

Application Form

PART 1: BASIC DATA

Experience data (complete the information below in a clear and concise manner)

Title of the experience: FirenzeProssima – Partecipa al Futuro (ForthcomingFlorence – Participate to the Future)
Name of the city or region: Florence
Inhabitants of the city or territory: 367.874 (Source: City Demographic Statistics - April 2022)
Country: Italy
Institution presenting the candidacy (name of the municipality, department, government, institution leading the candidate experience): City of Florence
Website of the experience or institution: https://firenze prossima.it/ - https://www.comune.fi.it/
Profiles in social networks of the experience or the institution: FirenzeProssima https://www.instagram.com/accounts/login/?next=/firenze prossima/ https://www.facebook.com/firenze prossima/ https://twitter.com/firenze prossima City of Florence https://www.facebook.com/cittadifirenzeufficiale/ https://twitter.com/comunefi https://www.instagram.com/accounts/login/?next=/cittadifirenzeufficiale/ https://www.youtube.com/user/comunefirenze https://t.me/cittadifirenzeufficiale
Start date of the experience: 2020
End date of the experience: ongoing
Budget of the experience (indicate the budget of the experience or the resources mobilized for its development and implementation): Total budget € 147.602,98 Details: Subcontracting for design, organisation, management and communication of FirenzeProssima participatory process: € 79.559,00 Additional City's communication campaign for FirenzeProssima: € 6.969,00 Subcontracting for design, organisation, management and communication of FirenzeRespira participatory process: € 29.280,00 (funded by Tuscany Region) Cost of City's Staff working on the FirenzeProssima and FirenzeRespira participatory processes: € 31.794,98

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Type of candidacy (Mark with an X in the right column)	New experience		
	Innovation on an existing experience		X
	Continuity of an experience		
Type of experience (Mark with an X in the right column) (you may choose more than one)	Participatory budgeting		
	Participatory planning		X
	Standing council		
	Workshop/meeting for diagnosis, monitoring, etc.		X
	Public Hearing/Forum		X
	Poll/referendum		
	Assemblies / Citizen juries / Deliberation spaces		
	E-government/Open government/Digital platforms		X
	Citizen initiative		
Objective of the experience (Mark with an X in the right column) (you may choose more than one)	To achieve higher levels of equality in terms of participation		
	Including diversity as a criterion for inclusion		
	Community empowerment		X
	To empower non-organised citizens		X
	To increase citizen's rights in terms of political participation		X
	To connect different tools of participation within a participatory democracy "ecosystem"		X
	To improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the mechanisms of participatory democracy		
	To improve the quality of public decision-making through the mechanisms of participatory democracy		X
	To improve the evaluation and accountability of the mechanisms of participatory democracy		
Territorial area (Mark with an X in the right column) (you may choose more than one)	All the territory	Local	X
		Regional	
	District		X
	Neighbourhood		
	Governance		X
	Education		

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<p>Thematic area (Mark with an X in the right column) (you may choose more than one)</p>	Transport	X
	Urban management	X
	Health	
	Security	
	Environment/Climate change and/or urban agriculture	X
	Civic associations, grassroots and new social movements.	
	Culture	X
	Housing	X
	Job creation	X
	Decentralization	
	Local development	X
	Training/learning	
	Economy and/or finances	
	Legal regulations	X
	Social inclusion	X
All		
Other (write the topic)		
<p>Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) associated with the practice Mark with an X in the right column (more than one option can be chosen) You can also add the specific target</p>	SDG 1 - No poverty	X
	SDG 2 - Zero hunger	
	SDG 3 - Good health and well- being	X
	SDG 4 - Quality education	
	SDG 5 - Gender equality	
	SDG 6 - Clean water and sanitation	
	SDG 7 - Affordable and clean energy	X
	SDG 8 - Decent work and economic growth	
	SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	X
	SDG 10 - Reduced inequality	X
	SDG 11 - Sustainable cities and communities	X
	SDG 12 - Responsible consumption and production	X
	SDG 13 - Climate action	X
	SDG 14 - Life below water	
	SDG 15 - Life on land	

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	SDG 16 - Peace, justice and strong institutions	
	SDG 17 - Partnership for the goals	

PART 2: DESCRIPTION OF THE EXPERIENCE

Fill in the following fields clearly and concisely. You can add links if you consider it appropriate.

