

UNIVERSITÀ
DI TORINO

SEMINAR CYCLE

of the PhD in Neuroscience of Turin

8th Appointment

Prof. Luca Cecchetti

Social and Affective Neuroscience (SAnE) Group, MoMiLab
Research Unit, IMT School for Advanced Studies Lucca, Italy

“Promises and Pitfalls of Naturalistic Stimulation in Affective (Neuro)Science”

6th October, 2025 h 3:00 PM

The lecture will last 1 hour and it will be followed by discussion

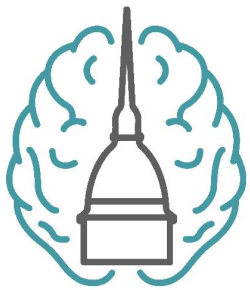
Host: Prof. Martina Amanzio



Graduation Room, Palazzo Badini
Via Verdi 10, Turin

Link: <https://bit.ly/4gvB1k6>

Organized by PhD in Neuroscience - Doctoral School of the
University of Turin

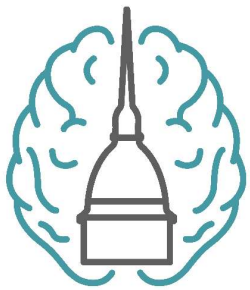


PROF. LUCA CECCHETTI

Luca Cecchetti is Associate Professor of Psychometrics and Principal Investigator of the Social and Affective Neuroscience (SANE) group at the IMT School for Advanced Studies Lucca. He received his Master's Degree in Experimental Psychology from the University of Florence and his Ph.D. in Neuroscience from the University of Pisa. Since 2012, he has published more than 50 articles in international peer-reviewed journals, including high-impact outlets such as Nature, Nature Communications, Nature Human Behaviour, and Science Advances.

His research has been recognized with awards from leading international societies in brain imaging and affective science, including the Organization for Human Brain Mapping, the Society for Affective Science, and the Social & Affective Neuroscience Society. His scientific interests focus on how individuals understand, predict, and respond to others, with particular attention to the neural bases of emotion, empathy, and theory of mind. His work integrates advanced approaches in brain imaging, psychophysiology, and behavioral methods.

**Organized by PhD in Neuroscience - Doctoral School of the
University of Turin**



ABSTRACT

A central challenge in affective science is eliciting authentic emotional responses in laboratory settings. Traditional approaches often rely on simplified, decontextualized stimuli (e.g., pictures or brief sounds), which may fall short of capturing the complexity, temporal unfolding, and nuance of real-life emotional experiences. In contrast, literature, film, and other narrative media naturally evoke rich emotional reactions, so much so that people engage with them daily. The approach known as naturalistic stimulation, involving full-length movies, narratives, or music, offers a promising way to bridge this gap, enabling more ecologically valid investigations of emotion. While increasingly adopted in cognitive (neuro)science, its use in affective (neuro)science remains relatively limited. In this talk, I will discuss the promises and pitfalls of this approach, drawing on both existing literature and studies from my lab to explore whether, and to what extent, naturalistic stimuli can deepen our understanding of the behavioral and neural correlates of affect and emotion.