

# SOFIA AMMASSARI

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## RESEARCH EXPERTISE

Populist radical right, Women in politics, Youth in politics, Political parties

## ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

2023-present    **Research Fellow**, Griffith University

## EDUCATION

2020-2023    **PhD in Political Science**, Griffith University

Thesis: 'Similar motivations, different participation: Women and men at the grassroots of populist radical right parties'

- Winner of 2023 Griffith Chancellor's Medal for Excellence in the PhD Thesis

2017-2018    **MA in International Security**, Institut Barcelona d'Estudis Internacionals

2013-2017    **BA in Political Science and International Relations**, Università degli Studi di Padova

## RESEARCH GRANTS

2025    Australian Research Council Discovery Project, 'Generation-Z engagement with political parties', with Duncan McDonnell (Griffith University) and Ferran Martinez i Coma (Griffith University). A\$825,546.

## ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

### Books

(2) McDonnell, D., [Ammassari, S.](#), Jungar, A.-C., Jupskås, A. R., & Mudde, C. (Forthcoming). *Youth wings of the populist radical right*. Oxford University Press.

(1) [Ammassari, S.](#) (Forthcoming). *Grassroots women in the populist radical right*. Oxford University Press.

### Journal articles

I have published 13 articles. 9 are in journals ranked A\* in the Australian Political Studies Association (AusPSA) 2022 journal ranking list, and 11 are in journals listed in Google Scholar (GS) top-20 rankings (9 Politics, 1 Gender Studies, 1 Geography).

- 13) Bolin, N., McDonnell, D., Ammassari, S., Heinisch, R., Jungar, A.-C., Valbruzzi, M., Wegscheider, C., & Werner, A. (Forthcoming). The added value of youth wings: Do they nurture the members their parties want? *Political Studies*. (AusPSA: A\*; GS PolSci: 18/20)
- (12) Ammassari, S., McDonnell, D., Bolin, N., Werner, A., Valbruzzi, M., Wegscheider, C., Heinisch, R., & Jungar, A.-C. (Forthcoming). Party youth wings as forces of renovation: A study of young women members' efficacy and ambition. *Politics and Gender*. (AusPSA: A; GS Gender Studies: 7/20)
- (11) Ammassari, S., McDonnell, D., Werner, A., Heinisch, R., Valbruzzi, M., & Wegscheider, C. (2026). More social, less material, more influenced by family ties: Why young women join political parties. *European Journal of Political Research*. (AusPSA: A\*; GS PolSci: 9/20)
- (10) McDonnell, D., & Ammassari, S. (2026). The geography of the party on the ground: Local branches in Italy and Sweden in the late twentieth century. *Political Geography*, 125, 1-21. (AusPSA: A\*; GS Geography: 7/20)
- (9) Ammassari, S., Martinez i Coma, F., & McDonnell, D. (2026). Young voters, abstainers, and unregistered: Generation Z turnout in a compulsory system. *Political Studies*, 74(1), 7-28. (AusPSA: A\*; GS PolSci: 18/20)
- Featured in *The Australian*
- (8) Ammassari, S. (2025). "Men's parties", but with more active women: Gender and party activism in the populist radical right. *Comparative Political Studies*, 59(5), 1083-1119. (AusPSA: A\*; GS PolSci: 6/20)
- Winner of the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR) Extremism & Democracy Best Paper Prize 2023
- (7) McDonnell, D., Ammassari, S., Werner, A., Bolin, N., Valbruzzi, M., Ferrinho Lopes, H., Heinisch, R., Jungar, A.-C., & Wegscheider, C. (2025). Young radicals, moderates, and aligned: Ideological congruence and incongruence in party youth wings. *European Journal of Political Research*, 64(4), 1759-1782. (AusPSA: A\*; GS PolSci: 9/20)
- Featured in *The Australian*
- (6) Ammassari, S. (2025). Deterrent or stimulus? How perceived societal stigma affects participation in populist radical right parties. *Political Studies*, 73(1), 240-262. (AusPSA: A\*; GS PolSci: 18/20)
- (5) McDonnell, D., Ammassari, S., Valbruzzi, M., Bolin, N., Werner, A., Heinisch, R., Jungar, A.-C., & Wegscheider, C. (2025). Inside party youth wings: The YOUMEM project. *Party Politics*, 31(6), 1049-1063. (AusPSA: A; GS PolSci: 17/20)
- (4) Ammassari, S. (2024). Disaffected but efficacious: Why people join populist radical right parties. *Government & Opposition*, 59(3), 655-674. (AusPSA: A)
- (3) Ammassari, S., McDonnell, D., & Valbruzzi, M. (2023). It's about the type of career: The political ambition gender gap among youth wing members. *European Journal of Political Research*, 62(4), 1054-1077. (AusPSA: A\*; GS PolSci: 9/20)
- (2) Ammassari, S. (2023). It depends on personal networks: Feelings of stigmatisation among populist radical right party members. *European Journal of Political Research*, 62(3), 723-741. (AusPSA: A\*; GS PolSci: 9/20)
- (1) Ammassari, S., Fossati, D., & McDonnell, D. (2023). Supporters of India's BJP: Distinctly populist and nativist. *Government & Opposition*, 58(4), 807-823. (AusPSA: A)

