



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM  
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA

AREA  
FORMAZIONE E DOTTORATO

## PHD PROGRAMME TABLE

Call for applications for the admission to the PhD programmes (41<sup>st</sup> cycle) - A.Y. 2025/2026  
Second round

PROGRAMME'S NAME	PHILOSOPHY, SCIENCE, COGNITION AND SEMIOTICS (PSCS)
DURATION	3 years
PROGRAMME START DATE	01/11/2025 (DD/MM/YYYY)
LANGUAGES	Italian, English
COORDINATOR	Prof. Claudio Paolucci ( <a href="mailto:c.paolucci@unibo.it">c.paolucci@unibo.it</a> )
CURRICULA	1. Philosophy and Science Studies 2. Semiotics 3. Cognitive Science
PhD POSITIONS	6
ADMISSION PROCEDURE	Qualifications and research proposal evaluation Oral examination

### Available Positions and Scholarships

Pos. n.	Financial Support	Description	Positions linked to a specific research topic
1	<b>PhD Scholarship</b>	Totally funded by the University of Bologna general budget	
2	<b>PhD Scholarship</b>	Totally funded by the University of Bologna general budget	
3	<b>PhD Scholarship</b>	Totally funded by the University of Bologna general budget	
4	<b>PhD Scholarship</b>	Totally funded by the University of Bologna general budget	
5	<b>PhD Scholarship</b>	Funded by the University of Bologna general budget and by the Department of Philosophy	STS, Knowledge infrastructures and modelling practices
6	<b>PhD Scholarship</b>	Funded by Regione Emilia-Romagna in the framework of the research training projects for PhD programmes 41st cycle "High skills for resilience and sustainability of land and communities - ESF+ PR 2021/2027 Priority 2. Education and Training Specific Objective e) - Action No. 4 – Economical and Social Transition" - under the public notice approved by resolution of the Regional Council n. 344 of 10/03/2025 – funding approved by resolution of the Regional Council n. 732 of 19/05/2025 – CUP J33C25000520006	Forms, ways and practices of inclusion



The yearly gross amount of the scholarships awarded for the PhD Programme in “Philosophy, science, cognition and semiotics” is €16,243.

All winners of PhD positions must fulfil the study and research obligations decided by the Academic Board, as well as the obligations set out in the relevant regulations, in the call for applications, in the funding schemes and in any agreements relating to specific positions.

## Admission Exams

	DATE AND TIME	RESULTS
Qualifications and research proposal evaluation	Applicants’ participation is not required	Available from <b>18/07/2025</b>
Oral examination	<b>Date:</b> starting from <b>22/07/2025 – 9.00 a.m. CEST</b> <b>Place:</b> In presence, Aula Mondolfo, Via Zamboni 38, Bologna. Remotely, using Microsoft Teams	Available from <b>30/07/2025</b>

The results of the qualifications and research proposal evaluation, as well as the oral examination detailed schedule, shall be available on the webpage [Studenti Online](#) (select “requests in progress” > “see detail” and open the .pdf file at the bottom of the page). No personal written communication will be sent to applicants concerning the examinations results.

**During the oral examination, applicants may express their interest in one or more PhD positions linked to specific research topics.**

## Required and Supporting Documents to be attached to the application

Only documents in Italian or English will be considered valid and will be assessed by the Admission Board. Identity documents and diplomas/degree certificates issued in a language other than Italian or English must be accompanied by an official translation. The translation must be carried out by an authorized body or by the awarding university. Only qualifications obtained in the last 5 years will be taken into account, with the exception of university degrees. The Admission Board will assess the relevance of the supporting documents to the PhD programme.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS	
Identity document	Valid identity document with photo (i.e. identity card, passport)
Curriculum Vitae	No specific CV format is required
Degrees	Documents attesting the awarding of the first and second cycle degrees, the exams taken and the marks obtained (see Art. 3 of the Call for Applications)
Research proposal	Multi-annual research proposal, with special emphasis on the <b>activities to be completed during the first-year course</b> . The proposal must meet the following requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- it must mention <b>on the cover page the Curriculum and/or the topic-specific position/s</b> the applicant is interested to and the proposal is about (<u>applications or research proposals lacking a clear indication of the preferred Curriculum will not be evaluated</u>);</li> <li>- <b>it cannot exceed 20,000 characters</b>, including spaces and formula possibly used. This figure does not include: the title of proposal, the outline, references and images (such as graphs, diagrams, tables, etc. - if present);</li> <li>- <b>it must include:</b> the state of the art; description of the proposal; expected results; articulation of the proposal and implementation times; references.</li> </ul>
SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS	
Reference letter/s	<b>No more than 2 reference letters</b> signed by Italian and international academics and professionals in the research field, which do not form part of the Admission Board, attesting the suitability of the applicant and his/her interest in the scientific research. Letters shall be uploaded following the procedure detailed in the Call for Applications (Art. 3.2).
Personal statement	This must include the reasons prompting the applicant to attend the PhD Programme and those <b>relevant experiences and research interests</b> , that make the applicant suitable for the specific PhD Programme (3,000 characters maximum, including spaces).

