



Margherita Ascari

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ABOUT ME

Margherita Ascari, PhD in Architecture and Design Cultures is currently Post-Doc Research Fellow at the University of Bologna, Department of Architecture in the frame of the Horizon Europe funded IMPULSE Project (RN: 101132704). She is a member of the Advanced Design Unit, Department of Architecture, University of Bologna since 2021. Her research interests include data-design practices in relation to processes of co-production of research (citizen science) and co-design of services within urban ecosystems. She is interested in interdisciplinary methodological frameworks involving human and non-human in design practices, and in the relationship between Design and STS. She has been collaborating in the Horizon 2020 funded project RESET - Restarting the Economy in Support of the Environment through Technology (2021-2024). In particular, the aim of her research project was to develop a framework for the integration of quantitative data, obtained through environmental monitoring tools, and qualitative data, obtained through participatory crowdsourcing methods which involve citizens, in order to improve environmental modeling methods for urban green areas. For the period 2021-2024 she has been associate to the National Research Council CNR - IRSA. In addition to her academic experience, since 2020 Margherita has led and participated in several facilitation experiences (workshops, participatory processes) and has provided training and consultancy services in the field of service design and data visualisation.

WORK EXPERIENCE

POST-DOC RESEARCH FELLOW – UNIVERSITY OF BOLOGNA – 02/01/2025 – Current – BOLOGNA, ITALY

Research Fellow at the University of Bologna, Department of Architecture in the frame of Horizon Europe funded project IMPULSE (Reference number: 101132704). Main tasks include research on data-based formats to communicate advancements in digital cultural heritage exploitation and research on environmental impact of digital technologies to identify sustainable dissemination practices in terms of CO2 emissions and resources usage.

ADJUNCT PROFESSOR – UNIVERSITY OF BOLOGNA – 09/2025 – Current – BOLOGNA, ITALY

Adjunct Professor for second year course "Services and Products for the Built Environment", part of the integrated course "Technology Laboratory I.C.", Master's Degree in Advanced Design, University of Bologna, a.a. 2025/2026

TEACHING ASSISTANT – UNIVERSITY OF BOLOGNA – 09/2021 – 09/2024 – BOLOGNA, ITALY

Teaching assistant for second year course "Service Design", Master's Degree in Advanced Design, University of Bologna, a.a. 2024/2025

Teaching assistant for third year course "Informatic Book", Bachelor's Degree in Industrial Design, University of Bologna, a.a. 2023/2024

Teaching assistant for third year course "Final Synthesis Lab", Bachelor's Degree in Industrial Design, University of Bologna, a.a. 2021/2022; 2022/2023

RESEARCH COLLABORATOR – UNIVERSITY OF BOLOGNA – 06/04/2023 – 14/07/2023 – BOLOGNA, ITALY

Collaboration in the frame of the EU PON Metro funded project Data Challenge - Youth & Culture. Data analysis and visual elaboration to observe gender diversity in Bologna's public libraries collections. Organization of divulgative event.

RESEARCH COLLABORATOR – CONSIGLIO NAZIONALE DELLE RICERCHE - ISTITUTO DI RICERCA SULLE ACQUE – 01/11/2021 – 31/10/2024 – BARI, ITALY

Link : <https://www.h2020reset.eu/our-outputs#h.yyxz85nu0u2m>

Collaboration in the frame of Horizon 2020 funded project ReSET - Restarting the Economy in Support of the Environment through Technology. Support in collection of quantitative and qualitative data to observe heatwave risk in Bologna, Italy.

Website: <https://www.fondazioneinnovazioneurbana.it/>

- Data analysis and data visualization for the communication of urban development policies and strategies (e.g. Bologna's Plan for Urban Innovation, Urban Innovation City Lab, ...);
- Co-design of citizen's engagement strategies;
- Support in the development of proposals for Horizon 2020 Framework Programme, Horizon Europe Framework Programme and other international calls.

● **EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

01/11/2021 – 25/03/2025 Bologna, Italy
PHD FELLOW IN ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN CULTURES University of Bologna

Thesis title: Design with(in) urban ecosystems. Progettare nuove interconnessioni tra dati, ambiente e cittadinanza.
Supervisor: Professor Valentina Gianfrate (University of Bologna). Co-Supervisor: Eng. PhD Raffaele Giordano (National Research Council).

Dissertation date: 24 March 2025.

Address Viale Risorgimento 2, 40135, Bologna, Italy | **Field of study** Design & Architecture

01/09/2023 – 01/12/2023 1 Place St Thomas D'Aquin, 75007, Paris, France
VISITING PHD FELLOW SciencesPo médialab

The visiting period has been focused on the development of data-informed artifacts related to my PhD Thesis project. The main techniques addressed are related to: media and press analysis, NLP (Natural Language Processing) techniques for text analysis, data and network visualization techniques.