## UNDER REVIEW

(2) Heinisch, R., Wegscheider, C., Werner, A., Ammassari, S., McDonnell, D., & Valbruzzi, M. Ready to party: Explaining electoral and social engagement of youth wing members. *Under review.*

(1) Seeberg, H. B., McDonnell, D., Ammassari, S., Bolin, N., Heinisch, R., Jungar, A.-C., Valbruzzi, M., Wegscheider, C., & Werner, A. The personal efficacy of party youth wing members. *Under review.*

## WORK IN PROGRESS

(5) Grahn, M., Ammassari, S., & van Dijk, R. Inside LGBTQ+ party wings: The participation and preferences of LGBTQ+ party members.

(4) Ammassari, S., & Off, G. The role of women candidates in legitimising and normalising far-right parties.

(3) Ammassari, S., McDonnell, D., & Nikolovski, J. The party on the ground and electoral performance.

(2) Vittonetto, F., Ammassari, S., & McDonnell, M. The transnational populist radical right ecosystem.

(1) Ammassari, S. Beyond nativism: New mobilising issues on the transnational populist radical right.

## TEACHING

2023-present     **Convenor**, The Rise of Global Populism, Griffith University

2021-2023       **Teaching Assistant**, The Way of the Dictator, Griffith University

2022             **Teaching Assistant**, Power and Policy Making, Griffith University

2021             **Teaching Assistant**, Political Leadership, Griffith University

## SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION

2025-present     **Political Organisations and Participation (POP) Group Co-Convenor**  
Australian Political Studies Association

2024-2025       **Early Career Researcher (ECR) Network Representative**  
Griffith Business School, Griffith University

2020-2021       **Postgraduate Caucus Representative**  
Australian Political Studies Association

## Organisation of conference panels and workshops

2025     Panel on ‘The supply and demand of right-wing populism in the 2020s’ at the International Political Science Association (IPSA) World Congress. Co-chaired with Duncan McDonnell (Griffith University).

- 2024 Panel on ‘Transnationalisation processes on the far-right’ at the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR) General Conference. Co-chaired with Ben Stanley (SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities).
- 2024 Panel on ‘Transnational issues and frames on the far-right’ at the ECPR General Conference. Co-chaired with Marta Lorimer (London School of Economics).
- 2024 Panel on ‘Gender and party politics: New perspectives on women’s participation and representation’ at the European Conference on Politics and Gender (ECPG).
- 2024 Panel on ‘The role of gender in the mobilisation, electoral expansion and normalisation of the radical right’ at the ECPG.
- 2024 Workshop on ‘Young People and Politics’ funded by the Australian Political Studies Association (AusPSA). Co-organised with Helen Berents, Ferran Martinez i Coma, and Duncan McDonnell (all from Griffith University).
- 2023 Panel on ‘Mobilisation on the far-right: Evolving strategies of movements and parties’ at the ECPR General Conference. Co-chaired with Andrea Pirro (University of Bologna).
- 2023 Panel on ‘The populist challenge to liberal democracy: Supply- and demand-side perspectives’ at the ECPR General Conference. Co-chaired with Andrej Zaslove (Radboud University).

