



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA

AREA
FORMAZIONE E DOTTORATO

PHD PROGRAMME TABLE

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

PROGRAMME'S NAME	PSYCHOLOGY
DURATION	3 years
PROGRAMME START DATE	01/11/2025 (DD/MM/YYYY)
LANGUAGES	English
COORDINATOR	Prof. Mariagrazia Benassi (mariagrazia.benassi@unibo.it)
PhD POSITIONS	4
ADMISSION PROCEDURE	Qualifications and research proposal evaluation Oral examination

Available Positions and Scholarships

Pos. n.	Financial Support	Description	Positions linked to research topics
1	<i>PhD Scholarship</i>	Funded by the Department of Psychology	
2	<i>PhD Scholarship</i>	Funded by the Department of Psychology with funds made available by the project LIFE PHOENIX-WEEE Grant Agreement n. 101213028, CUP J43C25000370006, Ref. doc. Federico Fraboni	Organizational framework for user interface and nudge strategies to promote sustainable practices among customers: a human factors and psychological approach in the LIFE PHOENIX-WEEE Project
3	<i>PhD Scholarship</i>	Funded by the Department of Psychology in partnership with Azienda Unità Sanitaria Locale della Romagna	Innovative approaches for implementing the "Scuole che Promuovono Salute" programme in the province of Forlì-Cesena: engaging educational communities and assessing health needs and intervention effectiveness
4	<i>PhD Scholarship</i>	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 – Economic 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	Economic and social transitions: The psychological perspective



The yearly gross amount of the scholarships awarded for the PhD Programme in “Psychology” 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 25/08/2025
Oral examination	<p>Date: starting from 01/09/2025 – 9.30 a.m. CEST</p> <p>Place: In presence, Aula 2, Department of Psychology, Viale Berti Pichat 5, Bologna. Remotely, using Microsoft Teams.</p> <p>Applicants unable to be present in person for serious reasons can request to be interviewed via Teams by writing an email to the members of the Admission Board (subject line: "Request of online interview"). Applicants are required to specify exactly the reasons why they cannot be in presence. The Board will evaluate the request and, if approved, will send the Teams link for the interview.</p> <p>The contact e-mail of each member of the Admission Board is to be found on the University website, selecting the relevant PhD Programme > “More information”, tab “Admission Board”.</p>	Available from 04/09/2025

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 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. The Curriculum Vitae must be written in English.
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, drawn up in English . The proposal must meet the following requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - it must mention on the cover page the topic-specific PhD position (cfr. table “Available Positions and Scholarships”, and detailed in the section “Research Fields”) the applicant is

	interested to and the proposal is about, and the number of words used to write the research proposal; - it must include: the state of the art; Aims; Hypothesis; Methodology / structure of the study(s) (sample, independent and dependent variables, analysis plan; Theoretical and practical implications); Temporal plan of activities - 3,000 words max , references excluded
SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS	
Reference letter/s	No more than 2 reference letters signed by Italian or 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) and written in English .
Personal statement	The statement should include the reasons why the applicant wishes to join the PhD programme and the relevant experience and research interests that make the applicant suitable for the specific PhD programme (3000 characters maximum, including spaces). The personal statement must be written in English.
Publications	Lists of publications (i.e. monographs, articles on scientific journals)

Evaluation criteria*

Scores will be expressed in points out of 100, as follows.

1. Qualifications and research proposal evaluation

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

Qualifications evaluation	University degree final mark. Graduands shall be evaluated according to the Weighted Average Mark (WAM)	10 points max
	Reference letter/s	2 points max
	Personal statement	1 point max
	Publications	4 points max
Research proposal evaluation	Scientific value and ground-breaking nature of the proposal	13 points max
	Structure of the proposal	10 points max
	Proposal feasibility	10 points max

2. Oral examination

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

English language proficiency	10 points max
Research proposal presentation	35 points max
General knowledge of PhD programme's main research topics and of the research topics linked to the available PhD positions	5 points max

Oral examination consists in the presentation and discussion of the applicant's research proposal. It 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.

The oral examination is carried out in English.