<b>Publications</b>	Lists of publications (i.e. monographs, articles on scientific journals), minor publications and abstracts.
<b>Other documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Postgraduate vocational training programmes and/or specialisation programmes relevant to the PhD Programme main research topics</li> <li>- Teaching and tutorship activity carried out at academic level</li> <li>- Research activity of any kind - whether basic, applied, translational, etc. - carried out in any capacity, including when covered by research grants, and as a staff member of research projects</li> <li>- Documents attesting the applicant's foreign languages proficiency</li> <li>- Periods of study abroad, completed by applicants outside their countries of origin (e.g. Erasmus programme or other similar mobility programmes)</li> <li>- Other qualifications attesting the suitability of the applicants (scholarships, prizes, etc.)</li> </ul>

## Evaluation criteria\*

Scores will be expressed in points out of 100. Scores attributed to the evaluation of the qualifications and of the research proposal will be awarded on the basis of consistency with the chosen Curriculum and the following criteria.

### 1. Qualifications and research proposal evaluation

Minimum score for admission to the oral examination: 30 points, Maximum score: 50 points

<b>Qualifications evaluation</b>	Second cycle (Master's) degrees final mark. Graduands shall be evaluated according to the Weighted Average Mark (WAM)	10 points max
	Publications	5 points max
	Other evaluable documents	5 points max
<b>Research proposal evaluation</b>	Scientific value and ground-breaking nature of the proposal	14 points max
	Structure of the proposal	8 points max
	Proposal feasibility	8 points max

### 2. Oral examination

Minimum score for eligibility: 30 points, Maximum score 50 points

English language proficiency	10 points max
Research proposal presentation	10 points max
Theoretic and methodological knowledge of the PhD programme's main research topics and of the research topics linked to the available PhD positions, suitability of the applicant for scientific research	10 points max

Oral examination aims to assess the suitability of the applicant for scientific research as well as the general knowledge of the PhD programme's main research topics and of the research topics linked to the available PhD positions. **During the oral examination, the applicants' English language proficiency shall be assessed.**

The oral examination is carried out in Italian or English.

\* Possible further evaluation criteria will be available on the [University website](#), selecting the relevant PhD Programme > "More information".

## Research Fields

### Pos. 5 – PhD Scholarship funded by the University of Bologna general budget and by the Department of Philosophy, with research topic “STS, Knowledge infrastructures and modelling practices”

The main goal of the position is to study how modelling practices (including LLMs' production and validation) shape and are shaped by emerging knowledge infrastructures and related new forms of knowledge legitimation.

The candidate will be presented with four main research activities. The first activity requires investigating current trends in computer science research on modelling, with a particular focus on the tension between scientific knowledge and “applicable knowledge” production. The second activity is expected to design and develop ethnographic and ideally also computational research methods to map dynamic “modelling ecosystems”. The third activity requires conducting ethnographic observations and interviews to answer questions about legitimization (e.g., how are models produced and validated? What is the role exerted by knowledge infrastructures themselves?), responsibility (e.g., how are modelling tasks re-allocated between different epistemic fields like statistics, mathematics, computer science, industry?), and governance (e.g., what are the consequences for academic, scientific and research organizations,

including inter-sectorial relations?). Finally, the fourth activity should validate modelling practices and suggest research policy recommendations.

**Pos. 6 – PhD Scholarship funded by Regione Emilia-Romagna in the framework of the research training projects for PhD programmes 41st cycle “High skills for resilience and sustainability of land and communities - ESF+ PR 2021/2027 Priority 2. Education and Training Specific Objective e) - Action No. 4 – Economical and Social Transition” - under the public notice approved by resolution of the Regional Council n. 344 of 10/03/2025 – funding approved by resolution of the Regional Council n. 732 of 19/05/2025 – CUP J33C25000520006 with research topic “Forms, ways and practices of inclusion”**

Inclusion is not just a political or social goal: it is a way of thinking, speaking, and imagining the world. It is a form of creativity, a cultural gesture that invites us to redefine our relationships, our languages, and our shared spaces. In our contemporary societies, inclusion has often become a subject of debate and division: for some, a model and a telos to be pursued; for others, a stereotype and a source of exclusion for those who do not conform to the inclusive model.

In line with the 2021–2027 Regional Smart Specialisation Strategy and specifically with the Action "Inclusion and Social Cohesion: Education and Collective Well-being," this project aims to fund philosophical, semiotic, or cognitive research on the modes and forms of inclusion, as well as on the ways in which the concept is constructed, regulated, and articulated in our daily practices. The project seeks to develop a philosophical, cognitive, and semio-linguistic reflection on inclusion as a creative and transformative process—one capable of generating new forms of coexistence, social innovation, and shared culture, while also highlighting how those who do not conform to the inclusive model may paradoxically be excluded.

In addition to the theoretical and methodological reflection, the project may include the activation of transdisciplinary workshops imagined by the doctoral candidate. These workshops should be capable of involving philosophers, artists, educators, designers, and activists in inclusive co-design practices through art, language, and social interaction. A reflection on inclusion can thus also become a driver of cultural innovation: experimenting with new symbolic, aesthetic, and performative devices that promote and envision new ways of building community.

With the aim of circulating ideas, words, and practices that help to think and rethink inclusion not as a duty, but as a possibility to be imagined and redesigned, the project sets out to:

- Promote a reflection on inclusion grounded in critical thinking, philosophically informed inquiry, and conscious linguistic and conceptual practices.
- Deconstruct the stereotypes of exclusion.
- Activate creative and participatory processes for social innovation.
- To rethink inclusion philosophically means to rethink the foundations of living together.

It is a constant work of translation between differences—an exercise in ethical and semio-linguistic imagination. Through this project, the aim is to make reflection on inclusion not only a goal, but a form, a language, and an aesthetic of the possible.