

RESEARCH THEME

XL cycle – a.y. 2024/2025

Title of the doctoral research

Design for the Regeneration of Local Values of Small Towns and Rural Areas

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Abstract

Today, we are witnessing a renewed interest in the recovery of smaller territories, not only due to the post-pandemic effect, which has highlighted the issues of environmental and social quality of living, but also due to the resonance of the PNRR call from the Italian Ministry of Culture to the "Attractiveness of the villages" and to the long-term European Commission initiative to develop "a common European vision for rural areas towards 2040".

The spotlight on this great heritage of small towns had been on for some time: as the "Arcipelago Italia" exhibition by Mario Cucinella at Venice Biennale in 2018, which showed the variety and quantity of small internal centers, holders of significant cultural heritage, material and immaterial, which risks disappearing.

Some processes and projects for valorizing internal areas were started well before, with actions often originating from the bottom on the initiative of local communities or individuals, driven by the urgency of imagining alternative scenarios to the rapid decline of places. Pilot projects guided by strategic visions and collaborative activation of communities, where the role of design, whether expert or otherwise (Manzini, 2015), is expressed in different forms: from the facilitator of processes of empowerment of local communities to the strategic planning of development and valorization plans, up to project experimentation in the field.

The research will focus on the analysis of case studies and the return of an interpretative framework of the methods, tools, and expected or obtained results, focusing on the role of design in these collaborative processes.

The research's expected outputs are the definition of interpretation and assessment models of possible actions in small towns and rural areas and developing guidelines to orient their regeneration.

Keywords

Design for Territories, Community, Rural Areas