Context

*In a **maximum of 300 words**, it presents the cultural, geographical, historical, institutional and socioeconomic context of the city, the territory in which the experience takes place.*

Despite being a medium size city, Florence has about 550.000 daily city users and 14mlns tourists/year (before pandemic) as UNESCO site since 1982 and guaranteeing a balancing inhabitants/temporary users is a priority (people/associations can contribute to the Management Plan <https://www.firenzepatrimoniomondiale.it/>). Florence is not just a tourist destination, but also home of sectors of excellence such as manufacturing, fashion and design system, high-tech, without forgetting the numerous universities and academies. The city development is strongly constrained by boundaries to preserve its priceless cultural heritage, nevertheless, it is fully engaged in sustainable, innovative and inclusive urban transformations. Due to its human-centric approach, Florence adopted an interdisciplinary and integrated framework convinced that only enhancing synergies, empowering stakeholders, and involving citizens, the city can handle the challenges and improve liveability.

Committed to be a climate neutral city means facing climate change (amplified by the huge number of temporary city users) with a holistic vision combining cross-sectoral competences for the enhancement of social and biocultural assets. The main goals are a well-being city, a more inclusive leaving no one behind, and promoting opportunities for all; a city more attentive to the ecosystem where public (green) spaces are meant by people for people equipped for the largest use/fruition, not merely kept but enhanced for socialization and integration. Florence also provides quality digital services to make life easier, accessible to all within the general framework to save CO2 emissions and reduce pollution, thus improving liveability.

The Pandemic taught us that public (green) spaces are essential for health and well-being both in terms of community and proximity and urban planning. Aiming at rethinking our city, we are promoting the citizens' active participation in co-designing, improving their sense of belonging and care of the territory (see "RinascereFirenze", a document open to everyone's contribution for the recovery strategy <https://www.comune.fi.it/rinascefirenze>)

Precedents

*Explain the precedents and origins of the experience: if it is the innovation of an existing experience, what are its origins, if it is a new experience, what are the antecedents in participation in your city/municipality/region. You can also indicate if you have been inspired by experiences in other cities/countries. (**maximum 300 words**)*

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Placing people at the centre of decision-making helps increase the political and social commitment for more ambitious goals. Stakeholder/Citizens' engagement is a structural component in strategic planning.

Since 2005, the Tuscany Region regulated for participation in the decision-making processes in the government of the territory and declined into detailed discipline as a 'planning' method.

Florence committed then itself to guarantee a decision-making process open to all as the town meeting in 2010, the meetings of 100 places in 2011, the listening marathons from 2014. The Marathon is an open discussion on wide-ranging topics organized in working groups focused on specific issues. Participants, through expert, are encouraged to develop reflections, exchange opinions and discuss proposals to share positions managing discussion on divergent ones. The goal of each table is to analyse any possible obstacle and together identify proposals to solve for common urban policies. The results of the discussion of each table are shared in a plenary session, at the end that could be find in a report available on the dedicated website <http://maratoneascolto.comune.fi.it>

From these experiences, the new Structural Plan and City Operational Plan (Green Plan included) are being then co-designed with citizens/stakeholders who are contributing on main issues as the use/functions of spaces, the strategic social and sustainable development objectives. The use of dedicated technologies/platforms allows a more involving and widespread participation to guarantee whenever the opportunity to attend to all. "Interactive maps" have been developed for the geolocation of the proposals: an open device to collect project ideas on specific sites (squares, streets, parks, etc.) in the following categories: Urban regeneration; Housing and services for residents; Public space; Mobility; Urban green; Cultural heritage and landscape. All proposals are geolocated in the interactive map and it's also possible to click on the chosen place to check the details.

Objectives of the experience

*What is the objective listed in Part 1 that you think is the most important, and indicate other outstanding objectives of the experience (**maximum 100 words**)*

To improve the quality of public decision making through the mechanisms of participatory democracy.

