

Federico Zoni, PhD

Medieval and post-medieval archaeologist | Building archaeology | Alpine and upland landscapes | Digital field methods

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RESEARCH PROFILE

I am a tenure-track researcher and lecturer specializing in medieval archaeology, archaeological methodology, and building archaeology. My research combines stratigraphic excavation, the archaeology of standing buildings, and landscape approaches to investigate settlement, power, production, and environmental interactions in upland and alpine contexts from Late Antiquity through the late Middle Ages and into early modern transitions.

I have extensive experience in archaeological survey and documentation, including close-range photogrammetry, UAV-based recording, and GIS/database management. My work is strongly embedded in interdisciplinary collaborations (history, architectural history, archaeobotany, dendrochronology, geophysics) and heritage practice.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS AND ROLES

Assistant professor (Tenure Track; ARC HEO-01/E - Medieval archaeology) – University of Bergamo
(Jan 2025–present)

- Research and teaching in Medieval Archaeology; development of field and digital documentation protocols; contribution to departmental research strategy.

Scientific Director – Parco delle incisioni rupestri e dei castelli di Grosio e Grosotto (Valtellina, Italy) (Jul 2023–present)

- Scientific direction of the park in coordination with heritage authorities; research, public archaeology and valorisation programs.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD DIRECTION

Field and Scientific Director (Italian Ministry of Culture – University of Bergamo) – Castle of Caspoggio (Castrum de Malenco, SO) (Jan 2020–present)

- Multi-period site (Bronze Age to Middle Ages); scientific and operational leadership of annual field campaigns.

Field and Scientific Director (Italian Ministry of Culture – University of Bergamo) – Dos del Castel, Teglio (SO) (Jan 2022–present)

- Multi-period site (Bronze Age to Middle Ages); research on medieval fortification and long-term landscape use.

Field and Scientific Director (Italian Ministry of Culture – University of Bergamo) – Colle del Calvario, Tresivio (SO) (Jan 2023–present)

- Multi-period site (Copper Age to Middle Ages); integration of remote sensing and targeted stratigraphic testing.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH POSITIONS

Postdoctoral Research Fellow (Assegnista di ricerca), STARS *experienced research grant* – University of Bergamo (Jan 2020–Dec 2022)

- Project: Castles of the Bergamo Alpine arc (Orobic Alps): medieval history, building archaeology and landscape archaeology (PI: Riccardo Rao).

Postdoctoral Research Fellow (Assegnista di ricerca) – University of Bologna (Aug 2018–Aug 2019)

- Project: Medieval architecture and landscape archaeology—methodological framework for historical landscape reconstruction from architectural sources (PI: Andrea Augenti).

EDUCATION

- PhD in Archaeology (Medieval Archaeology), University of Bologna, awarded 10 May 2018 (with highest distinction). Dissertation: Medieval residential building in the Reggio Apennines (11th–14th centuries).
- MA in Archaeology and Cultures of the Ancient World (Medieval Archaeology), University of Bologna, 2012 (110/110 cum laude).
- BA in Medieval History, University of Bologna, 2010 (110/110 cum laude).

RESEARCH INTERESTS AND EXPERTISE

- Medieval archaeology with strong extensions into the late Middle Ages and early modern transitions.
- Building archaeology and archaeology of standing structures: building stratigraphy, construction practices, technical environments, and patronage.
- Alpine and upland landscape archaeology: settlement dynamics, mobility corridors, production sites, and socio-environmental change.
- Material culture, trade and consumption in late medieval contexts (including edited volume work on objects as commodities).
- Interdisciplinary and scientific approaches: dendrochronology, archaeobotany, geoarchaeology; integrated geophysics and remote sensing.
- Digital documentation and analysis: close-range and UAV photogrammetry, GIS/database design, digital field workflows.

COMPETITIVE PROJECTS, GRANTS AND RESEARCH LEADERSHIP (SELECTED)

- Member: INTERREG Italy–Switzerland, Archeo Alps: Alpine archaeology—places, presences, strategies (2025–present). Archaeology lead for the University of Bergamo partner unit (total budget €1,763,414.99; UniBg budget €147,825.75).
- Co-PI: *Gabii after the Romans: History of a settlement in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Rust Family Foundation – Archaeology Grants Program; RFF-2018-119). Co-PI with Nicola Terrenato (University of Michigan) and international partners; responsibility for building archaeology (2019–2020).
- PI: Provincial competitive excavation grants (Province of Sondrio, 2023): Castle of Caspoggio (€30,000); Dos del Castel, Teglio (€30,000); Colle del Calvario, Tresivio (€30,000).
- Member: PRIN 2017 LOC-GLOB (2019–2023): infrastructures, production and trading areas in late-medieval Italy (1280–1500).

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS AND NETWORKS

Selected examples of international research collaboration and mobility:

- Project archéologiques au Palais Princier de Monaco (Musée d'Anthropologie préhistorique de Monaco), with dr. Elena Rossoni-Notter and Olivier Notter. (2023 - present).
- *Gabii after the Romans* (University of Michigan): Co-PI with Nicola Terrenato (University of Michigan); collaboration within an international team on late antique and medieval phases, with a dedicated building-archaeology component (2019-2020).
- Visiting Researcher, Technical University of Crete (TUC), School of Architecture (2019–2020): architectural and archaeological survey projects at Chania (Byzantine and Venetian walls) and Aptera (Chania, Greece).
- Invited member, LA3M UMR 7298 (Aix-Marseille Université / MMSH) (2016): medieval and modern Mediterranean archaeology research exchange.

