



Nicolò Cocchi

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Research

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Personal data

Born in Fivizzano (MS), Italy, on 17/10/1991

SHORT BIO

Nicolò Cocchi is currently a postdoctoral researcher, adjunct professor, and teaching assistant at the Department of Management, Alma Mater Studiorum — University of Bologna, where he is also affiliated with Oper.Lab, the Observatory for Open Innovation. His research focuses on innovation management, particularly on new product development, design thinking, and open innovation.

Nicolò earned his MSc in Management Engineering from the University of Pisa in 2017. He was a visiting MSc student at the School for Business and Society, University of York, from September 2016 to April 2017, and at the Department of Management and Production Engineering, Politecnico di Torino, in May 2017. After completing his MSc, he worked as a pre-doctoral research fellow at the Department of Sciences and Methods for Engineering, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, from 2018 to 2020. He earned his PhD in General Management from the Department of Management at the University of Bologna in 2025. As part of his PhD program, he was a visiting PhD student at the House of Innovation, Stockholm School of Economics, from January to June 2024.

Since 2018, he has been actively involved in the design and implementation of open innovation initiatives aimed at training students and managers to develop innovative ideas and address business and societal challenges. In this capacity, he collaborates with the Open Innovation Unit of Almacube, the incubator, accelerator, and innovation hub of the University of Bologna and Confindustria Emilia.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Innovation Management
New Product Development
Design Thinking
Open Innovation

EDUCATION

Nov 2020 – Jun 2025	University of Bologna Department of Management Ph.D. in General Management (Excellent/Excellent) Dissertation: “ <i>Managing New Product Development processes in uncertain business environments</i> ” Advisors: Paola Giuri (main supervisor), Matteo Vignoli, Clio Dosi
Sep 2014 – Oct 2017	University of Pisa DESTEC Master of Science in Management Engineering (110/110) Dissertation: “ <i>Organizational Ambidexterity: Balancing exploration and exploitation in production and product development. An international survey</i> ” (30/30) Advisors: Antonella Martini (main supervisor), Beatrice D’Ippolito, Paolo Neirotti
Sep 2010 – Sep 2014	University of Pisa DESTEC Bachelor of Science in Management Engineering (109/110) Bachelor thesis on Turbogas (29/30)
Sep 2005 – Jul 2010	Technical Institute Paolo Belmessengeri, Pontremoli, Italy Diploma in accountancy and programming (100/100 cum laude)

RESEARCH

Nov 2024 – Present	University of Bologna Department of Management Post-doctoral research fellow Research on NPD processes in uncertain business environments (Tutor: Clio Dosi)
Jan 2024 – Jun 2024	Stockholm School of Economics House of Innovation Visiting PhD student Research on NPD processes in uncertain business environments (Tutor: Mattia Bianchi)
Nov 2018 – Oct 2020	University of Modena and Reggio Emilia DISMI Pre-doctoral research fellow - Apr 2020 – Oct 2020: Research on design thinking and NPD strategies (Tutor: Fabiola Bertolotti) - Nov 2018 – Oct 2019: Research on design thinking in the food industry (Tutor: Matteo Vignoli)
May 2017	Politecnico di Torino DIGEP Visiting MSc student Research on organizational ambidexterity (Tutor: Paolo Neirotti)
Sep 2016 – Apr 2017	University of York School for Business and Society Visiting MSc student Research on organizational ambidexterity (Tutor: Beatrice D’Ippolito)