FirenzeProssima (and FirenzeRespira, as part of the path) aims at planning the development of the city of the future, its strategic vision, and the more specific aspects, co-designing with the citizens/stakeholders the desired/expected transformations, also taking into account the challenges imposed by the pandemic and climate change, also explaining why some solutions are needed. An interaction to define solutions tailored to different targets, with particular attention to young and weak people, through the networks of neighbourhoods and districts, through a territorial mapping made by those involved being resident or users experiencing the city services and facilities.

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Methodology

Describe the methodology of the experience: phases of the process, participation channels (maximum 300 words)

FirenzeProssima is the participatory process to co-design of the main urban planning tools at local level:

- the Structural Plan (PS), a long-term Plan (15/20 year) to draw the vision and define the strategies for territorial development and protection, in compliance with constraints and higher-multi level urban planning (national, regional and metropolitan);
- the City Operational Plan (POC), a medium-term Plan (5 year) to define in detail how implement the SP in terms of city's transformation: buildings, infrastructure and services. The POC also include the Green Plan, a new strategic instrument for the design of green areas, both public and private, which are not valued, as element of mending and regeneration of the residential settlement for community well-being and use of spaces.

FirenzeProssima consists of 3 phases:

Design stage taking into account the institutional, socio-economic, technical, and organizational context. Preparatory actions, in charge of the Municipality, consisted in: the identification of the macro-themes of planning and the related topics through a recognition of the programming/technical documents; the mapping of actors/stakeholders; the establishment of an interdepartmental working group; a "Scenario workshop" with the surrounding municipalities.

Open dialogue with citizens/stakeholders as mapped (associations, business, professionals, trade unions, students). Activities carried out:

- Focus Groups
- Itinerant Point Labs: temporary stands in 10 squares (2 per District) equipped as workstation
- Public Meetings in the 5 City Districts/Quarters (in which the municipality is organised) based on thematic issues, supported by engagement facilitators
- Interactive online/offline map to collect citizen's proposals
- Urban Innovation Lab (brainstorming open sessions among students and designers to elaborate ideas and solutions)

Outcomes showcase through:

- an interactive online Exhibition
- a public exchange event
- Reports publication on the website and spread through social network

The recommendations emerged throughout the process will be part of the plans.

Innovation

Explain what you consider most innovative in the practice. (In a maximum of 150 words)

The multi-level model is the innovative framework within engagement tools are deployed to guarantee no one is left behind. The Urban Innovation Lab: a "process in the process", actively engaged young people and skilled students that offered valuable contributions to discuss city challenges, considering that 2022 is the European Year of Youth.

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It took place in collaboration with the city's design schools (European Institute of Design – IED, High Institute for Artistic Industries - ISIA and Department of Architecture of Florence University) with the aim of developing solutions and projects for the "city of tomorrow".

Urban challenges addressed:

- Imagine the poly-centric city;
- Promote the active life of citizens;
- Urban Gender planning;
- Unconventional design (how people use spaces beyond the functions they were designed for).

18 projects developed by 68 students have been collected and showcased in a digital exhibition where the proposals are geolocated in interactive maps.

Inclusion

*Point out the importance of including as many groups and diverse populations as possible and how you have achieved it. (In a **maximum of 150 words**)*

Great attention was paid to groups/persons that generally do not participate in political/institutional life. A mapping of existing formal and informal groups and active citizenship was carried out to involve potential interested parties in all districts of the city, to allow a balance between centre/peripheral demand and participation. In addition to citizens, also city users were involved (e.g. students who in many cases are not residents but experience the city/its services for a temporary period).

The opportunities for listening/discussion were spread using targeted messages/tools.

The principle underlying the process is that a city designed considering also those with special needs is a city for everyone, where everyone likes to stay, work and live in (e.g. people with disability, women alone/with child, and children were at the centre of the inputs collection on mobility, services and housing). The approach is building a structured framework to balance positions, interests, and needs.

Communication

*What has been the strategy and communication channels of the experience so that the population knows about it and gets involved. (In a **maximum of 150 words**)*

In addition to the existing city communication tools (website, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Telegram, ...), a dedicated platform and social channels were created to spread the information on FirenzeProssima process and content plus an email for asking clarification (info@firenzeprrossima.it) and newsletter to get update.

