

Daniel Scalena

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Education

University of Milano - Bicocca | University of Groningen (CLCG) Nov 2023 – exp. Q4 2026
Double Doctorate (Ph.D) in Computer Science - NLP

Researching interpretability to improve the safety, reliability, and real-world applicability of generative models.

University of Milano - Bicocca Oct 2021 – Oct 2023
Master of Science (M.Sc) in Computer Science, Machine Learning track

- Final Grade: 110/110 with honors, (GPA: 29.7/30)
- Thesis: On the explainability of Large Language Models detoxification.

University of Milano - Bicocca Oct 2018 – Jul 2021
Bachelor of Science (B.Sc) in Computer Science

- Final Grade: 110/110 with honors, (GPA: 28.3/30)
- Thesis: Hate speech detection on social networks using state-of-the-art NLP techniques.

Experience

Research Intern Apr 2023 – Jul 2023
University of Groningen, Computational Linguistic Group

- Aligned LMs to counter hate speech narratives using RLAIIF, reaching up to 50% in safety improvements;
- Analyzed and interpreted model behavior shifts after applying post-training algorithms.

Assistant Researcher Jun 2022 - Apr 2023
C.I.N.I. & University of Milano - Bicocca

- Devised Open Relation Extraction for Italian legal texts, improving previous accuracy by 30%;
- Reduced manual legal document review using ad hoc models;
- Project funded by the *Italian Ministry of Justice* and *Inter-university Consortium for Computer Science*.

ML Engineer (contractor) Jun 2022 - Aug 2022
TESTUDO s.r.l.

- Designed and trained deep learning models to predict working hours timestamps;
- Fully automated the company's recognition system.

Publications

- [🔗 CALAMITA: Challenge the Abilities of LAnguage Models in ITALian](#) [🔗](#)

Giuseppe Attanasio, ..., **Daniel Scalena**

Proceedings at the Tenth Italian Conference on Computational Linguistics, CLIC-it 2024

- [🔗 Multi-property steering of large language models with dynamic activation composition](#) [🔗](#)

Daniel Scalena, Gabriele Sarti, Malvina Nissim

Proceedings at the Seventh BlackBoxNLP (at EMNLP 2024)

- [🔗 A gentle push funziona benissimo: making instructed models in Italian via contrastive activation steering](#) [🔗](#)

Daniel Scalena, Gabriele Sarti, Malvina Nissim, Elisabetta Fersini

Proceedings at the Tenth Italian Conference on Computational Linguistics, CLIC-it 2024

- [🔗 Let the Models Respond: Interpreting Language Model Detoxification Through the Lens of Prompt Dependence](#) [🔗](#)

Daniel Scalena, Gabriele Sarti, Malvina Nissim, Elisabetta Fersini


Extended abstract at the Sixth BlackboxNLP Workshop (at EMNLP 2023)

- [🔗 Mind at SemEval-2023 task 11: From uncertain predictions to subjective disagreement](#)

Scholarships and Awards

Google and Apple - BlackBoxNLP (EMNLP 2023) travel award	2023
Full-Fee M.Sc. Scholarship due to merit and financial scores	2021 - 2023
Full-Fee B.Sc. Scholarship due to merit and financial scores	2018 - 2021


Projects

Reward LM	DanielSc4/RewardLM 
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Python toolkit library for Fine-Tuning and Reinforcement Learning from AI Feedback of Generative LMs;◦ Developed tools to interpret and compare toxicity differences between original and fine-tuned models.	

Activities

Co-organiser	Challenge the Abilities of LAngeuage Models in ITALian (CALAMITA) 2024
Teaching	NLP course labs, MSc Data Science @ UniMiB (2024 - 2025)
Reviewer	ACL 2025, LREC-Coling 2024, NAACL 2024*, Information Processing and Management 2024 - 2025, CliC-IT 2023 - 2024, ICML Mechanistic Interpretability Workshop 2024* (*secondary reviewer)
Volunteer	CliC-IT 2021, EMNLP 2023
Misc.	European Researchers Night GroNLP collaborator 2023

Languages

Italian	C2 - Native Language
English	C1 - Bbetween Foreign Languages 
French	B1