA, Department of Architecture and Design (DAD) -** GENOA, ITALY
- **Bachelor's Degree in Design, University of Genoa – Seminar on audiovisual design held within the Product Design Studio.**
- **Duration:** 8 hours.

Seminar on audiovisual design as a tool for design research and communication, focusing on:

- representation of complex content through audiovisual languages;
- design of visual narratives in design processes.

INVITED TALK ON "VISUAL LANGUAGE AND GENDER BIAS IN ACADEMIC COMMUNICATION"
05/11/2024 – 05/11/2024

- **UNIVERSITY OF GENOA -** GENOA, ITALY
- UniGe **Gender Equality Plan Committee**
- **Duration:** 1 hour

Talk on gender-sensitive visual design addressed to the technical and administrative staff of the University of Genoa. Lecture on "Visual language and bias", devoted to the critical analysis of the role of visual communication in constructing and perpetuating stereotypes and inequalities. In-depth discussion of the ethical, social and cultural implications of representation processes and promotion of inclusive and responsible approaches to institutional communication design.

INVITED SEMINAR "VIDEO DESIGN" (2024)
06/03/2024

- **UNIVERSITY OF GENOA, Department of Architecture and Design (DAD) -** GENOA, ITALY
- **Bachelor's Degree in Design, University of Genoa – Seminar on audiovisual design held within the Product Design Studio.**
- **Duration:** 4 hours.

Seminar on audiovisual design as a tool for design research and communication, focusing on:
- representation of complex content through audiovisual languages;
- design of visual narratives in design processes.

INVITED SEMINAR "VIDEO DESIGN" (2023)
08/03/2023 – 22/03/2023

- **UNIVERSITY OF GENOA, Department of Architecture and Design (DAD) -** GENOA, ITALY
- **Bachelor's Degree in Design, University of Genoa – Seminar on audiovisual design held within the Product Design Studio.**
- **Duration:** 8 hours.

Seminar on audiovisual design as a tool for design research and communication, focusing on:
- representation of complex content through audiovisual languages;
- design of visual narratives in design processes.

INVITED SEMINAR ON VIDEO DESIGN (2022)
07/04/2022 – 21/04/2022

- **ALMA MATER STUDIORUM – UNIVERSITY OF BOLOGNA, DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE -** BOLOGNA, ITALY
- **Design Talks 2022.**
- **Duration:** 8 hours.

Seminar on audiovisual design as a tool for design research, representation and communication, with particular attention to building visual narratives, mediating complex content and using multimedia languages in design processes, held as part of the Design Talks series open to all students enrolled in Design and Architecture degree programmes at UniBo.

PARTICIPATION IN CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

PAPER AND WORKSHOP PRESENTATION – FUTURES4EUROPE 2026 CONFERENCE

30/09/2026 – 1/10/2026

- **CNR –** ROME, ITALY
- Paper title: "**From Futures Thinking to Youth Agency: Imagining a Value-Driven Approach to Technological Innovation for EU Competitiveness with Higher Education Students"**
- Workshop title: "**The Future is Not Neutral: A Futures Workshop to Rethink Technology through Critical Pedagogical Imagination"**

Presentation on the InspAIr workshop programme carried out in upper secondary schools.

WORKSHOP PRESENTATION – EDUCARE ALLE DIFFERENZE 2026 CONFERENCE
26/09/2026 – 27/09/2026

- **NAPLES, ITALY**
- **Workshop title: "Immaginare futuri per ripensare le relazioni digitali" [Imagining Futures to rethink digital relationships]**

Presentation on the RE_STIAMO INSIEME! Workshop carried out in Comune di Bergamo secondary schools.

PAPER PRESENTATION – SCUOLA DEMOCRATICA 2026 CONFERENCE
01/09/2026 – 03/09/2026

- **UNIVERSITÀ LA SAPIENZA –** ROME, ITALY
- 1° Paper title: "**The Teacher as a Body in the Classroom: transfeminist pedagogies and Comprehensive Sexuality Education as democratic practices in Italian Secondary Schools"**
- 2° Paper title: "**Convivial Futures: Educating to Democratic Agency and Social Justice in the Age of AI"**

Presentation on the InspAIr workshop programme carried out in upper secondary schools.

