

Alessandro Petruzzelli

PHD STUDENT · IN COMPUTER SCIENCE - ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Department of Computer Science - University of Bari Aldo Moro

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Alessandro Petruzzelli

Summary

Doctoral researcher specializing in the optimization of LLMs for recommendation tasks. My work focuses on knowledge augmentation integrating domain-specific expertise into LLMs and developing efficient evaluation frameworks via model distillation. Proven track record of bridging the gap between AI and personalized user experiences.

Research & Professional Experience

University of Bari

PHD RESEARCHER

Bari, Italy

Oct 2023 - Present

- Developing frameworks to inject domain-specific knowledge into LLMs, demonstrating significant improvements in recommendation accuracy.
- Designing and building end-to-end conversational AI systems capable of multi-turn, personalized interactions.
- Pioneering research on symbiotic systems, aiming to create more transparent and user-centric AI.

University of Bari

RESEARCH FELLOW

Bari, Italy

Feb 2023 - Oct 2023

- Conducted a formal analysis and validation of recommendation algorithms for retail personalization.
- Authored a comprehensive report on state-of-the-art methods, influencing subsequent project directions.

Selected Presentations

Oral Presentation at the 33rd ACM Conference on User Modeling, Adaptation and Personalization (UMAP '25)

New York City, NY, USA

EMPOWERING RECOMMENDER SYSTEMS BASED ON LLMs THROUGH KNOWLEDGE INJECTION TECHNIQUES

Jun 2025

- Presented a framework for improving LLM-based recommenders by injecting structured domain knowledge, showing significant gains in performance.

Oral Presentation at the 18th ACM Conference on Recommender Systems (RecSys '24)

Bari, Italy

INSTRUCTING AND PROMPTING LLMs FOR EXPLAINABLE CROSS-DOMAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

Oct 2024

- Detailed our investigation into prompt engineering strategies for generating accurate and explainable cross-domain recommendations from LLMs.

Presentation at the RecSys '24 Doctoral Symposium

Bari, Italy

TOWARDS SYMBIOTIC RECOMMENDATIONS: LEVERAGING LLMs FOR CONVERSATIONAL RECOMMENDATION SYSTEMS

Oct 2024

- Presented my doctoral research vision on creating symbiotic conversational systems to an audience of senior researchers and peers.

Selected Publications

DISTILLRECDIAL: A Knowledge-Distilled Dataset Capturing User Diversity in Conversational Recommendation

The 19th ACM Conference on Recommender Systems (RecSys)

MARTINA, A. F. M., PETRUZZELLI, A., MUSTO, C., DE GEMMIS, M., ET AL.

Prague, Czech Republic, 2025

- Introduces a novel dataset generated via knowledge distillation to simulate diverse user stereotypes, improving dialogue quality and realism for training CRSSs.

Empowering Recommender Systems based on Large Language Models through Knowledge Injection Techniques

The 33rd ACM Conference on User Modeling, Adaptation and Personalization (UMAP)

PETRUZZELLI, A., MUSTO, C., DE GEMMIS, M., LOPS, P., & SEMERARO, G.

New York City, NY, USA, 2025

- Proposes a novel framework for injecting domain-specific knowledge into LLMs to enhance recommendation accuracy and relevance.

Instructing and Prompting Large Language Models for Explainable Cross-domain Recommendations

18th ACM Conference on Recommender Systems (RecSys)

PETRUZZELLI, A., MUSTO, C., LARASPATA, L., ET AL.

Bari, Italy, 2024

- Investigates prompt engineering and fine-tuning strategies that enable LLMs to provide accurate cross-domain recommendations with natural language explanations.

Healthy and Sustainable Meals Recommendation Exploiting Food Retrieval and Large Language Models

PETRUZZELLI, A., DI CARLO, M.C., TEMPESTA, G., ET AL.

- Presents a system that combines food retrieval techniques with LLMs to generate personalized healthy and sustainable meal recommendations.

18th ACM Conference on Recommender Systems (RecSys) - Short Paper
Bari, Italy, 2024

Improving Transformer-based Sequential Conversational Recommendations through Knowledge Graph Embeddings

PETRUZZELLI, A., MARTINA, A. F. M., SPILLO, G., ET AL.

- Demonstrates that integrating knowledge graph embeddings into Transformer models significantly boosts performance in sequential conversational recommendation scenarios.

The 32nd ACM Conference on User Modeling, Adaptation and Personalization (UMAP)
Cagliari, Sardinia, Italy, 2024

Academic Service & Committees

The ACM Web Conference 2026 (WebConf '26)

PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEMBER

Prague, Czech Republic

2025

- Full & Short Papers

19th ACM Conference on Recommender Systems (RecSys '25)

PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEMBER

Prague, Czech Republic

2025

- Full & Short Papers
- Late Breaking Results
- Reproducibility Track
- Outstanding Reviewer Winner

33rd ACM Conference on User Modeling, Adaptation and Personalization (UMAP '25)

PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEMBER

New York City, NY, USA

2025

- Full & Short Papers
- Late Breaking Results & Demo Papers

18th ACM Conference on Recommender Systems (RecSys '24)

PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEMBER

Bari, Italy

2024

- Full & Short Papers

32nd ACM Conference on User Modeling, Adaptation and Personalization (UMAP '24)

PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEMBER

Cagliari, Sardinia, Italy

2024

- Full & Short Papers

Education

University of Bari

PH.D. IN COMPUTER SCIENCE - ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Bari, Italy

Oct 2023 - Present

Thesis: Understanding human needs in Symbiotic AI: towards Symbiotic Recommender Systems

University of Bari

M.S. IN DATA SCIENCE

Bari, Italy

Oct 2021 - Jul 2023

Thesis: Transformer-Based Conversational Recommendation based on Knowledge Graphs

University of Bari

B.S. IN COMPUTER SCIENCE AND SOFTWARE PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGY

Bari, Italy

Oct 2018 - Jul 2021

Thesis: Design and Development of a Content-based Recommender System to Support a Conversational Agent

Extracurricular Activity

TEACHING

Short Master in Generative AI

LECTURER

- Theory and practical lessons about how to improve LLMs performance through RAG

Bari, Italy

Gen 2026 - Feb 2026

SPEGEA Business School

LECTURER

- Designed and delivered a 6-hour professional course titled "How to Build a Chatbot".

Bari, Italy

Jul 2024 - Sep 2024

ADVANCED TRAINING & SCHOOLS

ACM RecSys, SIGCHI, ACM Europe, EURAI, and University of Cagliari

ACM EUROPE SCHOOL ON RECOMMENDER SYSTEMS

Bari, Italy

Oct 2024

Association for Logic, Language and Information

35TH EUROPEAN SUMMER SCHOOL IN LOGIC, LANGUAGE AND INFORMATION (ESSLI)

Leuven, Belgium

Aug 2024

Associazione Italiana di Linguistica Computazionale

LECTURES ON COMPUTATIONAL LINGUISTICS

Bari, Italy

Jul 2024

Various Sponsors

9TH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL ON DEEP LEARNING

Bari, Italy

Apr 2023