

Curriculum Vitae

INFORMAZIONI PERSONALI

Nome RITA
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FORMAZIONE TITOLI

CURRENT POSITION

02/03/2026 - to date. Associate Professor (BIOS-03/B - Anthropology), Department of Biological, Chemical and Pharmaceutical Sciences and Technologies (STEBICEF), University of Palermo, Italy.

PREVIOUS POSITIONS

- 28/02/2026- 01/03/2023. **Fixed-term Researcher** (RTDa) pursuant to Article 24, paragraph 3(a), Italian Law no. 240/2010, SC 05/B1 – Zoology and Anthropology, SSD BIO/08 – Anthropology, at the Department of Biological, Geological and Environmental Sciences – University of Bologna, Italy. Funded by the Italian National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR) – PE5 CHANGES Project: “Cultural Heritage Active Innovation for Next-Gen Sustainable Society”.
- Academic Year 2021–2022. **Adjunct Professor** and member of the examination committee for the course: “Anthropometry and Ergonomics (Module 2)”, SC 05/B1 – Zoology and Anthropology, SSD BIO/08 – Anthropology, within the Bachelor's Degree in Exercise and Sport sciences, Rimini Campus, University of Bologna, Italy.
- 30/11/2022 - 01/12/2018. **Postdoctoral Research Fellow** (SC 05/B1 – Zoology and Anthropology, SSD BIO/08 – Anthropology) at the Department of Biological, Geological and Environmental Sciences – University of Bologna, Italy. Research project: Evolution of bipedalism and study of morphological variability of the navicular bone in extant hominids (H. sapiens, Pan, Gorilla and Pongo). Supervisor: Prof. Maria Giovanna Belcastro; Co-supervisors: Prof. Stefano Benazzi and Prof. Damiano Marchi.
- 15/01/2018 – 16/04/2018. **Visiting Scholar** at the Department of Anthropology, Pennsylvania State University (USA), under the supervision of Prof. Timothy M. Ryan. Project: Exploring internal and external morphological changes in modern human and Neandertal tali. Funded through the Marco Polo 2017 mobility programme, University of Bologna.

EDUCATION

- 15/03/2019 - **PhD in Earth, Life and Environmental Sciences**, (Biology, BIO/08 - Anthropology), Department of Biological, Geological and Environmental Sciences (BiGeA), University of Bologna, Italy. Thesis title: Exploring morphological variation in hominid talar bones using geometric morphometric approaches. Tutor: Prof.ssa Maria Giovanna Belcastro - Co-Tutor: Prof. Stefano Benazzi.
- 16/03/2015 - **M.Sc. Archaeology** (LM-2) in 'Ricerca, Documentazione e Tutela dei Beni Archeologici' (110 cum laude), Alma Mater Studiorum Università di Bologna (BIO/08). Thesis title: Studio della biodistanza e dei pattern funerari all'interno della necropoli di IV-III secolo a.C. di Monterenzio Vecchio (BO). Tutor: Prof. Stefano Benazzi.
- 18/11/2011 - **B.Sc. Cultural Heritage** (L-1) in 'Beni Culturali' (110 cum laude), Alma Mater Studiorum Università di Bologna (BIO/08). Thesis title: Testimonianze archeoantropologiche dell'età del Bronzo in Sicilia: studio dei resti umani di Corvo - Partanna (TP). Tutor: Prof. Giorgio Gruppioni.

ATTIVITA' DIDATTICA

TEACHING

Teaching duties at the University of Bologna (Unibo) since 2021:

