DANIELA CONTI

SHORT ACADEMIC CURRICULUM VITAE

Condensed Version

CURRENT POSITION AND ACADEMIC PROFILE

Associate Professor of General Psychology (PSIC-01/A)
Department of Humanities, University of Catania, Italy
November 2024 – Present

Italian National Scientific Qualification (ASN) for Full Professor in General Psychology, Neuropsychology and Cognitive Neuroscience, and Psychometrics (11/PSIC-01), awarded in 2021.

Daniela Conti is Associate Professor of General Psychology at the University of Catania. Her research lies at the intersection of **general and experimental psychology, cognitive psychology, Human–Robot Interaction (HRI), social and assistive robotics, and Human–AI interaction**. Her main research interests include **trust in artificial intelligence and robotic systems, automation bias, decision-making, individual differences, cognitive and developmental robotics, and the psychological implications of intelligent technologies** in clinical, healthcare and educational settings.

Her research combines psychological and psychometric approaches with emerging technologies to investigate human cognition and behaviour in interactions with artificial and embodied agents.

EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

2012–2016 – International PhD in Neuroscience
University of Catania, Department of Biomedical and Biotechnological Sciences, Italy.
Thesis: *Robotics and Intellectual Disabilities: Models and Treatment*.
Supervisors: Prof. E. Commodari and Prof. S. Di Nuovo (Italy); Prof. A. Cangelosi (UK).

2008–2010 – MSc in Psychology
University of Catania, Italy.
Final grade: 110/110 cum laude.

2005–2008 – Degree in Psychological Sciences and Techniques
University of Catania, Italy.
Final grade: 110/110 cum laude.

2003–2004 – Degree in Psychiatric Rehabilitation Techniques
University of Messina, Italy. Professional qualifying degree.
Final grade: 110/110 cum laude.

1999–2002 – University Diploma in Psychiatric and Psychosocial Education and Rehabilitation Techniques

University of Catania, Italy. Professional qualifying diploma.
Final grade: 110/110 cum laude.

Professional Qualifications

- Registered Psychologist, Section A, Order of Psychologists of the Sicily Region (No. 6007/A), since 2011.
- Registered in the National Register of Court-Appointed Technical Consultants (CTU), Court of Catania, Psychology – Minors Area, since 2026.

ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH APPOINTMENTS

2024–Present – Associate Professor of General Psychology (PSIC-01/A)
Department of Humanities, University of Catania, Italy.

2021–2024 – Fixed-Term Researcher (RTD-B), General Psychology
Department of Humanities, University of Catania, Italy.

2020–2023 – Senior Researcher
Oasi Maria Santissima IRCCS, Troina, Italy.
Research focused on the efficacy of robot-assisted interventions for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

2019–2021 – Senior Research Fellow
Sheffield Hallam University, UK.
Research activities included *Robot Enhanced Therapy for Children with Special Needs* and *Cognitive Assessment through Human–Robot Interaction*, in collaboration with Sheffield Children's Hospital, the University of Sheffield and IBM Hursley Labs.

2017–2019 – Marie Skłodowska-Curie Research Fellow
Sheffield Hallam University, UK.
Horizon 2020 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowship – CARER-AID.

2014–2015 – Visiting Scholar
Centre for Robotics and Neural Systems, University of Plymouth, UK.
Research on cognitive robotics, acceptance of robotic technologies, and robot-assisted interventions for autism and intellectual disabilities.

MAJOR RESEARCH PROJECTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Principal Investigator – BENTEC (2024–2026)
Children and Chronic Conditions: New Technologies Supporting Diagnosis, Monitoring and Rehabilitation.
Interdepartmental research project funded by the University of Catania Research Incentive Plan (Pia.ce.ri. 2024–2026).

Principal Investigator – START to Aid (2022–2024)
Support To Autistic Children with Robot Technology to Aid.
Starting Grant funded by the University of Catania.

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowship – CARER-AID (2017–2019)
Controlled Autonomous Robot for Early Detection and Rehabilitation of Autism and Intellectual Disability.
Horizon 2020, Grant Agreement No. 703489, Sheffield Hallam University, UK.

INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC EVALUATION AND RESEARCH LEADERSHIP

Expert Evaluator and Rapporteur – European Commission (2020–Present)
Evaluation activities for the **Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)** under Horizon Europe, including Life Sciences and Social Sciences & Humanities panels.

Expert evaluator for the **Erasmus+ Sport Programme**, including evaluation activities for calls from 2022 to 2026.

Vice-Coordinator, Group of Evaluation Experts (GEV), Area 11b – Psychological Sciences (2024–2026)
Italian National Agency for the Evaluation of Universities and Research Institutes (**ANVUR**), VQR 2020–2024.

ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP, SERVICE AND SUPERVISION

2026–Present – Coordinator of Soft Skills Training Activities, PhD Programme in Interpretation Sciences, Department of Humanities, University of Catania.

2026–Present – Full Member of the Examination Committee for the First Session of the State Examination for Professional Qualification as a Psychologist – Section B, University of Catania.

2023–Present – Member of the Departmental Quality Committee, Department of Humanities, University of Catania.

2022–Present – Student Ombudsperson, Department of Humanities, University of Catania.

2022–Present – Member of the PhD Board in Interpretation Sciences, University of Catania.

PhD Supervisor, PhD Programme in Interpretation Sciences, University of Catania.

Member of Doctoral Final Examination Committees and Doctoral Thesis Evaluator, including activities for the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan.