PAPER PRESENTATION – ANTICIPATION 2026 CONFERENCE
01/07/2026 – 03/07/2026

- **POLITECNICO DI MILANO, SCHOOL OF DESIGN –** MILAN, ITALY
- Paper title: "**Secondary Education in Times of Uncertainty: Futures Literacy as a Pedagogy of Freedom in the Age of AI"**

Presentation on the InspAIr workshop programme carried out in upper secondary schools.

WORKSHOP – ANTICIPATION 2026
01/07/2026 – 03/07/2026

- **POLITECNICO DI MILANO, SCHOOL OF DESIGN –** MILAN, ITALY
- Paper title: "**Troubling Futures with InspAIr: An Experiential Workshop with AI Critical Inquisitors"**
- **Duration: 90'**

Workshop on the InspAIr methodology.

PAPER PRESENTATION – DIDACTA 2026 CONFERENCE
11/03/2026 – 13/03/2026

- **FORTEZZA DA BASSO –** FLORENCE, ITALY
- Paper title: "**Alfabetizzare le nuove generazioni ai futuri. Verso una pedagogia critica dell'innovazione digitale [Futures literacy for new generations: Towards a critical pedagogy of digital innovation]**"

Presentation on the potential of critical and futures-oriented design to innovate educational methods in secondary schools.

PAPER PRESENTATION – ICERI 2025 "18th annual International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation"
10/11/2025 – 12/11/2025

- **Barceló Sevilla Renacimiento Hotel -** SEVILLE, SPAIN
- Paper title: "**Empowering students to reimagine technological Futures: a toolkit for critical and anticipatory thinking in secondary education"**

Presentation on the design and piloting of an educational toolkit to promote futures thinking and teaching innovation, with particular attention to:

- development of critical and anticipatory thinking through backcasting methodologies;
- integration of critical pedagogy, futures studies and AI literacy in school contexts;
- design of methodological tools to support teachers and students in building future scenarios;
- promotion of transversal competences, active participation and informed decision-making regarding technological transformations.

PAPER PRESENTATION – EDUSUMMIT 2025 "Designing Education Ecosystems for the Future: The Role of Digital Technologies"
22/06/2025 – 25/06/2025

- **DCU INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION -** DUBLIN, IRELAND
- Contribution title: **TWG 3: Tech-Enabled Inclusivity: empowering learners from diverse and differing cultures**

Contribution on educational innovation and educational technologies for inclusion within Thematic Working Group 3 (TWG 3).

PAPER PRESENTATION – EDMEDIA + INNOVATE LEARNING 2025
19/05/2025 – 23/05/2025

- **UNIVERSITAT OBERTA DE CATALUNYA (UOC) -** BARCELONA, SPAIN
- Paper title: "**Educating for Tomorrow: Seeding a Critical Culture of Digital Innovation among New Generations in the AI Era through Speculative Pedagogy"**

Presentation on methodological models for digital innovation education, focusing on:

- integration of futures-oriented design and speculative pedagogy in educational contexts;
- development of competences to deal with complexity and AI-related transformations;
- promotion of human-centred, participatory and critical-thinking-oriented learning processes;
- experimentation with innovative approaches to support teaching innovation and the construction of future scenarios.

WORKSHOP – DIDACTA 2025
14/03/2025

- **FORTEZZA DA BASSO –** FLORENCE, ITALY
- Paper title: "**InspAIr. Educare al pensiero critico in visione prospettica nell'era dell'AI [InspAIr: Educating for critical and prospective thinking in the age of AI]"**
- **Duration: 90'**

Workshop-based seminar for secondary school teacher training based on the InspAIr workshop programme, with particular attention to:

- use of futures-oriented methods (speculative design) to promote critical and prospective thinking in school contexts;
- development of critical thinking regarding digital innovation;
- experimentation with participatory and student-centred methodologies for instructional design.