- 2025–2026. Human Osteology and Virtual Anthropology Laboratory, 60 hours. M.Sc. in Biodiversity and Evolution.
- 2024–2025 and 2023–2024. Paleobiology and Forensic Osteology Laboratory, 60 hours. M.Sc. in Biodiversity and Evolution.
- 2023–2024. Paleoanthropology (Module 2), 8 hours. B.Sc. in Natural Sciences.
- 2021–2022. Anthropometry and Ergonomics (Module 2), 47 hours. B.Sc. in Exercise and Sport sciences.
- 17-19/06/2019 - Lecture e Practical session in the Summer School “MORPHOSTATS-3D: Geometric Morphometric Methods for the analysis of shape and form variables”, Dipartimento di Beni Culturali, Ravenna – Unibo.
- 21-25/05/2018 - Lecture e Practical session in the Summer School “MORPHOSTATS-3D: Geometric Morphometric Methods for the analysis of shape and form variables”, Dipartimento di Beni Culturali, Ravenna – Unibo.
- 15-22/05/2017 - Tutor in Biodeterioration and Degradation of Bioarchaeological Materials- 67147, Master in Science for the Conservation - Restoration of Cultural Heritage, Department of Chemistry 'Giacomo Ciamician' University of Bologna, Italy.
- 9-31/05/2016 - Tutor in Biodeterioration and Degradation of Bioarchaeological Materials- 67147, Master in Science for the Conservation - Restoration of Cultural Heritage, Department of Chemistry 'Giacomo Ciamician' University of Bologna, Italy.

LECTURES

- 2026, 2025 and 2024. Contract Lecture: "Virtual Anthropology", "Digital acquisition techniques for skeletal remains", Master in Forensic Skeletal Anthropology and Palaeopathology. Joint degree: University of Bologna, University of Pisa and University of Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca MUR - BANDO 2026 Milan.
- 30/05/2025. Invited Lecture: "Morphological and morphometric approaches to the study of human skeletal remains: from past to present", AMARCH2025 Summer School. University of Trento.
- 14/10/2016 - Invited Lecture "Anthropological application of Geometric Morphometric methods (GMM)", in Bioarchaeology, Paleopathology and Forensic Anthropology, University of Bologna, Italy.

SUPERVISION OF GRADUATE STUDENTS AND POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS

- Ongoing – Nov. 2024 Co-supervision of Davide Mameli. PhD in Earth, Life and Environmental Sciences, Unibo.
- Apr. 2026 – Nov. 2022 Co-supervision of Teresa Nicolosi. PhD in Cultural and Environmental Heritage, Unibo. Department of Cultural Heritage.
- Apr. 2026 – Nov. 2022 Co-supervision of Erica Piccirilli. PhD in Cultural and Environmental Heritage, Unibo. Now post-doc Unibo.
- 2017 – to date. Supervision of 1M.Sc., co-supervisions of 15 M.Sc. and 5 B.Sc. students.

RICERCHE FINANZIATE

PARTICIPATION AT NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH TEAMS

- 2023 - **Team Member** of Ulysses500: The Rebirth and the Game of the Wonders of the World – Third Mission Project (2023 Call, 12 months), University of Bologna. Co-coordinator of the activity "But how hard it is to stand upright!" targeting younger audiences. PI: Prof. Fausto Tinti (BIO/05).
- 2021 – 2022 - **Team Member** of "A real-time biomechanical study of Neanderthal anterior dentition" funded by the Australian Research Council (PROJECT ID: DP190100465). P.I. Luca Fiorenza.
- 2017 - 2021 - **Collaborator** of "The earliest migration of *Homo sapiens* in southern Europe: understanding the biocultural processes that define our uniqueness" funded by the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement n. 724046 - SUCCESS). P.I. Stefano Benazzi.
- 2017 - **Team Member** of "BIRTH (Burial/Infant/Ritual Theme)" funded by ALMA IDEA Grant Senior. P.I. Elisabetta Govi.

INCARICHI / CONSULENZE

CONSULTANCY

- Feb. 2025 – Technical consultancy activities for the Carabinieri Command for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, Bologna Unit, to examine some skeletal remains discovered during excavations commissioned by the Municipality of Forlì.
- 03/07/2019 - 09/05/2012 –Founding Member of the cultural association "Archeo Team", based in Palermo, covering the fields of anthropology, archaeology, natural sciences, and environmental studies.
- Nov 2011 – Responsible for the anthropological study of certain relics, to be contextualized within the Master's thesis in Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Heritage by Dr. B. Figuccio, titled "A Lipsanoteca in Trapani". The anthropological consultancy was assigned to me by the University of Palermo, represented by Prof. Maurizio Vitella.

