



## INNOVATION JOURNEY

Sofia De Matteis manages *Avamposto Agricolo Autonomo*, an ethological donkey farm and promote outdoor education with her partner in Santa Caterina dello Ionio, Calabria. Sofia grew up in Sicily and moved to Bologna (central Italy) where she got a degree in geography and spatial processes. During the same period, she took part in various movements for social and environmental justice. Together with her partner, who is from Santa Caterina dello Ionio, she developed the idea of starting a farming project. They moved to Calabria in 2020, during the Covid19 pandemic, and bought the land, that had been abandoned for over fifty years.

The farming project is based on the principle of learning from the territory and from its inhabitants, revaluing their rich cultural heritage with an anti-speciesist and feminist approach. They thus cultivate traditional crops such as wild artichokes and let donkeys and other animals live freely in a large land plot. They also organize outdoor education activities for tourists as well as for local children and marginalized people, such as migrants living in the area. Thanks to the funding received through a national programme, Sofia is also about to open a kindergarten for local children, which will focus on the principles of living in

harmony with the local environment and with animals.



## THE INNOVATION IMPACT

Avamposto Agricolo Autonomo bridges environmental, social, and cultural sustainability, valorizing local traditional crops and farming practices, while also targeting local children as well as marginalized groups. Sofia has also been a promoter of the association We're South, a network of local operators and farmers celebrating the slowness uniqueness of rural villages in the region. She is also engaged in local movements fighting to have guaranteed basic services also in rural villages.

## USEFUL LINKS

[https://www.instagram.com/avamposto\\_agricolo\\_autonomo/](https://www.instagram.com/avamposto_agricolo_autonomo/)

[https://www.facebook.com/avampostoagricoloautonomo/?locale=it\\_IT](https://www.facebook.com/avampostoagricoloautonomo/?locale=it_IT)