PAPER PRESENTATION – "1st International Conference of ESERA SIG 8 FUTURES-oriented Science Education"
27/02/2025 – 01/03/2025

- **UNIVERSITY OF BOLOGNA, DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY "A. Righi" –** BOLOGNA, ITALY
- Paper title: "**InspAIr. Fostering a Critical Culture of Digital Innovation in STEAM education"**

Presentation on the InspAIr methodological approach to digital innovation education, focusing on:

- futures-oriented approaches in STEAM education;
- use of speculative design, worldbuilding and AI tools to promote critical and anticipatory thinking;
- development of competences to deal with complexity and to lead responsible innovation processes;
- participatory construction of future scenarios oriented towards sustainability, inclusion and digital citizenship.

PAPER PRESENTATION – OSARE IL FUTURO CONFERENCE
26/09/2024 – 28/09/2024

- **ITALIAN INSTITUTE FOR THE FUTURE –** NAPLES, ITALY
- Paper title: "**Lavorare 'con' e 'nel' futuro a scuola: un caso di studio [Working 'with' and 'in' the future at school: A case study]"**

Presentation on futures-oriented methodologies in school contexts, with particular attention to:

- application of backcasting and of an educational toolkit to promote futures thinking;
- development of a critical culture of digital innovation in the age of artificial intelligence;
- promotion of students' critical thinking, anticipation and active participation;
- experimentation with innovative methodological approaches to address complexity in educational contexts.

WORKSHOP – DIDACTA 2024
20/03/2024 – 22/03/2024

- **FORTEZZA DA BASSO –** FLORENCE, ITALY
- Paper title: "**In viaggio verso possibili futuri: esercitare capacità di visione prospettica tra gli studenti nell'era dell'Intelligenza Artificiale [Travelling towards possible futures: Exercising students' prospective vision in the age of Artificial Intelligence]"**
- **Duration: 90'**

Workshop-based seminar for secondary school teacher training on futures-oriented methodologies for educational innovation, with particular attention to:

- use of backcasting to promote prospective thinking in school contexts;
- development of critical thinking regarding artificial intelligence and digital innovation;
- experimentation with participatory and student-centred methodologies for instructional design.

PAPER PRESENTATION – ANTICIPATION 2022 CONFERENCE
4/11/2022

- **ONLINE**
- Paper title: "**Biases. A non-method for Anticipation"**

Presentation on the role of cognitive biases in anticipation processes and in building future scenarios, proposing a critical approach to futures-oriented educational design to support reflective practices and informed decision-making in complex contexts.

PAPER PRESENTATION – INTERNATIONAL GENDER FOR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH CONFERENCE 2025
18/05/2022 – 19/05/2022

- **Kadir Has University -** ISTANBUL, TURKEY
- Paper title: "**Using a gender lens to examine the field of design: Design, education, methods, sustainable production"**

Presentation on gender approaches in design education, aimed at promoting inclusive methodologies, educational innovation and sustainability in design processes.

CONFERENCE ORGANISATION

CRITICA PRATICA. FOR A CRITIQUE OF NORMALITY: NEW VISIONS AND DESIGN PARADIGMS
29/11/2023

- **UNIVERSITY OF GENOA – Department of Architecture and Design (DAD) -** GENOA, ITALY
- **Duration:** 8 hours
- **Organised by:** Valeria Piras (PhD DAD, Design curriculum), Giovanna Tagliasco (PhD DAD, Design curriculum), Federica Delprino (PhD DAD, Design curriculum), Omar Tonella (PhD DAD, Design curriculum), Duccio Prassoli (PhD DAD, Architecture curriculum), Sara Iebole (PhD DAD, Design curriculum)

Interdisciplinary symposium on the role of critical thinking in design and design education, with particular attention to design paradigms, community practices and urban transformations, through research contributions and case studies.

OTHER APPOINTMENTS

JURY MEMBER, RESEARCH SECTION, AWDA – AIAP WOMEN IN DESIGN AWARD
29/11/2023

- **AIAP – ITALIAN ASSOCIATION FOR VISUAL COMMUNICATION DESIGN -** GENOA, ITALY
- https://www.aiap-awda.com/jury

Member of a jury of five leading figures in Italian research, teaching and criticism, evaluating entries in the Women Researchers in Design category (human-centred, critical design, futures-oriented, visual, communication).