Website <https://medialab.sciencespo.fr/en/>

2018 – 2020 Bologna, Italy
MASTER'S DEGREE IN ADVANCED SERVICE DESIGN - WITH HONORS University of Bologna

Thesis title: Urban Data Stories - Designing services for citizens through data-driven narration.
Supervisor: Professor Valentina Gianfrate
Final votation 110/110 with honors

Address Viale Risorgimento 2, 40135, Bologna, Italy

2015 – 2018 Bologna, Italy
BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN INDUSTRIAL DESIGN - WITH HONORS University of Bologna

Thesis title: Designing with data. Data visualization for the communication of online activities of a European project.
Supervisor: Professor Elena Formia
Final votation 110/110 with honors

Address Viale Risorgimento 2, 40135, Bologna, Italy

● **LANGUAGE SKILLS**

Mother tongue(s): **ITALIAN**

Other language(s):

	UNDERSTANDING		SPEAKING		WRITING
	Listening	Reading	Spoken production	Spoken interaction	
ENGLISH	C1	C1	C1	C1	B2
FRENCH	B1	A2	A2	B1	A1

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

● **PUBLICATIONS**

2026
[Book \(monograph\)](#)

Ascari, M. (2026). *Design within Urban (Eco)Systems. Exploring Interconnected Practices between Humans, Data and the Environment*. Bologna University Press

Ascari, M. & Ricci, D. (2025). Life After Visualization. How to Recover Data That Eludes Visualization and How to Revive Data That Has Been Made Visual. *DIID - disegno industriale industrial design*. 85, 52-67

Mehmeti, L., Ascari, M., Gianfrate, V., Žegleň, Ž., Charitos, D., Anastassakis, G. (2025). The IMPULSE Project: Advancing Immersive Digitization for Sustainable Digital Cultural Heritage Integration within ECCCH. *Proceedings of the Conference Digital Heritage 2025 (Siena, 8-13 September 2025)*. Eurographics Association

Ascari, M., Colitti, S., & Gianfrate, V., (2025). Design-based Practices Towards New Ecological Consciousness. The Case of the Collective Archive of the Climate Emergency Memory, in: *Reassessing the Social - Understanding Transformation* (280 - 293). Proceedings of the Social Design Network Conference 2025, Lucerne, Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts

Ascari, M. & Colitti, S. (eds.). (2025). *Dati, Giovani e cultura. Il design come attivatore di nuove relazioni per le biblioteche di Bologna*. Tatanka APS. 10.5281/zenodo.14809243

Ascari, M. & Vignali, V. (2024). Designing the accessibility of Ground(s) through data and design-driven methods. In Åberg, H. E., Cazzaro, I., Costantino, C., Diodato, F., Pérez Puchalt, J., Rivaroli, L., Rosato, L., Turci, G., & Ouyang, Y. (Eds.). (2024). *GROUND(S) Mapping, Designing and Caring: Towards a Convivial Society*. SOAP | Stichting OpenAccess platforms. <https://doi.org/10.47982/qctd0w10>

Ascari, M. (2024). Urban-nature-data ecosystems. Co-designed, data-informed, citizens-connected practices for living in the urban ecosystem. In Bruggeman, R., Garcia, L., Issak, A., and Sievert, J.R. (2024) DRS 2024 Ph.D. Consortium, in Gray, C., Hekkert, P., Forlano, L., Ciuccarelli, P. (eds.), *DRS2024: Boston*, 23–28 June, Boston, USA. <https://doi.org/10.21606/drs.2024.170>

Gianfrate, V., Ascari, M., Giordano, R., Orioli, V. & Ginocchini, G. (2023). Co-design inclusive relations between humans and environments adopting citizen science approach. In Sayigh, A. (ed.). *Mediterranean architecture and the green-digital transition. Selected papers from the world renewable energy congress Med Green Forum 2022* (421-431). Springer International

Gianfrate, V., Ascari, M., Colitti, S. & Lopes, L. (2023). Intersectional Design for an Accessible and Empowering World: Views from the 8th Forum of Design as a Process, in: *Disrupting Geographies in the Design World. Proceedings of the 8th International Forum of Design as a Process* (220-225). Proceedings of the conference: 8th Forum of Design as a Process, Bologna, 20-22/06/2022

Ascari, M., Cattabriga, A., Colitti, S. & Licaj, A. IF THIS THEN THAT broken linear logic. Rethinking and representing the design process. In: *Disrupting Geographies in the Design World, diid - disegno industriale industrial design* (490-499). Proceedings of the conference 8th International Forum of Design as a Process, Bologna, 20-22 June 2022