The platform contains documents on urban planning and a section to facilitate the understanding (with faq and glossary); the interactive map are accompanied with tutorials to make access and active participation easy to all; the calendar of events; reports of all meetings and proposals for transparency and accountability.

The campaign was cross-media, combining a mix of tools:

- advertising online campaigns on Facebook and Instagram;
- radio campaign on a network of 7 local radio stations
- outdoor campaign (shop windows, flyers, posters, cards and binders)
- dynamic campaign (retro bus mobility + bus shelters);
- 5 newsletters (one for each District)

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Press conferences and press releases.

Articulation with other actors

*It explains how the experience was articulated with different actors and simultaneous or pre-existing processes. What roles did these participants assume? Explain the degree of success of this joint. (In a **maximum of 150 words**)*

FirenzeProssima experience was realized together with “FirenzeRespira” (<https://partecipa.toscana.it/web/firenze-respira>), the participatory process for the drafting of the Green Plan as part of the City Operational Plan dedicated to greenery as a space to be experienced, with a view also to inclusiveness involving local private/public actors.

Common stages: 5 in-person Point Lab held in each District, where citizens could interact with facilitators on both pathways. Over 12.000 participants (online and offline), about 800 proposals presented on the interactive map.

FirenzeProssima also capitalized the outcomes of the listening process “RinasceFirenze” (<https://www.comune.fi.it/rinascefirenze>) held in 2020 through online questionnaires (7845 contributions collected). A plan for post-pandemic city recovery that outlining priorities in the near future to build back better on: Polycentric city; New vocation for the historical centre; Living urban spaces; Green mobility; City economy development; Widespread culture; Children and families at the centre; Personal care: welfare, home, work; Boost the smart city.

Evaluation:

*What evaluation mechanisms have been implemented? Develop whether citizenship has participated in the evaluation of the practice (In a **maximum of 300 words**)*

The whole process was designed and realized by an independent social enterprise specialized in community empowerment starting from people and the shared management of commons (<https://www.sociolab.it/en/home/>). The idea was to receive the support of an external and skilled operator able to reach interested in people also with a predictive approach to create interest in public action. For FirenzeRespira, the mediator was Retesviluppo sc, founded by of young researchers from the University of Florence with multidisciplinary skills in Statistics, Methodology of Social Research, communication, training, education and evaluation that today it deals with participation, research and training with attention to the transformations taking place and social innovation.

The FirenzeProssima Reports (available on the website) gathers the input emerged processed through a sociological analysis: Are they relevant? Are they consistent with the regulations? - and from a policy perspective - Are they in line with the general goals of the Municipality?

The results were presented in a public exchange event with citizenship where the Municipality illustrated the participatory process achievements, what will be included in the new plans and what will not, providing the motivation of the choice and the related

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explications. The approval process for the SP and POC is still ongoing; the drafts have been published online and is now open for further observations.

During the FirenzeProssima design phase, the Municipality's Statistics Office collaborated to the definition of assessment tools to measure citizen satisfaction to be applied in all participatory process. The results are being evaluated and will be published on the City's website.

According to Regional Law a City's Guarantor of Information and Participation was appointed; he constantly monitored the activities and answered to citizens' clarification requests.

In addition, the city of Florence has a KPIs set to monitor urban policy implementation and Opendata set available online (<https://opendata.comune.fi.it/>).

Impacts and results

*Describe the impacts and results of the process. How many people have participated, and which are their profiles. What have been the impacts on public policies, on the functioning of the administration and on citizens. (In a **maximum of 300 words**)*

Since the process was develop during Covid-19 time, a mix-use system was built up to guarantee the maximum participation.

- 6 Online meetings with citizens (1 kick-off plus 5 District' meetings): 300 participants,
- around 10.000 web accesses
- 58500 people reached via social
- 5 in presence Point labs: 273 participants
- 5 public in presence meetings (1 for each Districts): 235 participants
- 3 focus groups with economic groups, trade unions, professional associations: 30 participants
- 1 Meeting with Mayors, politicians and managers of surrounding municipalities and Metropolitan City
- 1700 proposals included in the interactive map
- 15 internal meetings between Municipality technicians and Sociolab
- Urban Innovation Lab: 68 students, 18 projects, 5 schools
- Public exchange event: 200 participants (limited due to Covid-19 restrictions)

The recommendations merged were divided into 2 classes long-term (15/20 years, for Structural Plan) and short-term inputs (5 years, for City Operational Plan to be add to the Green Plan activity) and subsequently gathered into five thematic areas: "Florence works"; "Florence moves"; "Florence dwells"; "Florence lives"; "Florence regenerates".