HERITAGE, CONSERVATION AND PUBLIC ARCHAEOLOGY

- Archaeological consultant (Municipality of Bologna - University of Bologna) for the restoration and structural consolidation works at the Torre Garisenda (Bologna), supporting the integration of archaeological and architectural evidence into conservation decisions.
- Archaeological consultant for Stilsfer Joch National Park: fieldwork and surveys in high-altitude contexts, including excavations at the church of Passo di S. Giacomo di Fraele and systematic landscape reconnaissance.
- Scientific director of archaeological park (Grosio and Grosotto): heritage and public management.

TEACHING (SELECTED APPOINTMENTS)

- Archaeological methodology (MA), University of Bergamo – Course leader, 36 hours, 6 ECTS (AY 2025/26).
- Medieval Archaeology (BA), University of Bergamo – Course leader, 36 hours, 6 ECTS (AY 2025/26; 2024/25; 2023/24).
- History of Objects in the Middle Ages (MA), University of Bergamo – Co-course leader, 36 hours, 6 ECTS (AY 2024/25).
- Advanced GIS Lab (MA, Geo-Urban Planning), University of Bergamo – Instructor, 20 hours, 4 ECTS (AY 2021/22–2023/24).
- Alpine Landscape Archaeology (Professional development course), University of Bergamo – Instructor, 8 hours, 2 ECTS (AY 2021/22–2022/23).
- Building Archaeology Laboratory, University of Bergamo – Instructor, 30 hours, 6 ECTS (AY 2019/20).
- Medieval Archaeology Laboratory, University of Bergamo – Instructor, 30 hours, 6 ECTS (AY 2020/21).

For a detailed list of my full teaching experience, please refer to the *Teaching experience* section

INVITED TALKS AND CONFERENCE CONTRIBUTIONS (LAST, SELECTED)

From 2013 to the present, I have participated in more than fifty conferences, seminars, workshops, and related events as a speaker and/or organiser in Italy and abroad, including in the United States (AIA Annual Meeting), the United Kingdom (UCL – University College London), Spain (Universitat de Girona), Croatia (University of Zagreb; IRCLAMA – International Research Council for Late Antiquity and Middle Ages), and Greece (TUC – Technical University of Crete). A selection from the last two years is provided below:

- AIA & SCS Annual Meeting, San Francisco (7–10 Jan 2026): ‘*Medieval Alpine Archaeology: Power, Production, and Environment between Italy and Switzerland (8th–13th Century)*’ (invited speaker).
- UCL, ‘Dams, Displacements, Legacies’ (May 2024): ‘*Rediscovering a lost alpine heritage: archaeological and historical investigations in the Fraele Valley*’ (invited speaker).
- Landscape Archaeology Conference (LAC2024), Alcalá de Henares (Jun 2024). Session organizer: ‘*Archaeology of the Uplands: searching for models and methodology in high altitude human-shaped landscapes*’.
- 10th Italian National Congress of Medieval Archaeology (SAMI), Udine–Cividale (Sep 2025). invited speaker (Landscape Archaeology section): *Paesaggio e ambiente di una vallata alpina: la Valmalenco nel Medioevo*.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

- Archaeological Institute of America (AIA) – Member.
- International Association for Landscape Archaeology (IALA) – Member.
- Italian National Scientific Qualification (ASN) for Associate Professor (Seconda Fascia), Competitive Sector 10/A1 - Archaeology (field ARCHEO-01/E - Medieval archaeology).

DIGITAL AND METHODOLOGICAL SKILLS

- GIS: spatial database design, data management and analysis for multi-site and multi-scale projects; advanced teaching in GIS.
- Photogrammetry: close-range and UAV workflows; structured documentation for excavation and standing buildings.
- Integrated field prospection: multispectral UAV survey, GPR, targeted test excavations; reproducible documentation protocols.
- Research data management: interoperable databases, digital field recording, and dissemination-ready outputs.

LANGUAGES

- Italian: native.
- English: fluent, with extensive experience in international conferences and teaching abroad.
- French: fluent.

PUBLICATIONS

Since 2013, I have authored more than fifty publications, including journal articles, conference proceedings, and book chapters. I am also the author of a monograph (*Edilizia residenziale medievale dell'Appennino reggiano. Secoli XI-XIV*) that was awarded as the best Italian research work of the year 2018/2019 (SAMI – Italian Society of Medieval Archaeologists) and has been reviewed in major Italian and international journals such as *Medieval Archaeology*, *Studi Medievali*, and *Archeologia dell'Architettura*, and I have co-edited a volume with Riccardo Rao, University of Bergamo (*Gli oggetti come merci nel tardo medioevo. Fonti scritte e materiali*). For a detailed list, please refer to the *List of publications*.

Bologna, 20/01/2026

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