Formia, E., Gianfrate, V., Colitti, S., Ascari, M. & Mehmeti, L. (2023). Data Challenge. Re-thinking the library as a learning space to intersect youth, culture and gender diversity. In: *Life-Changing Design* (1-13). *Proceedings of the 10th Congress of the International Association of Societies in Design Research* (IASDR 2023)

Link <https://cris.unibo.it/handle/11585/944905>

2023

[Conference Proceedings Paper](#)

Van Delden, H., Giordano, R., Ascari, M., van Soesbergen, A. & Vanhout, R. (2023). Using the activity-based Metronamica model to simulate dynamic exposure profiles and support disaster risk reduction. In Sangiambut, S. & Sieber, R. (Eds.). *The 18th International Conference on Computational Urban Planning and Urban Management* (CUPUM 2023). <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/6YR5V>

2022

[Conference Proceedings Paper](#)

Ascari, M., Gianfrate, V. & Licaj, A. (2022). Life-centered design and intersectionality. Citizen science and data visualization as entry points. In: *Design for Adaptation*. Proceedings of the Conference Cumulus Detroit 2022, 2-4 November 2022, Detroit, USA

2022

[Contribution to Volume](#)

Ascari, M., Gianfrate, V. & Licaj, A. (2022). Wear and aware: citizens, sensors and data to design inclusive research processes. In Zannoni, M. & Montanari, R. (eds.). *Human Body Interaction* (303-318). BUP Bononia University Press

2021

[Journal Article](#)

Ascari, M., Formia, E. & Ginocchini, G. (2021). Attivare processi di empowerment dei cittadini. I dati per leggere i bisogni individuali e collettivi della società, *MD Journal*, 11. 52-61.

2021

[Contribution to Volume](#)

Ascari, M. (2021). Città Multiple. Design e dati per una narrazione inclusiva delle mutazioni tra la città fisica e le città digitali. In Formia, E., Gianfrate, V. & Vai, E. (2021). *Design e mutazioni. Processi di trasformazione continua nella città. Processes for the continuous transformation of the city* (219-231). BUP University Press. ISBN 978-88-6923-761-4

2021

[Contribution to Volume](#)

Ascari, M., Colitti, S. & Vai, E. (2021). L'interazione con CRICC. Comunicare le relazioni attraverso i dati e la loro visualizzazione in *Fondazione Innovazione Urbana. Visioni e azioni dell'istituzione dedicata alle trasformazioni di Bologna* (156-159). ISBN 978-88-9095-996-7

2021

[Journal Article](#)

Ascari, M., Gianfrate, V. & Mehmeti, L. (2021). Towards design and creativity in the European work programmes. *DIID: disegno industriale industrial design*, 73, 24-33.

2021

[Journal Article](#)

Ascari, M., Formia, E., Gianfrate, V., Succini, L. & Zannoni, M. (2021). Design for Responsible Innovation. Social impacts of products and services, *PAD Journal*, 21, 235-255.

● CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

2025

Paper Presentation at Social Design Network 2025 International Conference

Paper presentation at the International Conference "Social Design Network 2025" organized by Lucerne University of Applied Sciences. Held on September 18th-20th 2025.

Paper title (co-authors Simona Colitti, Valentina Gianfrate): "*Design-based Practices Towards New Ecological Consciousness. The Case of the Collective Archive of the Climate Emergency Memory.*"

23/06/2024 – 28/06/2024 Boston, USA

Participation in PhD Consortium at DRS BOSTON 2024

Invited participation at the PhD Consortium of the conference Design Research Society Boston 2024. Activities of thesis advancement presentation and discussion

29/03/2023 – 31/03/2023 Lisbon, Portugal

Presentation at Design Principles and Practices Conference 2023

Online presentation of two projects activated by Advanced Design Unit entitled: "Design Education for Just and Inclusive Transition. Experimenting collaborative models with younger generations through data literacy and game thinking". Co-presenter: Simona Colitti (University of Bologna)

02/11/2022 – 04/11/2022 Detroit, USA

Paper presentation at Cumulus Detroit 2022

Online presentation of the paper "Life-centered design and intersectionality. Citizen science and data visualization as entry points" co-authors: Valentina Gianfrate, Ami Licaj (University of Bologna)

20/07/2022 – 22/07/2022 Florence, Italy

Paper presentation at Med Green Forum 2022

Presentation of the paper "Co-design inclusive relations between humans and environments adopting citizen science approach" co-authors: Valentina Gianfrate (University of Bologna), Raffaele Giordano (CNR), Valentina Orioli (University of Bologna and Municipality of Bologna), Giovanni Ginocchi (Municipality of Bologna)

10/12/2021 Bologna, Italy

Paper presentation at Ground(s) International Conference

Paper presentation at the International Conference "Ground(s). Mapping, designing and caring: towards a convivial society" organized by the Department of Architecture, University of Bologna. Held on 10th December 2021.
Paper title (co-author Virginia Vignali): "Designing the accessibility of Ground(s) through data and design-driven methods"

20/06/2022 – 22/06/2022 Bologna, Italy

Track's collaborator at 8th Forum of Design as a Process

Track collaborator for Track 2 "Intersectional Design for an Accessible and Empowering World", 8th Forum of Design as a Process organized by the Advanced Design Unit (University of Bologna) as part of the Latin Design Process network.