MEMBER OF THE GENQ ASSOCIATION
01/05/2024 – Ongoing
Association working on sexuality and relationships education and gender studies in education.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD)
01/11/2020 – 31/05/2024

- **UNIVERSITY OF GENOA** – GENOA, ITALY
- PhD Programme, Design Curriculum, 36th cycle
- Duration: **3 years**

Research project on the disciplinary teaching of critical design in Italian higher education. In particular:

- analysis of critical design as a methodological approach for understanding and transforming educational processes;
- data collection and analysis to study the social, cultural, ethical and epistemic dimensions of knowledge construction and decision-making in design education contexts;
- research on the relationships between theory, reflective practice, participation and institutional change through critical and situated pedagogies and critical design approaches;
- development of a method and tools based on critical and futures-oriented design to promote participatory decision-making processes for innovating design education in Italy.

Field of study Design Education | **Final grade** Excellent, with international recognition and recommended for publication | **Final exam** Yes **| Thesis** Unlearning design in Italy. Critical representation as a medium of change

The results of this research activity are reported in the following publications: **1 monograph (2026), 1 edited volume (2026), 5 conference proceedings papers (2022, 2023, 2025), 1 article in a Class A journal in the Design field (2024), 1 article in an international journal (2026, accepted manuscript, 29/06/2026), 2 book chapters (2022).**

FIRST-LEVEL MASTER'S IN GENDER STUDIES AND POLICIES

01/03/2024 – 01/03/2025

- **ROMA TRE UNIVERSITY – DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY, COMMUNICATION AND PERFORMING ARTS** – Rome, Italy
- First-level Master's programme
- **Duration:** 1 year

Interdisciplinary Master's programme focusing on the analysis of the social, cultural and institutional processes that shape the construction and representation of knowledge, with particular attention to:

- inclusion, equity and ethical implications of public policies and decision-making processes;
- analysis of social and institutional processes through interdisciplinary perspectives combining gender studies and other disciplines;
- development of qualitative research skills through the design, conduct and analysis of interviews;
- in-depth study of the relationship between education and gender through research on sexuality and relationships education in Italian secondary schools.

The results of the research carried out during the Master's programme are reported in the following publication:
1 article in an international journal (2026, in press, email communication 12/06/2026).

Field of study Gender Studies and Policies | **Thesis** Educazione sessuo-affettiva in Italia: un percorso transfemminista tra ostacoli culturali e politiche educative [Sexuality and relationships education in Italy: A transfeminist journey between cultural obstacles and educational policies] | **Final exam** Yes **| Certification awarded** First-level Master's degree

VISITING PhD STUDENT

11/02/2023 – 04/06/2023

- **BASEL ACADEMY OF ART AND DESIGN FHNW (HGK BASEL)** – Basel, Switzerland
- **Duration:** 3 months and 24 days

Visiting PhD Student at the Basel Academy of Art and Design. Activities:

- participation in the MAKE/SENSES doctoral course of the Critical Media Lab FHNW;
- assistance in organising the teaching workshop "Feminism Design and Politics";
- ethnographic analysis of the pedagogical experience of the "Feminism Design and Politics" workshop.

Field of study Design Pedagogy, Design and Gender Studies | **Certification awarded** International PhD recognition | **Final exam** No

SCHOOL FOR SEXUALITY EDUCATORS – EDUSEX SCHOOL

19/09/2026 – ongoing

- **EDUSEX APS** – Genoa, Italy
- **Duration:** 100 hours

Annual training programme providing theoretical, practical and methodological tools for working on sexuality, affectivity and relationships in educational, social, health and clinical contexts, with particular attention to:

- foundations of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE);
- bodies, development and subjectivity;
- gender, sexual orientation and differences, and the deconstruction of stereotypes;
- consent, boundaries and responsibility in relationships;
- gender-based violence and prevention in adolescence;
- sexuality and disability;

- pornography, digital environments and imaginaries;
- affectivity, desire and relationships;
- design and supervision of sexuality education interventions, with a focus on professional responsibility and quality of practice.