EDITORIAL AND SCIENTIFIC ACTIVITIES

Guest Editor – Discover Artificial Intelligence (Springer Nature), 2025–Present
Collection: *Automation Bias and Cognitive Implications of Human–AI Collaboration in High-Stakes Contexts.*

Guest Editor – Complex & Intelligent Systems (Springer Nature), 2024–2025
Collection: *Exploring Embodied Robotics: Bridging Physical and Cognitive Systems*.

Guest Editor – Applied Sciences, 2023–2025
Special Issue: *Recent Advances in Human-Robot Interactions*.

Editorial Board Member – Interaction Studies, 2021–Present

Associate Editor – Frontiers in Psychology, 2020–2021

Reviewer for international journals including *IEEE Transactions on Affective Computing, Asian Journal of Psychiatry, Advanced Robotics, Interaction Studies, Applied Sciences, Brain Sciences, Heliyon,* and *IEEE Transactions on Cognitive and Developmental Systems*.

SELECTED TEACHING ACTIVITIES

Teaching activities at the University of Catania cover **General Psychology, Developmental Psychology and Assistive Robotics** across undergraduate, graduate, medical, healthcare and postgraduate programmes.

Selected current and recent courses include:

- **General Psychology with Laboratory**, Degree Programme in Philosophy.
- **Developmental Psychology with Laboratory**, Degree Programme in Philosophy.
- **General Psychology**, Degree Programme in Medicine and Surgery.
- **General Psychology**, Healthcare Profession Degree Programmes.
- **Assistive Robotics Across the Lifespan**, Postgraduate School in Clinical Psychology.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

1. **Conti, D.**, Bertacchini, F., & Soranzo, A. (2026). Exploring individual differences in visuo-tactile preferences: bottom-up vs predefined categories. *Art & Perception*, 1–29. https://doi.org/10.1163/22134913-bja10076

2. Cirasa, C., Sapienza, A., Cantucci, F., **Conti, D.**, & Falcone, R. (2026). Trust and accent: How speaker accent influences interaction with humanoid robots. *Applied Sciences, 16*(9), 4342. https://doi.org/10.3390/app16094342

3. De Pasquale, C., Pistorio, M. L., Høgsdal, H., Cirasa, C., & **Conti, D.** (2026). Using Human-Robot Interaction to assess emotion recognition in dialysis patients: A preliminary study. *Asian Journal of Psychiatry*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajp.2026.104878

4. Romeo, G., **Conti, D.**, & Di Nuovo, S. F. (2026). From Social Robotics to ecological cognitive care: An enaction-based umbrella review on Neurocognitive Disorders. *Healthcare, 14*(1), 66. https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare14010066

5. Romeo, G., & **Conti, D.** (2026). Exploring Automation Bias in Human-AI Collaboration: A Review and Implications for Explainable AI. *AI & Society, 41*, 259–278. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00146-025-02422-7

6. Tisza, G., et al., **Conti, D.**, et al. (2025). Generative AI-Powered Social Robots in Education: Opportunities and Challenges from a Delphi Study. *Behaviour & Information Technology*. https://doi.org/10.1080/0144929X.2025.2604060

7. Cirasa, C., & **Conti, D.** (2025). Mapping trust and cultural dimensions in Human-Robot Interaction: A scoping review approach. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports, 19*, 100763. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chbr.2025.100763

8. Ercolano, G., Rossi, S., **Conti, D.**, & Di Nuovo, A. (2024). Gesture recognition with a 2D low-resolution embedded camera to minimise intrusion in robot-led training of children with autism spectrum disorder. *Applied Intelligence*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10489-024-05477-z

9. Cirasa, C., Høgsdal, H., & **Conti, D.** (2024). "I See What You Feel": An exploratory study to investigate the understanding of robot emotions in deaf children. *Applied Sciences, 14*, 1446. https://doi.org/10.3390/app14041446

10. **Conti, D.**, Trubia, G., Buono, S., Di Nuovo, S., & Di Nuovo, A. (2021). An empirical study on integrating a small humanoid robot to support the therapy of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Intellectual Disability. *Interaction Studies, 22*(2), 177–211. https://doi.org/10.1075/is.21011.con

11. **Conti, D.**, Cirasa, C., Di Nuovo, S., & Di Nuovo, A. (2020). "Robot, tell me a tale!": A social robot as tool for teachers in kindergarten. *Interaction Studies, 21*(2), 220–242. https://doi.org/10.1075/is.18024.con

12. **Conti, D.**, Di Nuovo, S., Buono, S., & Di Nuovo, A. (2017). Robots in education and care of children with developmental disabilities: A study on acceptance by experienced and future professionals. *International Journal of Social Robotics, 9*(1), 51–62. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12369-016-0359-6

SELECTED BOOK CHAPTERS

Conti, D., Romeo, G., & Di Nuovo, S. F. (2026). Generative artificial intelligence in higher education: Opportunities, risks, and the future of critical thinking and human reasoning. In *Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education*. De Gruyter.

Conti, D., Cirasa, C., Høgsdal, H., & Di Nuovo, S. F. (2025). The use of social robots in educational settings: Acceptance and usability. In *Social Robots in Education*. Springer.

Cangelosi, A., & **Conti, D.** (2024). Dai Bambini ai Robot: Modelli di Robotica dello Sviluppo. Il Mulino.

SCIENTIFIC MEMBERSHIPS

Member of national and international scientific associations and research networks, including:

Italian Association of Psychology (AIP); American Psychological Association (APA); EUCognition; Italian Network of Psychological Associations (INPA/EFPA); Marie Curie Alumni Association (MCAA); NewHums – Neurohumanities Studies, University of Catania.

Condensed Version – Full Curriculum Vitae available upon request.

Catania, 28.8.26

Daniela Conti