Link <https://www.forumdesignprocess.org/dgdw22/>

15/05/2023 Bologna, Italy

Seminar co-curation

Co-curation of the seminar and final dissemination event for the project "Data Challenge - Youth & Culture" (with Simona Colitti). Invited speeches by Valentina Giuliani, Kim Albrecht (metaLAB at Berlin) and Jeffrey Schnapp (metaLAB at Harvard)

Link <https://site.unibo.it/advanceddesignunit/it/workshop-attivita/data-challenge-youth-culture>

06/04/2022 Bologna, Italy

Seminar co-curation

Co-curation of the seminar "From Knowledge to Wisdom & Back" (with Ami Licaj, Simona Colitti, Elena Formia, Valentina Gianfrate). Invited speeches by Michele Mauri (Politecnico di Milano), Donata Columbro (Dataninja), Salvatore Iaconesi & Oriana Persico (HER: She loves data)

Link https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W0V9pjlqy-c&ab_channel=DipartimentoArchitettura%2CUniversitàdiBologna

13/11/2024 Bologna, Italy

Guest Lecture

Guest lecturer at the course "Service Design" (resp. Prof. Silvia Gasparotto), Master's Degree in Advanced Service Design, University of Bologna. Title of the speech: "Design with data. Methods, practices, processes"

06/11/2024 Bologna, Italy

Guest Lecture

Guest lecturer at the course in Urban Policy (resp. Prof. Martina Massari), Master's Degree in Advanced Service Design, University of Bologna. Title of the speech: "Design with(in) urban ecosystems. Designing new interconnections between data, environment, citizens"

04/03/2024 Bologna, Italy

Guest Lecture

Guest lecturer at the course "Informatic Book", Bachelor's Degree in Industrial Design (resp. Prof. Elena Vai), University of Bologna. Title of the speech: "Digital Portfolio. Tools and case studies"

04/04/2023 Bologna, Italy

Guest Lecture

Guest lecturer at the course "Design methods", Bachelor's Degree in Industrial Design (resp. Prof. Laura Succini), University of Bologna. Title of the speech: "User research in design. Practices, tools, applications"

21/10/2022 Bologna, Italy

Guest Lecture

Guest lecturer at the course in Urban Policy (resp. Prof. Valentina Orioli), Master's Degree in Advanced Service Design, University of Bologna. Title of the speech: "Service design for collaborative and inclusive integration of urban ecosystems. Co-design, data-driven practices and citizen science"

08/06/2022 Bologna, Italy

Guest Lecture

Guest Lecturer at the Executive Master in Business Innovation Design (resp. Prof. Flaviano Celaschi), Bologna Business School. Title of the speech "Service Design and the territory. Practices, tools, applications"

07/04/2022 Bologna, Italy

Guest Lecture

Guest lecturer at the Master's Degree in Electrical Energy Engineering (resp. Dr. Giorgio Dall'Osso), University of Bologna. Title of the speech: "Creative approach to data: how to communicate projects through data-driven methods"

05/2023 Bologna, Italy

Workshop

Co-organization of the "Po River Blu Fest Workshop" for 3rd year students of the Bachelor's Degree in Industrial Design, University of Bologna (with Valentina Gianfrate). Topics addressed: data and network visualization for climate change

2022 – 2023 Bologna, Italy

Workshop

Co-organization of the workshop "Citizen as scientists" for high school students (with Simona Colitti). 3 editions (4 days each) related to the topics of qualitative data collection, data visualization and scenario elaboration.

29/03/2023 – 19/04/2023 Bologna, Italy

Workshop

Organization of the 4 weeks workshop entitled "ReSET Workshop 2023" for the 2nd year students of the Master's Degree in Advanced Design, University of Bologna. Topics addressed: environmental monitoring, data visualization for climate change

18/05/2022 Bologna, Italy

Workshop

Organization of the workshop "Citizens as sensors" for 2nd year students of the Master's Degree in Advanced Design, University of Bologna. Topics addressed: qualitative data collection

2024 Bologna, Italy

Training module

Co-curation of the training module "Data visualization process" for high school students (with Simona Colitti). The training module (4 editions of half day each) is part of the "Big Data & Climate Change School Program" promoted by Fondazione Golinelli and Fondazione Carisbo

Link <https://fondazionecarisbo.it/big-data-and-climate-change-school-program/>