Abstract:
I will present new findings from the UltraVISTA survey on the evolution of the properties of the progenitors of local ultra-massive galaxies over the past 11.2 billion years (i.e., since redshift z=3), along with recent results on their environment out to z=2 and of the relative role played by merging and in-situ star formation in the growth of their stellar mass content in the last 10 billion years. I will then present the first very exciting results from a spectroscopic follow-up program of candidates of very massive galaxies at 3<z<4. I will conclude by showing the latest constraints on the abundance of very massive galaxies in the early universe, as the frontier is pushed into the first 1.5 Gyr of cosmic history (i.e., z>4).