**Peer-reviewer for academic journals**

*British Journal of Political Science, European Journal of Political Research, The Journal of Politics, Journal of European Public Policy, Comparative Political Studies, Political Studies, West European Politics, Party Politics, Politics and Gender, European Journal of Politics and Gender, Journal of Women, Politics & Policy, Government and Opposition, Democratization, Acta Politica, Communication Research and Practice, Journal of Contemporary European Studies, South European Society and Politics, Journal of Contemporary Asia, Australian Journal of Political Science, German Politics, Italian Journal of Electoral Studies, Studies in Indian Politics.*

**AWARDS & PRIZES**

- |      |  |         |
|------|--|---------|
| 2024 | ECPR Extremism and Democracy Best Paper Prize                | -       |
| 2024 | Griffith Chancellor’s Medal for Excellence in the PhD Thesis | \$1,000 |
| 2023 | Griffith Award of Excellence in a Research Thesis            | -       |

**PRESENTATIONS & TALKS**

**Plenary sessions**

- 2025 ‘The future of the discipline’, panel discussion at the Australian Political Studies Association (AusPSA) Annual Conference, University of Melbourne, 27 November.

**Guest lectures**

- 2024 ‘Parties and elections in India’, online guest lecture for ‘Campaign and Elections’ course at La Trobe University, 28 June.
- 2023 ‘Contemporary populism in India’, guest lecture for ‘Populism’ course at Yale University, 11 October.
- 2023 ‘Oltre i soliti sospetti: Il populismo al potere in India’, online guest lecture for ‘Il populismo nel mondo contemporaneo’ Summer School at the Istituto per gli Studi di Politica Internazionale, Milan, 28 June.

- 2022 'Political parties in India', online guest lecture for 'Political Parties and Party Systems in Europe and Beyond' course at the Université Catholique de Lille, 10 November.

### Research seminars

- 2025 'The rise of the transnational populist right', research seminar at Universidad Privada Boliviana (Cochabamba), 7 November.
- 2025 'The rise of the transnational populist right', research seminar at Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (Lima), 30 October.
- 2025 'The rise of the transnational populist right', research seminar at Universidad Torcuato Di Tella (Buenos Aires), 15 October.
- 2025 'The rise of the transnational populist right', research seminar at Universidade de São Paulo, 9 October.
- 2025 'The rise of the transnational populist right', research seminar at Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, 6 October.
- 2025 'The rise of the transnational populist right', research seminar at Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, 29 September.
- 2024 'Branches on the line: Mapping the decline of the party on the ground', research seminar at Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona), 16 October.
- 2023 'Disaffected but efficacious: Why people join populist radical right parties', online research seminar at South Asia Forum, University of Melbourne, 15 June.
- 2022 'Some suffer more than others: A study of stigma among populist radical right party members', online research seminar at *The Populism Seminar*, 25 April.

### Conferences

Australian Political Studies Association (AusPSA)	2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025
Australian Society for Quantitative Political Science (ASQPS)	2023
European Conference on Politics and Gender (ECPG)	2024
European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR)	2021, 2022, 2023, 2024
European Political Science Association (EPSA)	2024
International Political Science Association (IPSA)	2025
Italian Political Science Society (SISP)	2019

### Workshops

Youth Politics Workshop at Aarhus University	2024
AusPSA Workshop on Young People and Politics	2024
AusPSA Specialist Group on Political Organisation and Participation	2022, 2025

## ENGAGEMENT & IMPACT

### Media articles

- 2025 '47% of Gen Z mainly vote to avoid a fine. It's a sign of younger Australians' discontent with democracy', with D. McDonnell and F. Martinez i Coma, *The Conversation*. 7 April.
- 2024 "'We have thousands of Modis": the secret behind the BJP's enduring success in India', *The Conversation*. 19 April.
- 2024 'Fewer women than men in parties' youth wings want to run for office', *ECPR The Loop*. 8 March.