This allows the Municipality to translate the needs and suggestions expressed by citizens into operational indications for planning tools.

This has strengthened the sense of belonging of citizens as they felt protagonists in designing the vision of the "city of tomorrow" finding their ideas and proposals into the draft planning tools.

Furthermore, citizens have become familiar with urban planning tools and the related technical and procedural flows, developing a greater awareness of the policy decision making process.

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After the final consultation stage (ongoing), the Municipality interdepartmental group will update the POC and PS for the approval by the City Council. Citizens will then have the opportunity to consult them and present remarks within a deadline set by the Council.

PART 3: EXPERIENCE SUMMARY

*A summary of the experience: origin, objectives, operation, results, monitoring and evaluation (Do not hesitate to repeat aspects that have already been written before, this summary is the one that will be shared on the digital platform for open evaluation and in the publication of the award). (In a **maximum of 500 words**)*

FirenzeProssima – Participate to the future is the 2021/2022 participatory process supporting the co-design of the main urban planning tools of the City of Florence:

- Structural Plan (PS), a long-term Plan (15/20 years) to draw the vision for territorial development and protection;
- City Operational Plan (POC), a medium-term Plan (5 years) to define how to implement the PS in terms of urban transformation: buildings, infrastructures and services. The POC also includes the Green Plan, a strategic tool for the design and enhancement of green areas, both public and private, as an asset for the community well-being.

FirenzeProssima aims at promoting citizens' participation involving different targets (with a special focus to young people) in designing the "city of tomorrow", for the benefit of the whole local community as well as enabling quality improvement of public decision making.

Based on the past experiences such as the "Marathons of Listening", FirenzeProssima capitalized on the outcomes of "RinascereFirenze", the 2020 citizens' engagement process collecting 7845 online questionnaires to define the post-pandemic city recovery plan. It was realized also in coordination with "FirenzeRespira", the participatory process for the drafting of the Green Plan (as part of the City Operational Plan) and consists of 3 phases:

(i) **Design stage** to prepare actions, taking into account the institutional and socio-economic context (mapping of actors/stakeholders, technical documents and guide for participants)

(ii) **Open dialogue with citizens/stakeholders** through:

- 3 Focus Groups: **30** economic actors (trade unions, entrepreneurs, professionals, associations);
- 6 Online meetings with citizens (1 kick-off plus 5 District's meetings): **300** participants;
- Itinerant Labs in 10 squares equipped as workstations: **273** participants;
- 5 Public meetings in presence around thematic issues supported by facilitators: **235** participants;
- interactive online/offline map as open device for participation: **1700** proposals collected
- Urban Innovation Lab: **68** students from **5** universities and design schools, **18** project ideas collected.

(iii) **Outcomes showcase** through:

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- an interactive online exhibition;
- a public exchange event with 200 participants;
- reports available on the FirenzeProssima website and spread through social networks.

The recommendations emerged were divided into 2 classes: long-term (15/20 years, for Structural Plan) and short-term inputs (5 years, for City Operational Plan) and subsequently gathered into five thematic areas (“Florence works”; “Florence moves”; “Florence dwells”; “Florence lives”; “Florence regenerates”).

These inputs allow the Municipality to translate the needs and suggestions expressed by citizens/stakeholders into operational indications for planning tools.

This shared building up process has strengthened the citizens’ sense of belonging to the community as they felt protagonists in designing the vision of the “city of tomorrow” with the recognition of their ideas and proposals into the draft plans.

Furthermore, citizens have become familiar with urban planning tools and the related technical and procedural flows, developing a greater awareness of the policy decision making process.

The Plans are already available online and after the ongoing final consultation stage for additional comments, a Municipality interdepartmental group will update the POC and PS for the approval by the City Council.