



CÔA – Corridor of Arts

Artist Residencies – Call for Artists

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A. Information about the event and the Greater Côa Valley

The Côa - Corridor of Arts land art festival celebrates the cultural heritage of the Greater Côa Valley, which has existed since prehistory, when people first began to engrave the creatures that lived in that region on rock. These engravings of aurochs, horses and other wild animals illustrate that man has always admired nature. The Greater Côa Valley is a natural wildlife corridor, which from that time until today maintains its appeal as a site rich in biodiversity and diverse landscapes.

The Greater Côa Valley is a corridor that stretches through the ages, where generation after generation have shared their artistic expression in an open way. The engravings are today the expression of those feelings, flows and movements. This reflection of a worldview is present in the people who lived the landscape, and the festival aims to allow these communities to express their desires and admiration for an environment in constant change.

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This land art festival seeks to connect artists with communities in a natural environment, the Greater Côa Valley, to co-create works of art that will mark the landscape. Using natural materials (e.g., wood, stone, water, etc.), and respecting their natural decay, they will be integrated naturally into the landscape evolution process.

The first event will be held in the summer of 2023. The event will have a mobile format, taking place in three to five different sections of the Greater Côa Valley on consecutive weekends. The event concentrates artistic programming close to cities and towns and will have an artistic program and itinerary to be visited along the Grand Route of the Côa Valley, that will extend it throughout the landscape.

The event will feature an exhibition of 6 to 8 works of art that will remain in place and that will be conceptualized and built by an artist with the involvement of a community. The goal is to create a museum of contemporary art outdoors and along the Greater Côa Valley to be visited at a slow and respectful pace, in line with the rhythms of nature.

A call to artists and makers

Rewilding is a progressive approach to conservation. It is about letting nature take care of itself, enabling natural processes to shape land and sea, repair damaged ecosystems and restore degraded landscapes. Through rewilding, wildlife's natural rhythms create wilder, more biodiverse habitats.

Rewilding is much more than just ecological restoration. It is a new philosophy that wants to promote a fairer and more sustainable way for people to live on the planet, making space for all species and reconnecting culturally with our wilder natures. Nature is the original source of cultural expression, and there is a long tradition of land art in the Greater Côa Valley which this land art festival seeks to celebrate and reinvigorate.

The arts and cultural practice are powerful means of connecting to the past, questioning the present and exploring possible futures. They play a key role in addressing environmental challenges and provide a path to better understand how people are connected to landscapes and nature. Place-based practice in particular can often articulate connections to nature in entirely new ways.

This is a call to contemporary artists and makers who are interested in being in residence in the Greater Côa Valley. Residencies of between four and six weeks will explore and celebrate, through co-creation with local communities, the link between nature and art, celebrating the long cultural heritage of the Greater Côa Valley. An award of 4,000 EUR accompanies each residency, covering the residency costs and creation of the pieces, with additional financial support available for accommodation and living costs.

The residencies aim to allow arts practitioners a chance to demonstrate how the complex interrelationships that exist between nature, people and landscapes can be articulated in new ways. We are looking for artists interested in connecting local communities to the landscapes through the arts and culture.

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Rewilding Portugal

Rewilding Portugal is a private non-profit organization, based in Guarda whose mission is to promote nature conservation through rewilding measures in Portugal. Rewilding Portugal currently works in the areas of Riba-Côa and Beira Alta in northern Portugal, a region where high rates of land abandonment have created opportunities for bringing nature back.

Rewilding Portugal is the main partner of Rewilding Europe in the Greater Côa Valley rewilding area and is working closely with Rewilding Europe to achieve the shared goal of making Portugal a wilder place.

The Endangered Landscapes Programme

The [Endangered Landscapes Programme](#) (ELP) is a progressive initiative which envisions a future where Europe's landscapes are enriched with biodiversity, establishing resilient, more self-sustaining ecosystems that benefit both nature and people.

The ELP is not about recreating the past and taking things back to a time before human influence, but aims to restore processes, populations and habitats for a better and more sustainable future. It signals a shift away from "slowing declines" and "no net loss" to a more positive and creative agenda in which the potential of our land and seas is recognised.

A grant from the Endangered Landscapes Programme is enabling the rewilding of the Greater Côa Valley in northern Portugal through the project "[Scaling up Rewilding in the Greater Côa Valley](#)". By scaling up current rewilding efforts, this will transform a region with high levels of rural depopulation and species loss into one with new opportunities for both wild nature and people. The CÔA – Corridor of Arts land art festival is financed by the Endangered Landscapes Programme.

The Scaling up Rewilding in the Greater Côa Valley is coordinated by Rewilding Europe, and counts on a partnership which includes Rewilding Portugal, Associação Transumância e Natureza, Zoo Logical and the University of Aveiro.

B. Information for applicants

a. How to apply

Applying for an artistic residence of the CÔA – Corridor of Arts is a two-part process. The first stage asks for an initial Expression of Interest. Following this first stage, short-listed applicants will be invited by the panel of curators to work up their proposal in further details. The final eight to twelve artists/collectives will be chosen from these proposals.

