Giovanni Bolelli graduated in Materials Engineering at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia in 2003 and received a Ph.D. in Materials Engineering at the same University in 2008, with a Thesis entitled: "Surface Engineering by Thermal Spraying: Ceramic and Metal Alloy Coatings for Wearand Corrosion-Protection". Since 1/2/2009, he has held post-doctoral research fellowships at the Department of Engineering "Enzo Ferrari" of the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia. Since 09/2016, he is an associate editor of the Journal of Thermal Spray Technology.

His research activity primarily focuses on protective coatings deposited by thermal spray processes, including metal, hardmetal, ceramic and composite coatings for sliding and abrasive wear protection (from room temperature up to elevated temperatures) and for corrosion protection. Experimental characterizations are coupled to thermo-mechanical finite element modelling of coating performance and of deposition processes.

Other research topics include oxidation and hot-corrosion protection, and bioactive coatings for prosthetic implant applications. The research activity also extends to other surface engineering techniques, such as chemical and physical vapour deposition (PVD, CVD) and pack cementation. Most of these activities are carried out in collaboration with national and international research institutes and companies.