POSITION RESPONSABILITY AND ADMINISTRATIVE ROLE

- 2024 - Alternate member of the examination committee for the PhD programme in Earth, Life and Environmental Sciences (STVA), 40th Cycle, Department of Biological, Geological and Environmental Sciences, University of Bologna.
- 2024 – Member of the evaluation committee for tutoring grants for the Bachelor's Degree in Natural Sciences for the academic year 2024–25, Department of Biological, Geological and Environmental Sciences, University of Bologna.
- 2023 – Member of the evaluation committee for the awarding of a research fellowship titled "Analysis and study of human remains from prehistoric contexts in South America", funded by PRIN 2022 "HABITS – Life-histories of prehistoric human groups in South America: a tale on environmental adaptations and subsistence economies", Department of Cultural Heritage, University of Bologna.
- 26/04/2015 – 01/04/2014 – Responsible for the anthropological study and museum exposition of osteological remains from the necropolis of Monterenzio Vecchio (Bologna, 4th and 3rd century BC) at Archaeological Museum "Luigi Fantini" of Monterenzio (Bologna, Italy).

ASSOCIAZIONI SCIENTIFICHE

Since 2024. Member EAA - European Anthropological Association.

Since 2020. Member AAI - Associazione Antropologica Italiana.

Since 2018. Member ESHE - European Society for the study of Human Evolution.

PUBBLICAZIONE

PUBLICATIONS

SCOPUS: <https://www.scopus.com/authid/detail.uri?authorId=57158897800>

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6529-7250>

EDITORIAL ACTIVITY

2022–2024 – Guest Editor for the Research Topic “Human Upright Walking from Past to Present” in the Quaternary Science, Geomorphology and Paleoenvironment section of the journal *Frontiers in Earth Science*, and in the Behavioral and Evolutionary Ecology and Paleontology sections of the journal *Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution*. <https://www.frontiersin.org/research-topics/48583/human-upright-walking-from-past-to-present>

Since 2017 – Reviewer for the following scientific journals: *Scientific Reports*, *PLOS ONE*, *International Journal of Osteoarchaeology*, *Clinical Anatomy*, *Anatomical Science International*, *Journal of Anatomy*, *The Anatomical Record*, *American Journal of Biological Anthropology*, and *Biology*. Most of these reviews are certified by Web of Science (21 verified peer reviews): <https://www.webofscience.com/wos/author/record/1613237>

ATTIVITA' SCIENTIFICHE

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

- 19/12/2023 – National Scientific Qualification (ASN, art.16 della legge del 30 Dicembre 2010, n.240) for Associate Professor, awarded by the Italian Ministry of University and Research. Competitive sector 05/B1 – Zoology and Anthropology.
- 2024 – Best Oral Presentation Award for “Virtual Anthropology as Cultural and Research Resource: The Digitalization and Ethical Management of the Documented Human Osteological Collections (DHOCs) of the University of Bologna”, by Sorrentino et al., 23rd European Anthropological Association Congress (€500).
- 2023 – Merit Recognition awarded by the Accademia delle Scienze (Bologna) for participation in the Top Ten 2023 project, class of Physical Sciences.
- 2019 – Best Poster Award for “Dental enamel proteins reveal the sex of the ‘Lovers of Modena’”, by Lugli et al., 23rd Congress of the Italian Anthropological Association (€300).
- 2018 – Research Mobility Grant – Marco Polo Programme 2017 (CALL 2), University of Bologna (€4,050).

AMBITI DI RICERCA

Paleoanthropology; Biological Anthropology; Archaeology; Virtual Anthropology; Evolution of bipedalism; Human skeletal variability and adaptation; Sicilian Prehistory; Geometric Morphometrics.