To apply, applicants need to complete the Expression of Interest ([here](#)). You can send your form any time up until the deadline of 30th August 2022. Please note that any forms that exceed any of the word limits or arrive after the deadline will automatically be discounted.

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b. Who can apply

Residencies are open to artists, makers and other practitioners who work with natural materials. These natural materials include wood, stone, metal, water, or any other materials found on site that degrade naturally.

This opportunity is open to emerging, mid-career and established artists who are over 18 years of age. You must have demonstrable experience of high-quality relevant arts practice in a related area.

c. Judging criteria

The panel of curators will be assessing expressions of interest against four criteria:

1. Your Vision – art and nature combined

We are looking for artists who are interested in celebrating the links between art and landscapes, including its communities. We welcome artists who are interested in exploring how communities connect to these transforming landscapes, and whose artwork has the potential to empathetically reconnect people to nature and to communicate the challenges, impact and opportunities for rewilding and ecological restoration.

2. Your demonstrable artistic experience

The competition is open to emerging, mid-career and established artists, over the age of 18. You must be able to demonstrate your track-record of high-quality relevant arts practice in a related area. Please reference at least two relevant projects. We particularly welcome proposals from interdisciplinary artists whose practice transgresses the boundaries between disciplines and/or those with experience of site-specific, interactive, or socially engaged work.

3. Your strategy to engage with a community

There is an expectation that artists will engage with a community – which can be defined in different ways (e.g., a local guild of workers (such as cork extractors, dry all masons, basket weavers, etc.), a local village, a group defined by a common interest or practice, among others). The work of art should be co-created with this community.

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4. *Your commitment to key values*

Applicants should demonstrate a broad commitment to sustainability, rewilding and a shared vision for a wilder future in the Greater Côa Valley and Portugal.

d. Eligibility

- This opportunity is open to artists, makers, creators and other practitioners. We are happy to work with artists that are already part of an established interdisciplinary collective and/or those that are open to collaboration with other artists.
- We will accept proposals from practitioners working with any natural medium (wood, stone, metal, etc.) and we are open to both new and traditional artforms, as long as these follow the land art form.
- Artists must be over 18 years of age and have a substantial track record of relevant experience.
- Applicants need to have a commitment to equal opportunities and an understanding of safeguarding and health and safety procedures when working with communities and on location in often remote areas.

e. Notes

- There is a limit of one entry per person.
- If you apply as a partnership or collective, you will need an agreement on how the funds will be shared.
- You will retain intellectual copyright of your work but with the understanding that the land where the piece is found belongs to Rewilding Portugal, and that the Rewilding Portugal team has permission to use the artwork for commercial and non-commercial purposes during and post residencies.
- The Rewilding Portugal team will be able to provide some logistical support. This includes bringing you to the location of the residency and helping you to engage with the local communities if needed.
- You must be available to be in residence for several days between January and May 2023.
- Whilst you may refer to previous work, it is essential that new work is created uniquely for the purpose of this artistic residency.
- You will need to manage the logistics of your travel to the area, but the Rewilding Portugal team may be able to offer some assistance with finding local accommodation.

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f. Key dates

Please note that these dates are provisional and may be changed should circumstances require this.

1st August 2022	Launch of the call for artists
1st August 2022	Applications open for Expressions of Interest
30th August 2022	Submission Deadline for Expressions of Interest
1st October 2022	Stage Two Proposals invited
30th October 2022	Stage Two submission deadline
15th November 2022	Residencies announced
January – May 2023	Residencies begin
30th May 2023	Residencies end
June 2023	CÔA – Corridor of Arts starts

g. Award amount

The value of each residency is 4,000 EUR. Funds may cover or contribute towards: artists fees relating to research, and development, design, delivery, and evaluation of activities; materials and any necessary equipment required. There is additional funding available to cover the artist’s travel and accommodation costs. You are welcome to use the award as match funds should you wish. Artists will need to manage their own budget.

h. Stage Two applications

Should your Expression of Interest be successful, the Rewilding Portugal team will contact you by the beginning of September 2022 and invite you to submit a second stage application. This will ask you to tell us more about your concept, and it will also ask you to supply a timeline of your planned activities over the duration of your residency.

If you do not hear from us at this stage, you will not have been successful during this round. Unfortunately, because we are a small team, we are unable to provide feedback on Expressions of Interest. We will be able to provide feedback on second stage applications should you request this.

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i. Contact Information

Please note that we are a very small team. Please ensure that you have read all the information above in detail before contacting us with your query. Should you still have a question once you have read all available information please email us at info@rewilding-portugal.com. A member of the team will get back to you as soon as they are able to.

j. Data Protection

The Rewilding Portugal team will hold personal data provided by entrants. This information will be used solely in conjunction with your entry for the artistic residency. Rewilding Portugal undertakes to comply with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679), as well as other applicable legislation on data protection.

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