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

Research Fields

Pos. no. 2 – PhD scholarship funded by the Department of Psychology with funds made available by the project LIFE PHOENIX-WEEE Grant Agreement n. 101213028, CUP J43C25000370006, Ref. doc. Federico Fraboni, with research topic "Organizational framework for user interface and nudge strategies to promote sustainable practices among customers: a human factors and psychological approach in the LIFE PHOENIX-WEEE Project"

The LIFE PHOENIX-WEEE project focuses on Europe's transition toward a sustainable and circular economy. Focused on the development of an innovative model for the end-of-life treatment of washing machines, the project integrates advanced technological infrastructure with organizational strategies and human-centered innovation. Central to the success of this approach is the integration of work, organizational, and personnel psychology and human factors methodologies that aim to optimize both user engagement and organizational adoption of sustainable practices.

Within this framework, a key challenge lies in designing and implementing an effective organizational and behavioral ecosystem to support circularity. Specifically, the LIFE PHOENIX-WEEE project introduces a comprehensive architecture: a semi-automatic selective disassembly line, a “repair academy” for social reintegration and upskilling, a historical spare parts warehouse, and novel sales and communication channels. These innovations are not only technical but socio-organizational, requiring the activation of behavioral change strategies, motivational alignment, stakeholder coordination, and human-centered user experience (UX) interventions.

Organizational and industrial psychology offer critical lenses for exploring and optimizing this system. The success of the project hinges on the ability to design organizational frameworks that promote sustainable consumption behaviors (e.g., preference for refurbished goods), increase consumer trust in reused materials, and improve stakeholder adherence to circular protocols. Leveraging psychological constructs such as motivation, habit formation, cognitive workload, and trust in technology, the research will focus on the analysis and optimization of the user interface and the nudge mechanisms integrated within physical and digital consumer experiences. Moreover, it will investigate employee skill development, resistance to change, and systemic organizational alignment with sustainability goals, which are key themes in human factors and work psychology.

Recent advancements in digital UX, behavioral economics, and repair culture (e.g., Right to Repair Directive) underscore the need for well-researched frameworks that guide how consumers interact with refurbished appliances and how organizations promote their reuse. However, gaps remain in understanding how to design effective nudges, measure UX trust and acceptance, and develop scalable training protocols for repair-oriented workforces.

To address these challenges, the Ph.D. project will develop a rigorous applied research agenda, combining methods from organizational psychology, human factors engineering, and sustainability science. The candidate will work closely with project partners to test interventions such as user-interface redesigns, behavioral prompts in e-commerce environments, and psychosocial training modules for repair workers. This includes experimental field studies, UX evaluation (e.g., SUS, QUIS), and organizational diagnostics.

By embedding psychological expertise into the project’s operational and consumer-facing domains, this research will contribute to enhancing system-wide adoption of circular practices. Furthermore, it will produce generalizable knowledge for applying psychological science to complex sustainability transitions, especially in industrial and commercial contexts.

Pos. no. 3 – PhD scholarship funded by the Department of Psychology in partnership with Azienda Unità Sanitaria Locale della Romagna, with research topic “Innovative approaches for implementing the “Scuole che Promuovono Salute” program in the province of Forlì-Cesena: Engaging educational communities and assessing health needs and intervention effectiveness” (Supervisor: Cinzia Albanesi, Co-supervisor: Elvira Cicognani)

The concept of “Health Promoting Schools” (“Scuole che promuovono salute”) has gained international recognition as an effective strategy for improving the health of children, adolescents, and the wider school community. Successfully implementing Health Promoting Schools involves a complex set of interventions that include a variety of innovative activities across several key areas, such as:

- School health policy
- School environment
- Individual skills and action competence
- Connections with parents and the local community
- School health services

Recent efforts have focused on innovating and improving interventions, as well as evaluating both the implementation and outcomes of health-promoting schools. However, empirical research has identified several limitations in implementation, including a lack of engagement with institutional processes and an insufficient emphasis on the factors influencing health and health-related behaviors. In terms of evaluation, challenges have been noted, particularly in identifying key indicators of success that extend beyond individual behavior change or health literacy. Additionally, there is a lack of research on long-term outcomes and a scarcity of mixed-method studies.

To address these limitations and challenges highlighted in the literature, the research project should develop a comprehensive approach to implementation and evaluation. This approach should not only foster innovation in practices but also generate rigorous evidence by comparing the processes and outcomes of the Scuole che Promuovono Salute program in Forlì-Cesena with similar regional experiences.

Pos. no. 4 – 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 – Economic 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 “Economic and social transitions: The psychological perspective”

This scholarship is funded within the scheme “Borse FSE 2025 II_PerCorsi”.

The selected candidate will do research on psychological perspectives addressing economic and social transitions, consistent with the research lines pursued at the Department of Psychology.