TEACHING

2025 – Present	Lecturer at University of Bologna Department of Management Course: Fundamentals of project management and design thinking. Taught in the second-cycle degree program in innovation and organization of culture and the arts. Led the design thinking module, where MSc students tackled a challenge presented by a partner organization and developed solution concepts using design thinking. • Project work with Life-Centered Design School (2025)
2022 – Present	Lecturer at Bologna Business School Courses: Innovation Management. • Executive MBA, “<i>Hybrid MBA International IV ed.</i>” (Jun 2025) • Executive MBA, “<i>Hybrid MBA International III ed.</i>” (Jun–Jul 2024) • Executive MBA, “<i>Hybrid MBA International II ed.</i>” (Apr–May 2023) • Executive MBA, “<i>Hybrid MBA International I ed.</i>” (Jun 2022) • Executive custom program, “<i>Dana embracing business evolution II</i>” (Sep–Dec 2023) • Executive custom program, “<i>Dana embracing business evolution I</i>” (Sep–Nov 2022) • Global MBA, “<i>Ferrari gMBA II</i>” (Apr–May 2023) • Global MBA, “<i>Ferrari gMBA I</i>” (Feb–Apr 2022)
2019 – Present	Teaching Assistant at University of Bologna Department of Industrial Engineering Course: Technology entrepreneurship. Taught in the second-cycle degree program in Management Engineering. Led the design thinking lab, where MSc students tackled innovation challenges presented by a partner firm and developed solution concepts using design thinking. • Project work with Hera Group (Sep 2024 – Aug 2025) • Project work with Bonfiglioli (Sep 2022 – Aug 2023) • Project work with Poggipolini (Sep 2021 – Aug 2022) • Project work with Sitbrush–Società Italiana Tecnospazzole (Sep 2020 – Aug 2021) • Project work with Rekeep (Sep 2019 – Aug 2020)
2020	Teaching Assistant at Bologna Business School Course: Innovation Management • Executive MBA, “<i>Public Management and Innovation II ed.</i>” (May–Jun 2020)

THIRD MISSION

2018 – Present	Almacube Open Innovation Unit Innovation coach Coaching activities to support the open innovation programs, mentorship activities to complement the training of students and professionals, and research activities to support the design and development of new programs
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INNOVATION PROJECTS

May 2020 – Present	University of Bologna Department of Management Competitive research projects • Open Facility Management Impact Funded by Bi-Rex and developed in partnership with CNS (project coordinator) Contribution: Platform design (May 2025 – August 2025) • Ippodamo Funded by Bi-Rex and developed in partnership with Rekeep (project coordinator) Contribution: Platform design (May 2020 – Dec 2021) • eOFM: Evolving Open Facility Management Funded by Bi-Rex and developed in partnership with CNS (project coordinator) Contribution: Contributed to writing the project (Nov 2020)
2020 – Present	Almacube Open Innovation Unit Open innovation projects • Tech to Market entrepreneurship bootcamp (Sep 2024; Dec 2024) • BeLeaf 2023 (Nov 2023 – May 2024) • Una Futura design sprint (Jun–July 2021) • Una.Ten design hackathon (Apr–May 2020) • Oper.Ten design hackathon (Mar 2020)
Nov 2017 – Oct 2018	University of Modena and Reggio Emilia DISMI New Product/Service Development projects • New product development consultancy project for Barilla S.p.A. Development of a new bakery product concept • Service design consultancy project for Interporto Bologna S.p.A. Redesign of the facility management services • Service design consultancy project for Coopservice S.Coop.P.A. Redesign of the train cleaning services

VOLUNTEERING INNOVATION PROJECTS

Dec 2019	Legambiente Modena Organizer of the Legambiente sustainability jam Workshop to design sustainable festivals for Legambiente Modena
Mar 2019	Global Service Jam Network Organizer of the Bologna service jam 2019 Workshop to prototype services inspired by a secret global theme
Jan 2019 – Feb 2020	Service design drinks Bologna Organizer of the Service design drinking bologna meetings. Open meetings to connect people interested in innovation topics

