

Allium

THE INNOVATION JOURNEY

Lenka Puh began her entrepreneurial journey at the age of 25. Since then, she has continuously developed innovations in various fields, focusing primarily on those that change the functioning of society.



Figure 1. Lenka Puh is a social innovator and mentor.

Founded in 2012, the Allium Cooperative and Institute, is a farm, an employment centre and a social enterprise. Three units (and practices) operate under its umbrella in different Slovenian regions (in the rural area near Ljubljana, in Metlika and Goričko). The cooperative employs people with disabilities whose work productivity is limited and who can only work with the help of a supervisor. Part of the innovation is carried out on land that Lenka inherited or purchased. As part of the expansion, further land has been leased supporters. Lenka is constantly developing innovations. In 2023, she opened an innovative Mini Factory concept in collaboration with Lidl, which addresses the need to process food

surpluses produced by farmers or small processors. Today, the cooperative connects various partners, farms, institutes, and the academic community, all striving to produce and process food according to the principles of sustainable agriculture. Lenka's contribution is important for both sustainable development and social innovation.

THE INNOVATION IMPACT

The Allium Institute has gradually created 12 new (green) jobs and regularly hosting around 10 volunteers. It employs severely disabled people and has developed educational programs for the less academically inclined individuals (e.g. biotechnology assistant). The institute successfully implements innovative practices and provides job and career opportunities by employing people from socially disadvantaged groups, which significantly contributes to the improving the quality of life. They produce organically certified food with a focus on herbalism, while the cooperative also educates people on healthy lifestyle at the work and at home. The cooperative also makes an important contribution to the circular economy and to reducing food surpluses, as it processes food into new products.

USEFUL LINKS

<https://dobro.si/>