ALTRE ATTIVITA

INTERVIEWS FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

- 2024 - **Ulysses500**: The Renaissance and the Game of Wonders of the World - Project within the framework of the Third Mission Call 2023 (12 months). In this project, my role is to narrate to Ulysses500 new scientific discoveries obtained from the activity titled "How Hard It Is to Stand Up!" and from modern technologies, adapting them into stories for the game and into content and language suitable for social media, especially for younger audiences. Lead Department: Department of Biological, Geological, and Environmental Sciences, Alma Mater Studiorum – University of Bologna. Project Lead: Prof. Fausto Tinti.
- 2023 - **Unibo Magazine** - "Get off on the right foot: shedding light on the complex evolution of our “support structures” as bipedal creatures." Journal reference: Sorrentino et al. 2023, *Communications Biology*, DOI: 10.1038/s42003-023-05431-8. <https://magazine.unibo.it/archivio/2023/get-off-on-the-right-foot-shedding-light-on-the-complex-evolution-of-our-201csupport-structures201d-as-bipedal-creatures>
- 2023 - **UNIPINEWS** - "Get off on the right foot: shedding light on the complex evolution of our “support structures” as bipedal creatures" Journal reference: Sorrentino et al. 2023, *Communications Biology*, DOI: 10.1038/s42003-023-05431-8. <https://www.unipi.it/index.php/news/item/26947-con-il-piede-giusto-nuova-luce-sull-evoluzione-delle-nostre-strutture-di-sostegno-da-bipedi>
- 2022 - **Bolognatoday** - *Studio Unibo: ecco come un dente da latte di 13.000 anni fa ci ha svelato antichi usi*. Journal reference: Lugli et al. 2022, *Scientific Reports*, DOI: 10.1038/s41598-022-12193-6 <https://www.bolognatoday.it/attualita/studio-unibo-cacciatori-dente-latte-Grotte-Pradis.html>
- 2021- **Unibo Magazine** - *Lo strano caso del cranio trovato nella Grotta Marcel Loubens, vicino a Bologna*. Journal reference: Belcastro et al. 2021, *Plos One*, DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0247306 <https://magazine.unibo.it/archivio/2021/03/04/lo-strano-caso-del-cranio-trovato-nella-grotta-marcel-loubens-vicino-a-bologna>
- 2019 - **NewScientist** - *Wearing shoes from a young age makes your ankles less flexible*. Journal reference: Sorrentino et al. 2020, *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*, DOI: 10.1002/ajpa.23976 <https://www.newscientist.com/article/2228116-wearing-shoes-from-a-young-age-makes-your-ankles-less-flexible/>

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS

- 6-18/06/2016 - **Prehistoric archaeological excavation** at the Cave of Uluzzo C (Nardò, Lecce –Italy). Scientific Directors: Dr. E. Spinapolice (Università la Sapienza di Roma), Prof. S. Benazzi and Prof. A. Curci (Università di Bologna).

- Dal 26/08/2017 al 10/09/2017 - **Prehistoric archaeological excavation** at the Cave of Uluzzo C (Nardò, Lecce –Italia). Scientific Directors: Dr. E. Spinapolice (Università la Sapienza di Roma), Prof. S. Benazzi and Prof. A. Curci (Università di Bologna).
- Dal 17/06/2013 al 7/07/2013 - **Archaeological excavation**, topographic survey and study of materials of the Ancient Bronze Age site of Mursia, Pantelleria (Trapani, Italy). Scientific Director: Prof. M. Cattani (Università di Bologna).
- 11-29/06/2012 - **Archaeological excavation**, topographic survey and study of materials of the Ancient Bronze Age site of Mursia, Pantelleria (Trapani, Italy). Scientific Director: Prof. M. Cattani (Università di Bologna).
- 1-14/09/2012 - **Archaeological excavation**, analyzing complex stratigraphy, study of material of the Bronze Age site of Solarolo (Ravenna, Italy). Scientific Director: Prof. M. Cattani (Università di Bologna) and Dott.ssa M. Miari (Sopr. BB. CC. Emilia-Romagna).
- Dal 27/05/2011 al 8/06/2011 - **Underwater archaeological** study and preservation of Late Roman wreck of a ship (relitto Grillo) discovered in Valderice sea (Trapani, Italy). Scientific Directors: Dott. R. la Rocca (Sopr. del Mare di Palermo) and Dott. L. Abelli (Ares Archeologia Ravenna).
- 19-31/07/2010 - **Archaeological excavation** of the proto-historic site of Bunifat- Alcamo (Trapani, Italy). Scientific Directors: Dott.ssa R. Giglio (Sopr. per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali di Trapani) and A. Filippi (Gad Drepanon).