

## RURACTIVE OPEN CALL - CHALLENGE 26

<b>Title of the challenge</b>	<b>Building Bridges: enhancing community cooperation through shared and community-based governance system</b>
<b>Dynamo (pilot location)</b>	Abruzzo, Italy
<b>RDD</b> <b>(Rural Development Driver)</b> <i>addressed by the challenge</i>	Culture and cultural innovation
<b>Overall context description and specific context to be addressed by the challenge</b>	<p>Abruzzo region is located in central Italy. It is divided into a mountainous area in the west, which includes the highest massifs of the Apennines, such as the Gran Sasso and the Maiella, and a coastal area in the east with beaches on the Adriatic Sea. Almost half of the region's territory is protected through national parks and nature reserves which offer opportunities for hiking, skiing, and wildlife observation. There are three national parks, one regional park, and 38 protected nature reserves. In the inland mountain areas, there are also small villages and hamlets with castles, hermitages, abbey sanctuaries and ancient churches.</p> <p>In Abruzzo, 32 community cooperatives operate across various towns, each striving to enhance local life through innovative initiatives. While these experiments are crucial for fostering community engagement and addressing local needs, there remains a significant gap in the ability to extend beyond municipal boundaries and adopt a networked, ecosystemic vision. This lack of broader connectivity hinders the potential for collaboration and resource sharing among cooperatives, limiting their impact on regional challenges such as sustainability, social inclusion, and cultural preservation.</p>
<b>Scope of the Challenge</b>	The scope of this challenge is to develop community-based management mechanisms that facilitate collaboration among the 32 community cooperatives in Abruzzo, addressing the need for a more interconnected approach to regional development. Sociocracy is a governance system that emphasises equality, transparency, and collective decision-making. It enables organisations to create inclusive structures where all voices are heard, fostering a sense of shared ownership and responsibility.

	<p>This challenge aims to establish frameworks that support horizontal exchanges of resources and knowledge among cooperatives, encouraging them to work collaboratively across municipal boundaries. This may involve the development of digital platforms/apps/tools that streamline communication and resource sharing, making it easier for cooperatives to coordinate efforts, share best practices, and tackle common challenges.</p> <p>Geographically, the focus will be on the Abruzzo region, encompassing the various towns where these cooperatives operate which are Aielli (AQ); Barrea (AQ); Calascio (AQ); Campo di Giove (AQ); Navelli (AQ); Goriano Valli (AQ); Sante Marie (AQ); Tufillo (CH). The initiative will particularly emphasise inclusivity, ensuring that the needs and perspectives of diverse population groups, including marginalised communities, are taken into account.</p>
<b>Solution requirements</b>	<p>Applicants are expected to provide innovative, concrete solutions that facilitate the establishment of shared and agreed management mechanisms among community cooperatives in Abruzzo. The solution should be easy to use, ensure open access, and utilise open data sources.</p> <p>The following requirements should be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Data management and Analytics:</b> Implement robust data management systems to track resource exchanges, community needs, and engagement levels among cooperatives. This data should be used to inform decision-making and improve the effectiveness of collaboration efforts.</li> <li>• <b>Community engagement tools:</b> Integrate tools for community engagement that facilitate participation and feedback from residents, ensuring that local perspectives are incorporated into cooperative initiatives. All members of the community should have the equal opportunities and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life, to enjoy an equitable environment and a standard of living.</li> <li>• <b>Sustainability considerations:</b> Propose sustainable technologies and practices for the operation of the digital tool and cooperative activities, emphasizing environmental responsibility.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Digital development:</b> Identify, design or create a user-friendly digital platform or other digital solutions (e.g. apps) that supports horizontal communication and resource sharing among cooperatives. The digital tool should include features such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ <b>Resource exchange system:</b> a module for cooperatives to offer and request resources, services, or knowledge.</li> <li>➔ <b>Event management tools:</b> functionality for organising joint events, workshops, or community gatherings.</li> <li>➔ <b>Collaboration spaces:</b> Virtual spaces for discussion, project planning, and decision-making, using tools that embody community-based governance principles.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Scalability and replicability:</b> Solutions should be designed with scalability in mind, allowing for easy adaptation and replication in other regions or among other cooperatives facing similar challenges.</li> </ul>
<b>Specific objectives and expected outcomes</b>	<p><b>Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Establish shared management mechanisms:</b> Facilitate the creation of equitable and agreed-upon governance structures among community cooperatives, ensuring equal participation for all members.</li> <li>• <b>Develop robust data management systems:</b> Implement data tracking and analytics systems to monitor resource exchanges, engagement levels, and community needs, enabling data-driven decision-making for more effective collaboration across cooperatives.</li> <li>• <b>Enhance community engagement:</b> Integrate tools that enable direct participation and feedback from local residents, ensuring that cooperative initiatives reflect community needs and foster active involvement from all stakeholders. Effort should be put into ensuring that also marginalized and less-tech savvy community members are involved in the process.</li> <li>• <b>Promote sustainability and digital solutions:</b> Propose and develop sustainable practices for cooperative operations, particularly in the digital platform's design, prioritising environmental responsibility and ease of use for cooperatives to share resources and knowledge.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Build a scalable and replicable model:</b> Design solutions that can be easily scaled to other regions and communities, enabling broader adoption of cooperative governance and sustainable community-based practices.</li> </ul> <p><b>Expected Outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Increased inclusivity and social justice:</b> Establishment of a governance model that ensures equal access to resources and participation in decision-making for all cooperative members, ensuring the involvement of people at risk of exclusion and fostering an inclusive environment across cooperatives in Abruzzo</li> <li>• <b>Improved data-driven collaboration:</b> Enhanced cooperative collaboration through data management systems that optimise resource sharing, track community engagement, and inform strategic planning, leading to more efficient and effective cooperative operations.</li> <li>• <b>Strengthened community involvement:</b> Increased resident participation in cooperative initiatives through integrated engagement tools, leading to greater community ownership and satisfaction in cooperative projects and activities.</li> <li>• <b>Sustainable digital infrastructure:</b> The creation of a user-friendly, environmentally sustainable digital platform/tool/app that supports resource exchange, event management, and collaborative decision-making, contributing to long-term cooperative sustainability.</li> <li>• <b>Scalable model for broader application:</b> The development of a replicable and scalable model that can be adapted by other regions and cooperatives, creating a wider impact and promoting the success of community-based governance on a broader scale.</li> </ul>
Available resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Network of community cooperatives:</b> A robust network of community cooperatives is available to conduct feasibility studies and partnership. Principal municipalities: Aielli (AQ); Barrea (AQ); Calascio (AQ); Campo di Giove (AQ); Navelli (AQ); Goriano Valli (AQ); Sante Marie (AQ); Tufillo (CH)</li> <li>• <b>Data on resident needs:</b> We can provide data that outlines the specific needs of local residents, which will aid in the analysis of the services to be offered.</li> <li>• <b>Links to similar projects:</b> Applicants will have access to resources and case studies from other similar projects, facilitating knowledge sharing and learning from best practices.</li> </ul>