

Rural ctivators

Rural Activators Pilot Academy

Open Call for Participants

We're empowering the new rural innovators

Welcome to the **Rural Activators Pilot Academy**, from the *Architecto-Nemata* EU International project!

This is a pioneer initiative designed to support 30+ upcoming rural innovators across Europe to activate their territories by regenerating unused or abandoned spaces, to develop social innovation inside them, and inspire others to do the same.

We're currently on the lookout for 10 upcoming **rural activators in Spain | Portugal | Italy** that wish to embody rural regeneration excellence – who aim to bring creative approaches to revitalizing rural spaces and communities.

Important: **You won't just learn. You'll take the first steps, bringing your ideas to life, and start your own network of inspiring and established cases.**

As a participant in the program, besides accessing a pioneer training, you will discover many inspiring case studies: their work, their journey, their entrepreneurial stories – so you can model your own strategies on what they've built. You'll also have the opportunity to be in contact with the protagonists of success cases, so you can ask your relevant questions and explore their recipes for rural activation.

Start bringing your rural project to life!

What We're Building Together

The Rural Activators Academy brings together:

- **30+ up-and-coming rural innovation projects across Europe** (participants like you)
- **6 reference cases per country** (showcasing some of the most inspiring examples)
- **A platform for peer learning**, mentoring, and European collaboration
- An **online training and mentoring** in rural activation
- **In-person training and dissemination events** to allow you to present your project to potential partners and stakeholders

Your role as a **Participant** is to:

1. Actively engage in the learning and training
2. Share your story and background with fellow participants
3. Contribute to a European knowledge commons on rural activation
4. Work on developing your own project of regeneration in rural areas

Who Are We Looking For?

Ideal participants are individuals, small teams, or collectives that:

- Want to actively regenerate rural spaces (turning them into co-livings, co-workings, cultural hubs, creative centers, agricultural innovation, youth programs, social enterprises, hybrid farms, training centers in rural areas, etc.)
- Want to work closely with local communities (not extractive; collaborative)
- Have already identified a space in which the project can happen
- Have an innovative project that embraces architecture, social innovation, and/or community engagement
- Have some English communication skills so they can enrol in the international content and make the best out of the mentorship session

Your Commitments (What We Need From You)

The non-negotiables:

- ✓ **Be available and open** to share your own project of rural activation
- ✓ **Participate in 2 in-person events** in your country (locations to be defined, with a fair geographical distribution)
- ✓ **Participate in a minimum of 80% of the online sessions**

The nice to have:

- ✓ Participate in the international workshop in Italy
- ✓ **Provide overall feedback to the project**

Simple. Doable. Meaningful.

FAQs

Still in doubt if this program is for you? Take a look here:



What is a Rural Activator?

- We see **Rural Activators** as Social entrepreneurs: someone who imagines, plans & implements the sustainable regeneration of rural built heritage through social innovation together with local communities



Who can Apply?

- Any **individual or small team** with an upcoming **rural innovation project** in Italy, Portugal, or Spain.
- Municipalities owning unused buildings and seeking contacts with rural activators are also welcome to apply!
- More details on 'Who are we Looking for'

Objectives

- Promoting the regeneration of unused spaces
- Developing activation skills & networking opportunities
- Promoting new and innovative rural projects focusing on architecture, social innovation, or community building
- Helping the development of disadvantaged rural, remote, and peripheral areas
- Creating an international community of peer rural activators

What we offer

- National & International networking - with other newcoming rural activators, and also well-established rural innovative projects, local stakeholders and institutions, municipalities, etc.
- The chance to participate in the first Pilot Academy designed for new Rural Activation projects
- Online training and 2 in-person meetups
- Access to a learning platform & materials & knowledge on success cases
- Mentoring by expert rural activators
- Working with your peers to develop projects in collaboration
- Access to the International workshop in Italy

Selection Criteria

- To have your own regeneration project (an idea and the space identified)
- The idea should be innovative in the area
- It should also relate to any of the project's main focus points: a) architecture, b) social innovation, c) community engagement

How to Apply

- Interested? If this resonates with you, please write to any of the country delegates with your questions or fill in the form directly
- Submission deadline: Sunday, March 29th, 2026 (23:59)
- Announcement of results: Monday, April 13th, 2026

What is Not Included

- In-country travel (and to the international workshop in Italy - in-person attendance is optional)
- Accommodation (if needed)
- Meals at the in-person events

How will I get Visibility?

- **Be one of the 30 upcoming rural innovation projects in 3 European countries.** Become a Rural Activation reference!
- **Access to peer support, networking,** and potential synergies around European rural activators
- Feature in the **final dissemination materials** (reports, case study book, presentations, website...)
- **Social media campaign** promoting your project across EU networks
- **Attendance Certificate & Europass Certificate**

Learning & Networks

- **Access to the learning platform** with videos, podcasts, photos, and interviews - EN
- **In-person national training session** (idioms: PT, ES, IT)
- **Online workshops and access to mentoring** by established rural activators - EN
- **Access to peer support** - EN (or another mutual language)
- **Action Learning:** learn by working on your own rural regeneration project
- **Possibility to access the international workshop in Italy** (EN)
- **Showcase your project idea**
- **Possibility to apply as an individual or as a small team**
- **Networking opportunities** with European rural innovators and policymakers



[APPLICATION FORM](#)

The Timeline & Cadence

Phase	Timing	Commitment
Participants Application deadline	Sunday, March 29th, 2026	
Interview + Selection	Feb - March 2026	2-3 hours
In-person Kick Off Meeting	May 2026	1 day in-person
Online training + Mentoring	May-September 2026	15 sessions of 2 hours each
In-person Final Event	Oct - Nov 2026	1 day in person
Event in Italy (optional)	August 2026	4 days

One Last Word

Rural regeneration isn't a policy problem to solve. It's a movement to catalyze.

And movements need visible examples, brave pioneers, and people willing to share their stories.

Next Steps

Interested? Ready to become a Rural Activator?

1. **Reply to this invitation** by filling in the form
2. **Schedule a 20-min call** with the Rural Activators team to discuss expectations and answer your questions
3. **If you are selected, sign the participation agreement**
4. **Welcome to the movement.** Let's amplify rural regeneration together.

Contact & Questions

Email: Portugal: info@dinamo10.net | Italy: angelo@liberopensatore.it | Spain: ruralactivators@rooral.co

Learn more: ruralactivators.org

You can be part of the solution.

With rural optimism,

The Rural Activators Team

Empowering Europe's next generation of rural leaders.

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