Certification awarded Certificate of attendance | **Final exam** Yes

ADVANCED POSTGRADUATE COURSE IN SEXUALITY AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

05/01/2026 – 27/02/2026

- **UNIVERSITY OF MILANO-BICOCCA, SCHOOL OF ADVANCED STUDIES – DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SCIENCES FOR EDUCATION** – Milan, Italy
- **Duration:** 60 hours

Interdisciplinary in-depth study of educational, relational and cultural processes, with particular attention to:

- design of educational practices oriented towards well-being and inclusion;
- development of skills for the critical analysis of complex educational phenomena through interdisciplinary perspectives;
- application of reflective and participatory approaches in school contexts;
- promotion of citizenship, respect for differences and prevention of inequalities;
- analysis of the role of schools in building safe and inclusive educational environments.

Certification awarded Certificate of attendance | **Final exam** No

POSTHUMAN STUDIES SCHOOL

27/11/2025 – 29/11/2025

- **CIRSDe Centre – UNIVERSITY OF TURIN** – Turin, Italy
- **Duration:** 20 hours

Interdisciplinary training on the critical analysis of the relationships between technologies, ecologies and social practices, with particular attention to:

- development of systemic approaches to address the complexity of socio-technical transformations;
- analysis of the ethical and organisational implications of innovation processes in social and educational contexts;
- critical reflection on the limits of human-centred approaches, extended towards relational and posthuman perspectives;
- design and piloting of an educational workshop aimed at fostering critical understanding of these topics through participatory methodologies.

Certification awarded Certificate of attendance | **Final exam** No

FORESIGHT MASTERCLASS

26/09/2024 – 26/09/2024

- **Italian Institute for the Futures** - Naples, Italy
- **Duration**: 8 hours

Foresight Masterclass in Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) with Sohail Inayatullah and Ivana Milojević – Italian Institute for the Future and The Millennium Project Italia. Advanced training in Futures Studies methods and in the application of Causal Layered Analysis, with particular attention to:

- use of futures-oriented approaches to analyse complex problems and build alternative scenarios;
- analysis of the social, cultural and organisational dimensions that influence decision-making and innovation processes;
- application of CLA as a methodology to promote critical thinking, reflexivity and systemic change;
- exploration of the educational potential of futures methods to support learning processes oriented towards complexity and anticipation.

Certification awarded Certificate of attendance | **Final exam** No

ANTICIPATION SUMMER SCHOOL 2024

11/09/2024 – 14/09/2024

- **LANCASTER UNIVERSITY** - Lancaster, UK
- **Duration**: 40 hours

Advanced training in Anticipation and Futures Studies methods within the 5th International Conference on Anticipation, with particular attention to:

- application of anticipatory and futures-oriented approaches to analyse complex problems and build future scenarios;
- development of methodological skills to support research, innovation and decision-making processes;
- experimentation with applied workshops and mentoring pathways in interdisciplinary contexts;
- in-depth study of the potential of futures methods to promote critical thinking, learning and anticipatory capacity in educational and organisational contexts.

Certification awarded Certificate of attendance | **Final exam** No

MASTER'S DEGREE IN COMMUNICATION DESIGN (LM-12)

10/10/2013 – 17/04/2017

- **POLITECNICO DI MILANO, SCHOOL OF DESIGN** – Milan, Italy
- **Duration**: 3 years

Experimental thesis in Communication Design on the design of a methodological toolkit to support participatory co-design processes, with particular attention to:

- design of tools to facilitate collaboration between communication designers and cultural organisations;
- development of participatory methodologies for the shared definition of design strategies and decision-making processes in multi-stakeholder contexts;
- application of collaborative approaches to communication design, oriented towards understanding needs and the shared construction of knowledge;
- experimentation with co-design practices as a tool to promote inclusive and informed design processes.

