

AVAILABLE POSITIONS

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PROJECT 1 INFO	
Title of the proposed project:	Digital approaches to psychological screening in oncology
Short description of the project	<p>Psychological distress and cognitive burden are highly prevalent among cancer patients and their caregivers, with important consequences for quality of life and engagement with care. However, these aspects are still inconsistently addressed within routine oncology practice, particularly in terms of early identification and timely intervention.</p> <p>This project addresses this gap by focusing on the development of scalable and integrated approaches to mental health screening in cancer settings. In particular, digital technologies offer the opportunity to implement continuous and accessible assessment strategies, while also providing tailored informational and psychological support to individuals at different stages of the disease trajectory.</p> <p>The PhD project will investigate how digital tools can be designed to improve the identification of individuals at risk of psychological and neurocognitive difficulties, and how these tools can support healthcare professionals in delivering more personalized care. It will also explore the integration of screening functions with supportive components, such as psychoeducation and targeted interventions, to enhance coping and reduce distress. The research will combine a review of existing screening approaches with the design and empirical evaluation of innovative digital solutions.</p> <p>The candidate will be expected to adopt an interdisciplinary approach, combining theories and methods from psychology, neuropsychology, and social sciences, and applying them within clinical and health-related research settings through both quantitative and qualitative methodologies.</p>
Main research area for the project	Medical Humanities
3 key words for the project	Decision-making; technologies; cancer care

PROJECT 2 INFO	
Title of the proposed project:	Psychological Wellbeing and Artificial Intelligence across cancer trajectory
Short description of the project	Cancer prevention increasingly depends on the capacity to influence everyday health behaviours, which remain among the

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	<p>most significant determinants of cancer risk. Within this landscape, European policy initiatives have emphasized the need for more effective and scalable approaches to support individuals in adopting and sustaining healthier lifestyles. In this regard, digital technologies—particularly those leveraging artificial intelligence—offer promising opportunities to move beyond standardized solutions by enabling adaptive and personalized interventions.</p> <p>At the same time, a comprehensive understanding of prevention requires explicit consideration of psychological and emotional processes. Factors such as stress, affective states, and cognitive representations of health and illness play a critical role in shaping individuals’ engagement with preventive behaviours and may also interact with underlying biological pathways. This calls for integrative frameworks that bring together behavioural, psychological, and lifestyle dimensions within a unified approach to cancer prevention.</p> <p>The proposed PhD project aims to examine the contribution of psychosocial determinants to cancer risk and prevention, while also investigating how artificial intelligence methods can be leveraged to design dynamically adaptive digital interventions. These interventions will be tailored to individual profiles and behavioural patterns, with the goal of promoting sustainable health behaviour change.</p> <p>The candidate will be expected to adopt an interdisciplinary approach, combining theories and methods from psychology, neuropsychology, and social sciences, and applying them within clinical and health-related research settings through both quantitative and qualitative methodologies.</p>
Main research area for the project	Medical Humanities
3 key words for the project	Artificial Intelligence; Cancer Prevention; Psychological wellbeing

LAB INFO	
Main topic/s of the lab	Decision-making
Short description of the lab activity	<p>The lab activities are focused on the study of decision-making process in medicine in order to study the factors involved both from doctors’ and patients’ point of view, in conditions of uncertainty and risk, often characterized by an increased emotional burden. With this background the Lab promotes a multidisciplinary perspective, which aims at developing a new psycho-cognitive approach for decision-making in medicine. In addition to strictly medical matters and biological data, by developing a personalized approach that takes into account the analysis and interpretation of the cognitive components (information needs, preferences, decision-making, beliefs and knowledge about the disease and health), the psychological components (level of stress, anxiety, depression) and the behavioural (lifestyle) components of each patient, we aim to promote patient empowerment and increase participation in the process of care, compliance and overall satisfaction. Within the Lab, applied research programs aim to promote increasingly advanced and evolved techniques and methods of treatment of the individual as a</p>

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	<p>whole, and clinical activities aim to support the person both throughout the treatment period and in the subsequent phase of recovery and return to everyday life.</p> <p>Within the Lab, the PhD candidate will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collaborate with supervisors and research team members to formulate robust and innovative research designs. This includes conducting literature reviews, identifying key research questions, defining objectives, and selecting appropriate methodologies and tools for data collection and analysis. ▪ Design and implement quantitative and qualitative experimental studies. This may include laboratory studies, surveys, interviews, and/or focus groups. ▪ Plan and track research progress, manage time effectively, and ensure timely completion of milestones and deliverables. ▪ Use statistical software and qualitative analysis tools to analyze and process data. ▪ Draft, revise, and submit manuscripts for national and international peer-reviewed journals. This may include writing research papers, reviews, or case studies, responding to reviewers' comments, and collaborating with co-authors to ensure high-quality manuscripts. ▪ Assist in identifying funding opportunities and preparing applications for research grants, fellowships, or institutional support. ▪ Support undergraduate or master's students through tutoring, supervising thesis projects, or assisting with lab sessions. ▪ Participate in outreach activities and scientific dissemination initiatives to increase the visibility and impact of the research.
Recent bibliography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capetti, B., Sdinami, S., Luisi, J., Conti, L., Grasso, R., & Pravettoni, G. (2026, January). Efficacy of Technology-Based Cognitive Rehabilitation Tools for Cancer-Related Cognitive Impairment in Non-CNS Cancer Patients: A Systematic Review. In <i>Healthcare</i> (Vol. 14, No. 2, p. 239). MDPI. ▪ Sebri, V., Ongaro, G., Giudice, A. V., Mazzocco, K., & Pravettoni, G. (2026). Sailing toward healing. A combined group intervention to improve well-being in breast cancer survivors: a brief report study. <i>European Journal of Cancer Prevention</i>, 35(2), 187-192. ▪ Masiero, M., Marzorati, C., Fragale, E., Munzone, E., Pietrobon, R., Teixeira, L., ... & Pravettoni, G. (2025). Optimistic Bias and Personality Factors in Adherence to Oral Anticancer Treatments in Metastatic Breast Cancer: A Retrospective Analysis of Data From a Randomized Controlled Trial. <i>Cancer Control</i>, 32, 10732748251382300. ▪ Marzorati, C., Voskanyan, V., Sala, D., Grasso, R., Borgogni, F., Pietrobon, R., ... & EUonQoL Consortium. (2025). Psychosocial factors associated with quality of life in cancer patients undergoing treatment: an umbrella review. <i>Health and Quality of Life Outcomes</i>, 23(1), 31. ▪ Vaz-Luis, I., Masiero, M., Cavaletti, G., Cervantes, A., Chlebowski, R. T., Curigliano, G., ... & Pravettoni, G. (2022). ESMO Expert Consensus Statements on Cancer Survivorship: promoting high-quality survivorship care and research in Europe. <i>Annals of Oncology</i>, 33(11), 1119-1133.