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Nov 2020 – Nov 2023	University of Bologna Department of Management Member of the State Exam Commission in Management Engineering • 2023: Jul & Nov • 2022: Jul & Nov • 2021: Jun & Nov • 2020: Nov
Dec 2021 – Present	University of Bologna Department of Management Support for the organization of bachelor's and master's theses • 2025: Feb, Mar, Jul • 2024: Feb, Mar, Jul, Oct, Dec • 2023: Feb, Mar, May, Jul, Sep, Oct, Dec • 2022: Feb, Mar, May, Jul, Oct, Dec • 2021: Dec
Mar 2021 – Present	University of Bologna Department of Management Co-Supervisor for master's theses • Mattia Campanini (2023): <i>“Progettazione del ruolo di un intermediario di innovazione. Il caso di Oper.Lab”</i> • Letizia Venturini (2022): <i>“Progettazione di un kit di supporto ai corsi Project Based Learning: il ruolo del tutor nel modello Tech to Market”</i> • Luigi Ferramosca (2021): <i>“Progettare il valore della tecnologia nello sviluppo di piattaforme digitali: il caso Ippodamo”</i>
Apr 2020 – Dec 2021	University of Modena and Reggio Emilia DISMI Co-Supervisor for master's and bachelor's theses • Luca Tognazzi (2021): <i>“Creazione di un Business Model per una piattaforma digitale per Smart Cities”</i> • Giuseppe Dargenio (2021): <i>“Il need-finding a distanza nel design thinking: esperienze a confronto”</i> • Beatrice Vittoria (2021): <i>“Analisi dei Big Data nelle Smart City: Il caso Ippodamo”</i> • Elisabetta Ferrari (2020): <i>“Analisi e confronto di processi di NPD”</i>
Sep 2023	Italian Association of Management Engineering (AiIG) Support for the organization of the summer school <i>“Striving for research quality”</i> held in Bologna
Nov 2020 – Present	Reviewer Journal of Product Innovation Management, The Journal of Technology Transfer, CERN IdeaSquare Journal of Experimental Innovation

CONFERENCES

Annual Scientific Meeting (RSA AiIG)

- Feb 2026 [Legacy and horizons: bridging time and complexity in management](#), Udine - *planned*
- Oct 2024 [How AI is changing Economic Systems, Organizations, and Society](#), Palermo
- Oct 2023 [Humanizing technologies for a better society](#), Lecco
- Oct 2022 [Redesigning networks and supply chains in times of transition](#), Roma
- Oct 2019 [The challenges ahead: work, tech. change and organizations of the future](#), Torino

R&D Management Conference

- Jul 2025 [Innovation & Biodiversity](#), Pisa (Italy)
- Jun 2024 [Transforming industries through technology](#), Stockholm (Sweden)
- Jun 2023 [Responsible and responsive innovation for a better future](#), Seville (Spain)
- Jun 2022 [Innovation for people and territories](#), Trento (Italy)

Journal of Product Innovation Management research forum

- Sep 2025 [2025 JPIM research forum](#), Chicago (US) - *planned*
- Nov 2019 [Competitive edge: disruption by design](#), Orlando (US)

International Conference on Engineering Design (ICED)

- Jul 2023 [Design in a complex world](#), Bordeaux (France)
- Aug 2021 [Design in motion](#), Göteborg (Sweden)

Academy Of Management Conference

- Jul 2025 [Academy of Management's 85th Annual Meeting](#), Copenhagen (Denmark)

Design Factory Global Network Research Conference (DFGN.R)

- Oct 2023 [Designing for Multiplicity](#), Ankara (Turkey)

World Open Innovation Conference (WOIC)

- Dec 2020 [Leading the recovery: turning threats into opportunities with OI](#), online

Research-Technology Management (RTM) Lunch & Learn Discussion

- Aug-Sep 21 Invited talk. Presentation of the paper "*The Hybrid Model Matrix. Enhancing Stage Gate with Design Thinking, Lean Startup, and Agile*"

SUMMER SCHOOLS

AiIG PhD Summer School

Sep 2023 [Striving for research quality](#), Bologna (Italy)

Sep 2021 [Pathways to research impact](#), Bari (Italy)

R&D Management Conference

Jun 2024 [Doctoral Colloquium](#), Stockholm (Sweden)

Jun 2023 [Doctoral Colloquium](#), Seville (Spain)

EURAM Early Career Colloquium

Mar 2025 [Collective growth in academia: Unlocking networks and research opportunities](#), Bologna

International Conference on Engineering Design (ICED)

Aug 2021 [International PhD forum](#), Göteborg (Sweden)

