



# FORMICHINE (ANT-WORK) (talking about doctoral life with STEFANO MIRTI)

by Enrico De Angelis

The foreword is simple: he holds a PhD, he is a successful achiever and he has a potential long list of stories to tell. For this, and to gain elements for your inspiration, I asked him an interview. We met last Saturday, we had a pleasant talk and a nice dinner but, then, I didn't know from where to start writing something useful to you and he told me: "I'll send you a document. start from there".

Let me, first, introduce him.

In the caption of his linkedin profile, Stefano Mirti writes "multitasking" and, as much as he succeeded in his academic career, so he did in the other fields where he happened to practice.

Master student in Architectural Design and PhD in Architectural Technology at the Politecnico di Torino, postdoc at Tokyo University, then lecturer in many Italian and international universities, he made his way becoming the head of a Bachelor Program (NABA Bachelor of Arts in Design) and adjunct professor at Bocconi.

Meanwhile, since a student, he was founding and leading a Design Team (Cliostraat) that won three European prize for architecture, receiving a Bronze Medal of the Italian Republic for merits in the field of culture, then organizing one of the most innovative design laboratory of the Interaction Design Institute Ivrea (where M. Banzi was perfecting and testing the well-known hardware Arduino, as an example), eventually starting a new design office (Idlab). Recently, he has been leading the Social Media team for Expo 2015 Milano and, now, he is the director of a little nice school, the "Scuola Superiore d'Arte Applicata del Castello Sforzesco", from which he has just been upgraded as President of the institution that holds it (Fondazione Milano), together with four other University Schools (worth to be listed: the Scuola di Cinema "L. Visconti", the Scuola Interpreti e Traduttori "A. Spinelli", the Scuola di Musica "C. Abbado" and the Scuola di Teatro "P. Grassi").

I received his document. It was the speech given at the inauguration of the academic year of the Domus Academy two years ago, when he gave few fundamental tips for life. I read it, I liked very much, and I decided not to recast any other Q&A series, but to give a short (very short!) synthesis of it, translating it for your PhD life.



## TIP01 – THE ANT-WORK

Be patient (the world is for the patient people) and don't rush for reaching a breakthrough. Run, if you can, but don't rush.

Do one little thing a day (like saving one euro or reading one paper a day from your list of references) and you will accumulate a wealth. In money as well as in abilities, skills, knowledge: world goes on because of incremental gain and it is for ants,

## TIP02 – BUILD A NETWORK (with empathy)

No one succeeds alone. This phrase can be read in many ways and mine is the following: be nice and empathic with the person in front of you. Not because it's politically correct. Just because it works better and this is even more "compound interest": in business, within your family, with the love of your life, in a lab. Talk to others; reply to the emails you receive. Smile. Smile again, smile more. Be empathic. And listen, too.

## MIRTI'S TIPS TRANSLATED FOR PHD LIFE

Plan your work: it is always important, it is even more in research work, because of its high uncertainty, and it's the best way to prevent anxiety. Only, be ready to change your plan and to take all the opportunities that your research will offer you. You can do many things, in your three years of PhD Program. Straight high but reachable, don't expect breakthrough, but you can do a great piece of work, in three years if you perform a little every day, you can even become a recognized expert: so, start and resolutely. Meanwhile, build your network: a network of global researchers, around the world, but also a local one. And tighten those links with empathy.

## TIP03 – THE TIME WE HAVE

Time is a limited resource. So, be aware about the way you are using it: enjoy it as most, also when you are ... wasting it. It is precious because it is not renewable). One day more is one day less. Think about death, just once in a while.





## CALLS AND EVENTS



### PUBLISHING ADVANCED MATERIALS SCIENCE (HOW TO MAXIMIZE YOUR SUCCESS)

**Francesca Riboni,**

Francesca is the editor of *Advanced Energy Materials* (2018 impact factor, 25.81), and *Advanced Functional Materials and Energy Technology* (2018 IF, 24.88), published by Wiley-VCH. These journals are in a multidisciplinary field of research with many different scientists and engineers, with various backgrounds, active in it, currently populated by a wide range of journals which greatly differ in purpose, scope, quality, and readership.

This presentation will cover what we can offer, as well as sharing some of our selection criteria to help you publish with us. Key aspects that will be discussed are: structuring one's research work well and assembling a convincing manuscript, understanding the decision processes in editorial offices, choosing an appropriate journal and knowing what to put in the cover letter, and what to avoid. In addition, the talk will cover the reasoning behind editorial workflows and the peer review process, publishing ethics and best practices for authors and reviewers, as well as possibilities for open access.