Field of study Communication Design | **Final exam** Yes | **Final grade** 110/110 | **Thesis** Comunichiamo! Uno strumento per il dialogo progettuale con le associazioni. [Let's communicate! A tool for design dialogue with associations]

BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

18/10/2009 – 10/04/2013

- **University of Genoa, Department of Architecture and Design (DAD)** – Genoa, Italy
- **Duration**: 3 years

Field of study Industrial Design

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Mother tongue: **ITALIAN** Other languages:	**UNDERSTANDING**		**SPEAKING**		**WRITING**
	Listening	Reading	Spoken production	Spoken interaction	
ENGLISH	C1	C1	C1	C1	C1

Levels: A1 and A2: Basic user; B1 and B2: Independent user; C1 and C2: Proficient user

PUBLICATIONS

Monographs

Piras, V., Reyes Redondo, M. C., & Trentin, G. (2020). *Come disegnare un corso online: Criteri di progettazione didattica e della comunicazione [How to design an online course: Instructional and communication design criteria]*. FrancoAngeli. ISBN-13 (15) 9788835103417 https://series.francoangeli.it/index.php/oa/catalog/book/526

- Book on the integrated design of online training programmes, proposing methodological criteria for instructional and communication design in digital environments, with particular attention to user experience, interaction and the quality of learning processes.

Piras, V. (2025). *Un'altra educazione al design in Italia: Sguardi e pratiche di critica situata [Another design education in Italy: Perspectives and practices of situated critique]*. FrancoAngeli. ISBN-13 (15) 9788835182573 https://series.francoangeli.it/index.php/oa/catalog/book/1424

- Research monograph based on the doctoral thesis. The book critically analyses design education in Italy, proposing a theoretical and methodological framework for rethinking design education through critical and futures-oriented design approaches aimed at addressing contemporary educational and social challenges.

Journal articles

Piras, V., Castellano, A., & Noel, D. (2024). Che genere di font? Un esercizio didattico oltre il binarismo in campo tipografico [What gender is a font? A teaching exercise beyond binarism in typography]. *MD Journal, 15*, 142–151.

- Research article presenting a teaching experiment based on critical design to foster reflection on gender stereotypes through typographic design, proposing participatory educational practices aimed at developing critical thinking and transforming learning processes.

- **Role**: Equal first author; writing, review and final drafting.

Piras, V., & Chakraborty, A. (2026). *Gender-based cyberviolence prevention in European secondary education: A scoping review on the intersection between comprehensive sexuality education and digital literacy*. *Journal of School Health*.

- Scoping review analysing the intersection between Comprehensive Sexuality Education and Digital Literacy in European school contexts, highlighting the need for integrated educational models to prevent online gender-based violence and develop critical competences for digital citizenship.
- **Role**: First author; writing, review and final drafting.

Piras, V., Valenza, A., Chiulli, S., & Falcolini, E. (2026). *Scuole come microcosmi politici: Educazione sessuo-affettiva ed esperienze delle insegnanti tra ostacoli e resistenze in Italia [Schools as political microcosms: Sexuality and relationships education and teachers' experiences between obstacles and resistance in Italy]*. *Education Sciences & Society*. Franco Angeli.

- Qualitative study exploring the experiences of teachers engaged in sexuality and relationships education, highlighting the organisational and cultural dynamics that shape educational innovation and the transformation of school contexts.
- **Role**: Equal first author; writing, review and final drafting.

Piras, V. (2026, accepted manuscript, 29/06/2026). *Unlearning design education: Feminist perspectives on design politics and structural violence in Italy*. *Design and Culture*.

- Study combining an analysis of university curricula and students' experiences to investigate power dynamics in design education, proposing unlearning as a process of pedagogical innovation and transformation of educational practices.

Book chapters

Piras, V. (2022). Modelli pedagogici del design della comunicazione: Responsabilità e complessità [Pedagogical models of communication design: Responsibility and complexity]. In M. L. Falcidieno (Ed.), *Dialoghi 2.0. Tracce per ricerche sulla visualità* (pp. 55–60). Stefano Termanini Editore.

- Research contribution analysing pedagogical models of communication design in order to rethink educational methodologies and practices aimed at developing critical thinking, design responsibility and the ability to operate in complex contexts.

D'Urzo, M., Piras, V., M., Elbert, & Ruan, J. (2022). Thoughts about a critical and positive design pedagogy. In P. Califano (Ed.), *Exploring Tomás Maldonado* (pp. 72–87). Fondazione Giangiacomo Feltrinelli.

