



**RADICEPURA  
GARDEN FESTIVAL**  
*biennale del paesaggio mediterraneo*  
SICILY

Organized by



In collaboration with



**Presents**  
**CALL for IDEAS**

SIXTH EDITION: MAY - NOVEMBER 2027  
Radicepura, Giarre (CT), Sicilia, Italia

**Gardens of Hope**  
***Cultivating Coexistence***

It is a place for human and botanical coexistence, where the slow rhythm of growth teaches us patience and harmony. A garden that uplifts the spirit and inspires optimism, a place where life feels possible even after hardship. A garden that is both a sanctuary and a classroom, where humans and plants truly live in dialogue rather than humans simply shaping nature. A place based on coexistence, not control.

**What we expect to see:**

Native plants, exotics and introduced hybrids coexist with wildlife habitats and gentle pathways for humans. The garden is designed to adapt naturally, letting plants guide human experience rather than the other way around.

Long-lived trees, perennial flowers, and layered plantings that unfold day by day, teaching visitors patience. Seasonal changes are highlighted—fallen leaves, sprouting bulbs, flowering cycles—so growth is experienced, not rushed. Benches or terraces that allow visitors to watch life unfold at its own pace, connecting human presence to natural rhythms. And, of course, water features.

*Emanuela Rosa-Clot, artistic director of the Radicepura Garden Festival*

## **Type of Selection**

Radicepura Garden Festival announces an international competition for the selection of garden designers who will be tasked with designing and creating **n. 8 temporary gardens**. The selection is launched on an international scale as an open call for ideas

## **The Radicepura Garden Festival and the Radicepura Horticultural Park**

The **Radicepura Horticultural Park** is the brainchild of the Faro Family who decided to make their botanical collection available: it was the result of fifty years' work and aimed at safeguarding biodiversity, the real wealth of this area.

This has been the aim of the **Radicepura Garden Festival** ever since it started in 2017. It is the first major international event intended to promote the culture of Mediterranean gardens, involving the main players of landscaping, art & architecture, designers and scholars. The botanical journey includes rare and unique species such as *Encephalartos*, a cycad genus of the *Zamiaceae* family, as well as permanent installations and gardens by François Abelanet, Paolo Pejrone, Michel Péna, Antonio Perazzi and Andy Sturgeon, in an exchange with the work by contemporary artists such as Emilio Isgrò, Alfio Bonanno and Adrian Paci. The park lies in the shadow of Mount Etna, where the rich soil has enabled over 3,000 plant species multiply, totaling over 5,000 varieties of plants. The park has 5 hectares of self supporting energy and water. The *Palazzo* of the Radicepura Foundation and the *Palmento*, a millstone used to make Etna wine, a jewel of industrial archaeology, and the set for *The Godfather, part II*. The green house (*Serra*) houses tropical plants such as the *Ravenala madagascariensis* and the *Cyathea australis*.

## **Participation Requirements**

Participation is open to everyone with the skills to design and create a garden. This includes individual professionals or teams of emerging architects, landscape architects, agronomists, garden designers, botanists, nurserymen, urban planners, engineers, artists, and curators. The Festival encourages the formation of multidisciplinary teams. The selection is also open to companies, associations, cooperatives, schools, and universities.

To participate, applicants must be **no older than 36 years old**; participants must not have turned 37 by the date of 10/30/2026.

Students may utilize a university tutor who is older than thirty-six (36). Each designer or group member may submit only one application. Winning designers from previous editions of the Radicepura Garden Festival are not eligible to participate.

## **Applications**

Candidates must submit their project following the online guided procedure received via email upon registration by the mandatory deadline of 10/30/2026. Participation is free of charge.

## **Selection Process**

The gardens will be selected by a Jury of experts who will evaluate their artistic and technical qualities, including Sarah Eberle, Jury President and landscape designer, Silvia Arnaud Ricci, art historian, Laura Gatti, landscape agronomist, and Antonio Perazzi, landscape designer.