Monday 14 October 2019 at 11AM  
Center for Nano Science and Technology@PoliMi, Istituto Italiano di Tecnologia  
Campus Leonardo, Via Giovanni Pascoli, 70/3 - Building C (Meeting Room)



### 2019 MATLAB ACADEMIC TOUR

This year the MATLAB Academic Tour will include an event at Politecnico di Milano.

During this event, you will learn about the new capabilities available in the MATLAB environment to address some of the major technical challenges in teaching and research. The presenters will be

- Dr. Stefano Olivieri, PhD in IT at Polimi, R&D in STMicroelectronics and Philips, in Mathworks since 2005
- Dr. Loren Shure, PhD Geophysics at Univ Calif at San Diego, presently in Mathworks, with major contributions to the design of MATLAB Language

#### [Brochure](#)

For further information and to register for the event please follow [this link](#)

10 October 2019, Bovisa Campus, building BL 27 – Room BL 27.01, 4:15PM to 9:15 PM



### FONDAZIONE FRATELLI CONFALONIERI SCHOLARSHIPS (PHD AND POST-DOC)

The Fondazione Fratelli Confalonieri opened the usual call for PhD and Post-Doc Scholarships: [Quattro borse per dottorandi di ricerca delle università milanesi 2019-2020](#) and [Otto borse per ricerca post-dottorale da svolgersi presso università milanesi 2019-2020](#).

Deadline: Nov.14th, 2019 (you must apply digital and by mail too!!)



## PHD JOB MENTORING DAY

The PhD Job Mentoring Day is an event organized by the Polimi Career Service dedicated to PhD students and candidates who want to explore job roles and sectors and liaise with company representatives.

Thanks to this exclusive event, you will join 15-minute sessions with company managers, playing job roles in line with your own study path.

You will be part of a small group, moving together with your colleagues throughout the different company stations, asking questions to professionals, listening to the answers of your colleagues' questions. You will learn more about the career opportunities suitable for you and you will have the chance to listen to the previous professional experiences of the company representatives and which innovative projects they faced throughout their career.

At the end of the group mentoring, there will be a happy hour, where you will informally get to know all the professionals, discovering their experiences, comparing views and sharing contacts!

[Sign up now](#) to join the event!

October 29<sup>th</sup> at the Career Lab, Bld. 2, Bovisa Campus from 4:00 to 7:00 pm



## ENI AWARD 2020 - YOUNG RESEARCHER OF THE YEAR

The *Young Researcher of the Year Award 2020* is a prize for PhD students who have obtained or will receive their degree at an Italian university in 2018 or 2019. The applications submitted must be related to the energy and environmental sectors. Participation is allowed only to researchers born in 1987 or later.

WARNING: register before Friday 8 Nov 2019, 17.00 CET and apply before Nov 22<sup>nd</sup> 2019, 17.00 CET

See the Call [here](#) for further information





## SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS



### DATA-MATERIALS: DESIGN BETWEEN ENVISIONING&PROTOTYPING

I.Mariani, P.Bolzan, L.Varisco, S.Parisi, M.Stepanovic

What if materials could transform due to user interaction, environmental condition, and digital data?

“Data < > Materials”, a two-day Hackathon dealing with Bio-based materials, Digital Manufacturing, Speculative Design, Smart and Interactive Artifacts.

25-26 October 2019



### GOODBYE HOSPITALS: HELLO IMPLANTABLE NANOSENSORS

Prof. Thomas J. Webster, Northeastern University, USA

This talk will summarize techniques and efforts to create nanosensors for a wide range of medical and tissue engineering applications, particularly those that have received FDA approval and are currently being implanted in humans.

October 18<sup>th</sup> 2019 10 am–Sala Consiglio, Dept of Mechanical Eng., Via La Masa 1



### MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURES: SENSEMAKING FROM DATA

Prof. Eleni Chatzi, ETH Zürich

This talk will discuss how Structural Health Monitoring (SHM) systems, powered by the Value of Information that is latent in data, offer unique tools for sense making and supporting decisions regarding the management of infrastructure throughout its life-cycle.

October 25<sup>th</sup> 2019 - 2:30 pm–Sala Consiglio, Dept of Mechanical Eng., Via La Masa 1