- Research contribution reflecting on pedagogical models of design based on the thought of Tomás Maldonado, proposing a critical and constructive approach to design education aimed at developing reflective thinking, designer responsibility and the ability to deal with complex and changing contexts.
- **Role**: Equal first author; writing, review and final drafting.

Bocconi, S., Piras, V., Talamini, F., & Trentin, G. (2026). Seeding a critical culture of digital innovation among new generations in the AI era. In S. Bocconi, V. Piras, F. Talamini, & G. Trentin (Eds.), *Educating to Inhabit Futures: Seeding a Critical Culture of Digital Innovation Among New Generations in the AI Era* (pp. 1–22). Nova Science Publishers. https://doi.org/10.52305/SSWQ1065

- Chapter defining the theoretical and methodological framework for fostering a critical culture of digital innovation in educational contexts, integrating futures-oriented design, systems thinking and human-centred approaches to support learning, participation and responsible innovation in the age of artificial intelligence.
- **Role**: Equal first author; writing, review and final drafting.

Piras, V., Talamini, F., & Bocconi, S. (2026). Students working with futures: The educational use of backcasting and speculative design. In S. Bocconi, V. Piras, F. Talamini, & G. Trentin (Eds.), *Educating to Inhabit Futures: Seeding a Critical Culture of Digital Innovation Among New Generations in the AI Era* (pp. 51–74). Nova Science Publishers. https://doi.org/10.52305/SSWQ1065

- Contribution on the design and piloting of futures-oriented methodologies for education, using backcasting and speculative design to support participatory learning and decision-making processes and the development of critical thinking in educational contexts.
- **Role**: Equal first author; writing, review and final drafting.

Barca, D., & Piras, V. (2026). Designing AI literacy for future-ready learners: A comparison of the UNESCO competency framework for students and the Lucy Pathway syllabus. In S. Bocconi, V. Piras, F. Talamini, & G. Trentin (Eds.), *Educating to Inhabit Futures: Seeding a Critical Culture of Digital Innovation Among New Generations in the AI Era* (pp. 117–138). Nova Science Publishers. https://doi.org/10.52305/SSWQ1065

- Research contribution analysing and comparing international frameworks for the development of AI Literacy competences, providing methodological guidance for designing educational pathways aimed at the critical, informed and responsible use of artificial intelligence.
- **Role**: Second author; review and final drafting.

Conference proceedings

Piras, V. (2022). Rappresentazione dei modelli pedagogici del design, uno strumento di analisi critica [Representing pedagogical models of design: A tool for critical analysis]. In E. Bistagnino & C. Battini (Eds.), *DIALOGHI / DIALOGUES • visioni e visualità / visions and visuality: Testimoniare, comunicare, sperimentare / Witnessing, communicating, experimenting* (Proceedings of the 43rd International UID Conference). FrancoAngeli. https://doi.org/10.3280/oa-832

- Contribution on the development of a critical analysis tool for representing and comparing pedagogical models of design, aimed at supporting methodological reflection and the innovation of training processes in educational contexts.

Piras, V., Colitti, S., & Licaj, A. (2022). *Biases. A non-method for the anticipation* [Conference paper]. 4th International Conference on Anticipation, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ, United States / Online

- Contribution exploring the role of cognitive biases in anticipation processes and in building future scenarios, proposing a critical approach to futures-oriented design to support reflective practices and informed decision-making in complex contexts.

Piras, V., & Iebole, S. (2023). Using a gender lens to examine the field of design: Design, education, methods, sustainable production. In *International Gender for Excellence in Research Conference Proceedings*. ISBN 978-9180394994.

- Research contribution proposing the adoption of a gender perspective as a methodological approach to critically analyse design, educational models and design processes, promoting more inclusive, reflective and sustainability-oriented educational practices.

Piras, V., Iebole, S., & Chimenz, L. (2023). Trouble #1. Design history: A new sight on design through gender studies and intersectionality. In N. Ceccarelli & M. Sironi (Eds.), *DesignIntorno. Atti della Conferenza annuale della Società Italiana di Design* (pp. 534–541). Società Italiana di Design. ISBN 978-88-943380-7-2.

