SOFIA AMMASSARI

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RESEARCH EXPERTISE

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

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

2026-present **Senior Lecturer**, Flinders University

2023-2026 **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. (2026). *Youth wings of the populist radical right*. Oxford University Press.

(1) Ammassari, S. (2026). *Grassroots women in the populist radical right*. Oxford University Press.
- Featured in *Vrij Nederland*

Journal articles

I have published 14 articles. 9 are in journals ranked A* in the Australian Political Studies Association (AusPSA) 2022 journal ranking list, and 12 are in journals listed in Google Scholar (GS) top-20 rankings (10 Politics, 1 Gender Studies, 1 Geography).

(14) Seeberg, H. B., McDonnell, D., Ammassari, S., Bolin, N., Heinisch, R., Jungar, A.-C., Valbruzzi, M., Wegscheider, C., & Werner, A. (2026). The personal efficacy of party youth wing members. *Party Politics.* (AusPSA: A; GS PolSci: 16/20)

13) Bolin, N., McDonnell, D., Ammassari, S., Heinisch, R., Jungar, A.-C., Valbruzzi, M., Wegscheider, C., & Werner, A. (2026). The added value of youth wings: Do they nurture the members their parties want? *Political Studies.* (AusPSA: A*; GS PolSci: 14/20)

(12) Ammassari, S., McDonnell, D., Bolin, N., Werner, A., Valbruzzi, M., Wegscheider, C., Heinisch, R., & Jungar, A.-C. (2026). 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: 10/20)

(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. (2026). "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) Ammassari, S., & Off, G. More socially acceptable, more electorally appealing: How women voters perceive women far-right candidates. *Under review.*

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

WORK IN PROGRESS

Book manuscript

(1) Grahn, M., Ammassari, S., & van Dijk, R. *Rainbow wings: LGBTQ+ party wings in democracies.*

Journal articles

(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

From 2027	**Topic Coordinator**, Governing, Complexity and Policy, Flinders University
	Topic Coordinator, Emerging Digital Futures, Flinders University and Nankai University
2023-2026	**Course Convenor**, The Rise of Global Populism, Griffith University • Received the 2025 Student Experience of Teaching Survey Commendation
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 workshops

2026 Australian Political Studies Association (AusPSA) Political Organisations and Participation (POP) Annual Workshop. Co-organised with Emily Foley (University of Canberra/Flinders University), Patrick Leslie (Australian National University), Jordan McSwiney (University of Canberra) and Mark Riboldi (University of Technology Sydney).

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).

Organisation of conference panels

2026 Panel on 'The international and transnational dimensions of the populist radical right' at the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR) General Conference. Co-chaired with Francesco Vittonetto (Griffith University).

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 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.

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, Comparative Political Studies, Journal of European Public Policy, 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, Journal of Experimental Political Science, Parliamentary Affairs, 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

2026	Griffith Student Experience of Teaching Survey Commendation	-
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

2026 'Lunchtime populism roundtable', panel discussion at the Australian Political Studies Association (AusPSA) Annual Conference, Deakin University, 24 November.

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

Guest lectures

2026 'Women's political participation and populism', online guest lecture for 'Introduction to Political Science' course at Universitas Diponegoro, 13 November.

2026 '"Men's parties", but with more active women', online guest lecture for 'Populist Politics and Governments in Contemporary Europe' course at the University of Groningen, 9 November.

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 Instituto 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

Australia	University of Melbourne (2022), University of Queensland (2026)
Europe	Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona (2024), University of Hamburg (2026), Uppsala University (2026), Center for Right-Wing Extremism, Oslo (2026) University of Oslo (2026), University of Sussex (2026), The Gender Institute, Royal Holloway University of London (2026), Queen Mary University of London (2026), University of Bath (2026)
Latin America	Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (2025), Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (2025), Universidade de São Paulo (2025), Universidad Torcuato Di Tella, Buenos Aires (2025), Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Lima (2025), Universidad Privada Boliviana, Cochabamba (2025)

Conferences

Australian Political Studies Association (AusPSA)	2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026
Australian Society for Quantitative Political Science (ASQPS)	2023

European Conference on Politics and Gender (ECPG)	2024, 2026
European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR)	2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2026
European Political Science Association (EPSA)	2024
European Political Science Society (EPSS)	2026
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 Organisations and Participation	2022, 2025, 2026

ENGAGEMENT & IMPACT

Media articles

2026. 'Grassroots women in the populist radical right', *RHUL Gender Institute Substack*. 15 October.

2026 'Pauline Hanson attracting women voters? It's part of a global far-right trend', *The Conversation*. 1 June.

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

2026 ABC Melbourne, *The Conversation Hour*. 5 June. Radio interview on the rise of One Nation and women's involvement in the far right.

2026 ABC NewsRadio, *The World Today*. 2 June. Radio interview on the rise of One Nation and women's involvement in the far right.

2026 ABC NewsRadio, *PM*. 1 June. Radio interview on the rise of One Nation and women's involvement in the far right.

2026 Kemp. L. 'Op rechts shinen vrouwen wel' [Women really shine on the right]. *Vrij Nederland*. 17 April. Interview on book on women in the populist radical right.

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 Presentations of co-authored book about populist radical right youth wings and YOUMEM project to the European Wergeland Centre in Oslo. 28 September.
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 Organisations and Participation
- Women's Caucus
- LGBTIQ+ 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