



URBAN GREEN CARE

case study



BOSCOINCITTÀ & CFU

Our initiative, Boscoincittà, is developing and renewing a network of green spaces in the Municipality of Milan to give its citizens back the contact and health benefits associated with nature.

"We have sought to give citizens the possibility to improve their own urban areas, empowering them in creating a green lung for their own city".

*Silvio Anderloni
(CFU Director)*

MODEL IN A NUTSHELL

- Website**
www.boscoincitta.it
- Social channels**
facebook.com/boscoincittacfu
instagram.com/boscoincitta
- Country**
Italy
- Main sector**
Voluntary
- Specific sector**
Urban Forestry,
Outdoor Education and
Wellness,
Horticulture
- Stage of development**
Project
- Our work in SDGs:**
 -  **3** GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
 -  **11** SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



FROM FEW TO MANY

It all started many years ago when a proactive Municipality of Milan gave some green spaces to the association “Italia Nostra” and the association created the **Centro Forestazione Urbana (CFU)**, which, since 1974 has been managing, expanding, innovating and taking care of Boscoincittà.

At the moment there are about **18 people**, external professionals (foresters, botanists, architects, zoologists, accountants) and volunteers, who caring of Boscoincittà. Our project is addressed to different beneficiaries that can access the majority of the services for free such us: **scout groups, physically challenged citizens, families, schools, old-age citizens** and citizens of Milan.



FROM IDEA TO ACTION

In **1974**, the **Boscoincittà** concept started from wanting to give green space back to the citizens in the city, one that they could contribute to the development of.

Since the very beginning, CFU, through the success and growth of Boscoincittà, has promoted the extension and creation of **green areas** by carrying out its core activities in the following areas: green space management, secretariat and logistics, administration, park maintenance and agro-forestry works, initiatives and services for users, technical and forestry offices, urban gardens, carpentry, volunteer work, participatory approaches and stakeholder consultation and communication. Through these key activities, we have been able to develop the project over the years to offer a range of services like: **Environmental** (and 360 degree socially inclusive) **education, sports and fitness activities** (e.g. Nordic walking), **park accommodation, urban allotments and vegetable gardens** and much more.

We are able to offer **free services** thanks to the Municipality of Milan's grant aid (about 75% of our revenue) and to the combination of fund-raising activities, donations, additional grant applications, payment for use of the park accommodation and conference and meeting centre structure (about 25% of our revenue).

These activities and services result in a whole range of what we like to say are **“positive” impacts**. Boscoincittà has done its best to keep track of some of these and in 2019, the following are just a few:

- urban green management (allotments, new beehives, nurseries, tree-planting and forest management) in **3** of Milan's **parks**;
- offering refuge from urban heatwaves (microclimate created is 2/3 degrees less under canopy in summer heat);
- **184 school classes** and groups visits and thousands of children in 2019;
- **370 subscriptions** to extracurricular activities in: naturalistic aspects, orientation in the park, games outdoor entertainment, first aid and outdoor teaching;
- thousands of online bookings for park facilities (scout activities, wood cabin, picnicking and barbecuing);
- internships and university thesis activated;
- inclusion activities for migrants;
- **12** new registered **volunteers** and hundreds of “active” citizen volunteers involved;
- **1230** new **trees** planted;
- **226 allotments**.

FROM OLD TO NEW

Historically, our project is **one of the first successful examples of a participatory and community-inclusive urban forest and green space in Italy** and brought the different agriculture parks in South and West of the city of Milan together.

Our innovation can be summarised in a few words: **"giving the land back to the people"**. For this reason, we do not consider the other environmental projects our competitors because we believe in "the more the better" approach, that is, the more land that can be given back to the people, the better. Indeed, it was thanks to a forward-thinking and proactive mayoralty and some eager volunteers of Italia Nostra that started the whole project. They saw the need to conserve and sustain Milan's green areas for the people in a time when the city's construction sector was booming.

The project is innovative also because **it continuously adapts to the needs of new generations**; it is evident from the wide range of popular services that each of the park spaces offer. Indeed, this adaptation has been core to its development considering the model's dependence on the public authorities. The survival of this initiative through the various tumultuous years of political variation of the municipality's mayoralties is testament to its innovative and resistant spirit.

FROM NOW TO THEN

We have **more than forty years of activity behind**, for this reason the future does not frighten us.

We already have many plans and it is clear in our minds what we need to do to keep moving forward. The most immediate plans are to **increase our involvement in local sustainable policy development** and lobbying for existing and new green spaces, and fighting against the illicit use of woods.

To continue our good work we need to **maintain and grow our budget** for internal resources and additional materials for maintaining and developing existing and new services. But don't worry, we are working hard on that front!

