

## Call for participants: Utopic Urban Garden

### Volunteering Team project

In Rome from the 27<sup>th</sup> of May to the 11<sup>th</sup> June 2024



## What is the European Solidarity Corps?



The European Solidarity Corps is a funding programme of the European Union that creates opportunities for young people to undertake a long-term voluntary placement with the costs paid. Projects can be of community interest, in the social, environmental, or cultural field.

To participate in ESC you must be aged between 18 to 30 years old and be motivated by supporting important causes, discovering other cultures and living closely with people from other countries. Volunteers abroad receive funding to cover accommodation, food, travel, insurance and pocket money through their hosting organisation.

### Servizio Civile Internazionale: The coordinator organization



Servizio Civile Internazionale (SCI Italia) is the Italian branch of Service Civil International network ([sci.ngo](http://sci.ngo)), an international voluntary movement that is present in more than 80 countries around the world. It's been promoting international volunteering projects for 100 years on the themes of peace and disarmament, conscientious objection, human rights, and international solidarity, sustainable lifestyles, social inclusion and active citizenship. In the core, there is a real commitment

to make a change against inequality, injustice, and violation of human rights. SCI Italia, founded in 1948, is an NGO recognized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Advisory Member of UNESCO and the Council of Europe.

It is based in Rome and it is supported by several regional and local groups of activists. The regional and the local groups support the work of the National Secretariat by dealing with trainings and the promotion of volunteering in various Italian regions.

To know more...

- Web site: [www.sci-italia.it](http://www.sci-italia.it)
- Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/sci.italy>
- Instagram page: <https://www.instagram.com/sciitalia>

## La Città dell'Utopia: The hosting organization



"La Città dell'Utopia" (Utopia City) is a project of SCI Italy located in Rome (San Paolo neighbourhood) inside the Casale Garibaldi, an old country house located on a green hill in the middle of modern buildings.



*La Città dell'Utopia entrance, 2023*

The project is an ongoing workshop on active citizenship and local development. There

are different events, initiatives, courses and workshops organized around different main themes: interculturality, sustainable lifestyles, antifascism and active citizenship. In recent years, work has been done to **improve accessibility to the garden areas** to enhance the plant richness that surrounds the farmhouse and enjoy the green spaces.

The main activities carried out in “La Città dell’Utopia” are:

- Organising and hosting of international workcamps, north/south trainings, and international youth meetings (trainings, seminars, youth exchanges, and capacity building activities).
- Organising and running awareness-raising events.
- Organising conferences, meetings, festivals, photo exhibitions, thematic meals, farmers’ markets, and courses on music, group dancing, language courses, gardening.

To know more...

- Web site: <http://www.lacittadellutopia.org/>
- Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/lacitta.dellutopia.7/>
- Instagram page: [www.instagram.com/lacittadellutopia](http://www.instagram.com/lacittadellutopia)

## The project: Utopic Urban Garden



*Gardening in the area around “La Città dell’Utopia”, 2023*

Urban gardening is the practice of growing plants, fruits, and vegetables in urban

areas. There are an immeasurable number of benefits when it comes to urban gardening: reducing food miles, promoting healthy eating, improving air quality, and providing green spaces for communities.

The garden of La Città dell'Utopia is a wonderful green space in the middle of the urban context, which has meant for many people social co-planning for the protection and preservation of the medium environment. In this small green island in the city, communities of people active on social and political issues coexist with animal species that find refuge where, in the urban environment, they are much more subject to urban impact.

The garden was built thanks to the passion and commitment of local activists, enriching itself with a botanical collection of Mediterranean and exotic plants. Even now a group of activists takes care of it by continuing to add new plants

**Utopic Urban Garden Workcamp** is part of a process of participatory construction through voluntary work with the aim of improving the accessibility of the garden. In addition to local activists, more than 50 international volunteers participated in this evolution.



*Gardening in the area around "La Città dell'Utopia", 2023*

The next step is to continue maintaining the trails and building facilities for community activities. Furthermore, the study of the botanical species present in the garden will also be important. With the aim of making the garden usable, it also means describing

it through the creation of labels and a map of the plants.

### The Workcamp

The Camp will be divided in two parts: a **study part** and a more **practical one** working in the garden. During the workcamp, the volunteers will have a workload of around 6 hours per day. The main activities will be:

- Continue the build the path and sheet metal terracing
- Build boxes with the reclaimed wood
- Create labels for the trees and plants of La Città dell'Utopia
- Organizing a public event open to all the neighbourhood
- Study visits: partners of SCI Italy and "La Città dell'Utopia"



*Gardening in the area around "La Città dell'Utopia", 2023*

### Study Part

The study part will be dedicated to naturalistic research in the garden to begin to build a collection of observations useful for reflecting on the importance of green areas in the city. Furthermore, a map of the botanical species present will be built and labels will be installed in the garden to identify them along the path.

At "La Città dell'Utopia", the volunteers will also have the chance to meet the group of

volunteers who take care of the garden and the farmers of the Terra Terra project. It will be an opportunity to learn the history of the garden and other projects present in the Rome area.

During the study part, there will be visits to agricultural cooperatives near Rome.

### Requirements

- Interest in gardening
- Group working skills
- Interest in organizing and creating events
- Artistic and manual skills
- Motivation for cooking and gardening
- Basic cooking skills
- Being between 18 - 30 years old.



*Participants of the Zuppa workcamp ESC teams, 2023*

### Logistics, financial conditions, and sustainability

**Simple life:** You will be hosted in the hostel of "La Città dell' Utopia". You will share a room with other volunteers. You will also share the two bathrooms of the hostel. We provide sheets and blankets, but don't forget to bring your own towels!

**Money, money, money :** This project is founded by the European Solidarity Corps

program. Therefore, we can cover all essential costs of the program (including food, travel costs up to a maximum amount per country, visa costs, accommodation, and pocket money). The travel is reimbursed after tickets and boarding passes submission.

**Sustainable food:** The food we will cook will be vegan/vegetarian. This is not just a practical decision, but also an ideological one: SCI believes in the values of sustainability and climate justice – and if we want to contribute to a more peaceful planet, we need to give up on industrialized animal agriculture and its destructive effects on our planet. You can tell us if you have any diets, allergies, or intolerances that we should be aware of.

**Sustainable travels?:** This is also why we ask you to come to this youth exchange by any more sustainable means of transport rather than flying (e.g. by train or bus), if somehow possible. We will guide you on how you can reach the venue once you are accepted to the project.

### How to apply?

We ask you to fill out [this form](#) and send your and Motivation Letter to the mail [formazione@sci-italia.it](mailto:formazione@sci-italia.it) until the **28th of April 2024** . We invite you to apply as soon as possible (all applications will be processed on arrival order).