- Research contribution proposing a critical rereading of design history through gender studies and intersectionality, highlighting the role of inclusive and reflective methodological approaches in education, research and the development of design practices.
- **Role**: Equal first author; writing, review and final drafting.

Bocconi, S., Staggini, G., Piras, V., & Talamini, F. (2025). Fostering students' ability to envision possible futures with AI & robotics: A teacher training course on anticipatory thinking for secondary schools. In T. Bastiaens (Ed.), *Proceedings of EdMedia + Innovate Learning 2025* (pp. 584–590). Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (AACE).

- Research contribution on the design and piloting of a teacher training course aimed at integrating anticipatory thinking, artificial intelligence and robotics in school contexts, through futures-oriented methodologies that foster critical thinking, imagination and educational innovation.
- **Role**: Second author; review and final drafting.

Iorio, T., & Piras, V. (2025). Visioni speculative: Rappresentare il futuro per affrontare la complessità [Speculative visions: Representing the future to address complexity]. In L. Carlevaris, D. Calisi, L. Baglioni, C. Bianchini, M. Canciani, M. G. Cianci, L. Farroni, C. Inglese, M. F. Mancini, A. Meschini, J. Romor, M. Salvatore, G. Spadafora, & G. M. Valenti (Eds.), *ÈKPHRASIS. Descrizioni nello spazio della rappresentazione* (Proceedings of the 46th International Conference of Teachers of Representation Disciplines). FrancoAngeli.

- Contribution on the use of representation as a methodological tool for futures-oriented design, highlighting the role of *speculative visions* in supporting anticipation processes and the understanding of complexity.
- **Role**: Equal first author; writing, review and final drafting.

Piras, V., Talamini, F., & Bocconi, S. (2025). Educating for tomorrow: Seeding a critical culture of digital innovation among new generations in the AI era through speculative pedagogy. In T. Bastiaens (Ed.), *Proceedings of EdMedia + Innovate Learning 2025* (pp. 380–389). Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (AACE).

- Contribution on the development of an educational methodology based on speculative pedagogy to foster a critical culture of digital innovation, supporting the development of futures thinking and future-oriented competences in school contexts.
- **Role**: Equal first author; writing, review and final drafting.

Piras, V., Bocconi, S., & Talamini, F. (2025). Empowering students to reimagine technological futures: A toolkit for critical and anticipatory thinking in secondary education. In *Proceedings of the 18th International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation (ICERI 2025)*. IATED Academy.

- Contribution presenting an educational toolkit to promote critical and anticipatory thinking in secondary schools, supporting students and teachers in building informed visions of the future with respect to technological transformations.
- **Role**: Equal first author; writing, review and final drafting.

Edited volumes

Bocconi, S., Piras, V., Talamini, F., & Trentin, G. (Eds.). (2026). *Educating to Inhabit Futures: Seeding a Critical Culture of Digital Innovation Among New Generations in the AI Era*. Nova Science Publishers. https://doi.org/10.52305/SSWQ1065
2026

- Scientific editing of an international volume on the relationships between education, futures-oriented design and digital innovation in the age of artificial intelligence, bringing together methodological contributions and case studies to promote critical thinking, AI literacy and future-oriented educational practices.

Delprino, F., Iebole, S., Piras, V., Prassoli, D., Tagliasco, G., & Tonella, O. (Eds.). (2026). *Per una critica della normalità: Nuove visioni e paradigmi progettuali [For a critique of normality: New visions and design paradigms]*. Genova University Press. https://doi.org/10.6093/gup.9788836183616

- Scientific editing of an interdisciplinary volume exploring critical approaches in the design disciplines, bringing together contributions on methodologies, design education, participatory practices and new paradigms for addressing the complexity of social, cultural and technological transformations.

Poster

Piras, V., Talamini, F., & Bocconi, S. (2024, September). *Seeding a critical culture of digital innovation among new generations in the AI era* [Poster presentation]. 5th Annual Conference on Anticipation, Lancaster University, Lancaster, United Kingdom.

- Research poster presenting a theoretical and methodological framework for fostering a critical culture of digital innovation in educational contexts, integrating critical pedagogy, futures methods and sustainable approaches to innovation in the age of artificial intelligence.