Business Engineering for data science Summer School

Jun 2024 [Text Mining for Innovation Management](#), Stockholm (Sweden)

PUBLICATIONS

Scientific articles

- [5] Cocchi, N., Dosi, C., and Vignoli, M. (2024). Stage-Gate hybridization beyond Agile. Conceptual review, synthesis, and research agenda. *IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management*, 71, 6435–6453. <https://doi.org/10.1109/TEM.2023.3282269>
- [4] Cocchi, N., Dosi, C., and Vignoli, M. (2023). Tech to Organization. Assessing and designing technology adoption with design thinking. *CERN IdeaSquare Journal of Experimental Innovation*, 7 (3), 20–31. <https://doi.org/10.23726/cij.2023.1478>
- [3] Cocchi, N. (2023). Motivating students to attend open innovation initiatives. A motivational structure perspective. *CERN IdeaSquare Journal of Experimental Innovation*, 7 (2), 33–50. <https://doi.org/10.23726/cij.2023.1451>
- [2] Cocchi, N., Dosi, C., and Vignoli, M. (2021). The Hybrid Model Matrix. Enhancing Stage Gate with Design Thinking, Lean Startup, and Agile. *Research-Technology Management*, 64 (5): 18–30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08956308.2021.1942645>
- [1] Mincolessi, G., Cocchi, N., Dosi, C., and Vignoli, M. (2020). “OPER.TEN” Transform Emergency Now! – facing Covid-19 with Open Innovation and Human Centered Design. *Strategic Design Research Journal*, 13 (3): 658–668. <https://doi.org/10.4013/sdrj.2020.133.28>

Contributions to conference proceedings

- [4] Cocchi, N., Dosi, C., and Vignoli, M. (2025). Agile in NPD Manufacturing. The Decreasing Returns of NPD Agility on Product Innovation Performance. In *Academy of Management Proceedings* (Vol. 2025, No. 1, p. 23819). Valhalla, NY 10595: Academy of Management. <https://journals.aom.org/doi/abs/10.5465/AMPROC.2025.23819abstract>
- [3] Cocchi, N., Dosi, C., Marzi, G., and Vignoli, M. (2024). On NPD processes–projects fit. Design principles and framework for building a decision-making tool through sensemaking. In *XXXV 2024 AiIG Scientific Meeting–Associazione italiana di Ingegneria Gestionale* (pp. 1–48). <https://iris.imtlucca.it/handle/20.500.11771/29918>
- [2] Cocchi, N., Dosi, C., and Vignoli, M. (2023). Tech to Market. Finding and designing suitable technology applications with design thinking. *Proceedings of the International Conference on Engineering Design (ICED23)*, Bordeaux, France, 24–28 July 2023, 3: 3315–3324. <https://doi.org/10.1017/pds.2023.332>
- [1] Dosi, C., Cocchi, N., and Vignoli, M. (2021). TEN Transform Emergency Now! – Facing COVID 19 with Open and Frugal Innovation. *Proceedings of the International Conference on Engineering Design (ICED21)*, Gothenburg, Sweden, 16–20 August 2021, 1: 2971–2980. <https://doi.org/10.1017/pds.2021.558>

Extended abstracts

- [1] Vignoli, M., Cocchi, N., and Dosi, C. (2023). Tech to Organization. Assessing and designing technology adoption with design thinking. *Proceedings of the Design Factory Global Network Research Conference (DFGN.R 2023)*, Ankara, Turkey, 5–6 October 2023, 1: 110–113. <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-64-9638-2>

★ Reviewers’ Favourite Award ★

PUBLICATIONS

Teaching cases

- [1] Barbini, F.M., Cocchi, N., and Giuri, P. (2022). Stage-Gate or Agile? Addressing new product development dilemmas at SCM group. The Case Centre - ECCH, [Case study](#) (no. 322-0057-1) and [Teaching note](#) (no. 322-0057-8)

Informative articles

- [1] Barbini, F.M., Cocchi, N., and Giuri, P. (2023). SCM, rethinking innovation beyond crisis and successes. Online practice-oriented articles BBS, [Bologna Business School's official website](#)