- 2023 'Beyond grievances: The path to populist radical right party membership', *ECPR The Loop*. 12 December.
- 2023 'When it comes to finding Australia's future leaders, both the Liberals and Labor have a women problem: New study', with D. McDonnell, *The Conversation*. 23 January.
- 2023 'Why personal networks are key to the stigma felt by members of populist radical right parties', *LSE European Politics & Society*. 20 January.
- 2022 'What will its first far-right leader since WWII mean for Italy?', with D. McDonnell, *The Conversation*. 26 September.
- 2022 'Italy on brink of history as it turns to a woman of the far right', with D. McDonnell, *The Sydney Morning Herald*. 23 September.
- 2019 'Lok Sabha election results 2019: At 14.6%, Lok Sabha to have most women ever', with G. Verniers, *Hindustan Times*. 25 May.

## Media interviews

- 2025 3CR Melbourne, *Radio FILEF*. 13 August. Radio interview on the populist radical right.
- 2025 Radio Adelaide, *The Wire*. 17 April. Radio interview on co-authored study about Gen-Z turnout in Australia.
- 2025 ABC South East SA, *Breakfast*. 10 April. Radio interview on co-authored study about Gen-Z turnout in Australia.
- 2025 ABC WA, *Statewide Drive*. 7 April. Radio interview on co-authored study about Gen-Z turnout in Australia.
- 2024 The Tally Room. 3 April. Podcast on 2024 Indian general election.
- 2023 Griffith Gender Equality Research Network (GERN), *The Gender Card*. 14 February. Podcast on co-authored study about gender and political ambition in youth wings.
- 2023 ABC Newcastle, *Mornings*. 24 January. Radio interview on co-authored study about gender and political ambition in youth wings.
- 2023 ABC South East NSW, *Breakfast*. 24 January. Radio interview on co-authored study about gender and political ambition in youth wings.
- 2022 Triple R, *The Grapevine*. 3 October. Radio interview on the 2022 Italian election results.
- 2022 Mama Mia, *The Quicky*. 30 September. Podcast on the 2022 Italian election results.
- 2022 Radio Adelaide, *Breakfast*. 27 September. Radio interview on the 2022 Italian election results.
- 2021 Castigliani, M. 'Elezioni amministrative, le donne hanno già perso'. *Il Fatto Quotidiano*. 25 September. Interview on co-authored study about gender and political ambition in youth wings.

## Impact

- 2026 Panel discussion 'Should 16-year-olds get the vote?' in the Queensland Parliament. 23 March.
- 2024 Online presentation and report of co-authored study about Gen-Z turnout in Australia to the Australian Electoral Commission. 20 November.
- 2022 Online presentation and report of my PhD project's membership survey results to the National Party Executive of the Sweden Democrats. 14 February.

## RESEARCH METHODS TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

- 2024 **Mapping in R**  
R for the Rest of Us

- 2023 **Quantitative Text Analysis and Machine Learning using R**  
European Consortium for Political Research, Winter Methods School
- 2021 **Linear Regression and Modelling with R**  
Duke University, Coursera
- 2021 **Statistical Inference with R**  
Duke University, Coursera
- 2021 **Introduction to Probability and Data with R**  
Duke University, Coursera
- 2021 **Introduction to Statistical Analysis**  
European Consortium for Political Research, Winter Methods School

**Languages:** English (fluent), Italian (native), Spanish (fluent)

**Software:** LimeSurvey, Nvivo, RStudio, Qualtrics

## **ASSOCIATIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

### **Australian Political Studies Association (AusPSA)**

- Specialist Group on Political Organisation and Participation
- Women's Caucus

### **European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR)**

- Standing Group on Extremism and Democracy
- Standing Group on Gender and Politics
- Standing Group on Political Parties

## **REFERENCES**

Available upon request