**The selection process for the winning designers will be divided into two phases.**

In the **first phase**, designers are invited to respond to our call with an idea compelling enough to grant access to the selection, providing the required documentation (see page 6). From this initial stage, a short-list will be created to access a subsequent restricted phase, where candidates will be invited to produce a detailed project for a specific assigned area. Finally, the **final selection** of the **8 winners** will follow. They will be called upon to realize their garden in the Radicepura Biennale park, where the projects will remain on display for the entire duration of the festival. They will be visited, studied, and experienced by thousands of visitors, as well as by photographers and journalists from all over the world who will appreciate their quality and beauty.

### **PHASE 1 - IDEA**

Designers are required to present their project idea for a garden through a concise dossier that conveys a concept with a title, a brief but comprehensive graphic elaboration, and a short explanatory text accompanied by reference images and evocative sketches capable of communicating a vision. From the dossiers received, the jury will choose the best design ideas, selecting the finalists who will be invited to participate in the second phase of selection. They will be assigned a specific project area within the Festival grounds to be developed for the final stage.

- *Creative response to the theme proposed for the 6th edition.*
- *Originality, clarity, and coherence of the design idea and potential interaction with the public.*
- *The project's contribution to garden art, culture, and innovation.*
- **The short-list of the first gardens selected in PHASE 1 will be communicated to the candidates by 11/30/2026 via email.**

### **PHASE 2 - PLACEMENT IN SPACE**

Designers are required to place their garden idea within the assigned area by developing an executive project including technical drawings, construction details, executive direction, and a planting plan, as well as an economic estimate. The project must fall within the total cost of €10,000, unless the designer independently secures sponsors to cover extra expenses.

- *Coherence with the initial idea, feasibility, and consistency with the assigned budget.*
- **The gardens selected in PHASE 2 will be communicated to the candidates by 01/05/2027 via email.**

The **8 winning projects** will be realized by the team that submitted the project and will be guided and supervised by the Radicepura staff.

## **Further information is available contacting**

Website: [www.radicepurafestival.com](http://www.radicepurafestival.com) | Mail: [application@radicepurafestival.com](mailto:application@radicepurafestival.com) | Tel: +39 095 964154

## ***Deadlines***

The final deadlines for the digital submission of project proposals are as follows:

**Phase 1 Deadline:** 10/30/2026

**Phase 2 Deadline:** 01/05/2027

## ***Project Space and Design Guidelines***

Gardens will celebrate biodiversity, Mediterranean natural and anthropic (human) landscapes. They shall be original, innovative, attractive, usable so as to capture visitors' attention highlighting their message and the idea underlying the project. Furthermore, since the gardens will also be accessible in the evening, we suggest including a lighting system as there will be several evening/night events during the Festival. The Festival lasts six months and so the evolution of the garden over time will also have to be considered reducing maintenance to a minimum, or alternatively supervising them in the event of additional work (on top of ordinary maintenance) is required.

The Festival encourages interaction with the public, an innovative approach with new ideas to support and develop a positive interaction among people, their cultures and the natural environment they live in, a shared relationship between human beings and Nature. The range of Mediterranean climate zones and the complexity of the culture in the area offer a great variety of hints for creative ideas.

The nature of the soil and climate to be considered for the design to be in keeping: the soil is volcanic very rich in minerals, neutral to slightly acidic, fertile and with good drainage. The climate is generally mild, with very hot summers, with a peak of extreme heat in August, and equable winters. The area is windy in winter, with short Mediterranean storms between November and March.

## ***Creating the Gardens***

The Festival will carry out the actual construction of the temporary gardens. Site managers and foremen/women will oversee the creation of each garden. The teams will consist of professionals, volunteers and interns. Gardens will be built from February and must absolutely be finished by the end of April. The Festival and staff will guarantee garden maintenance after the opening and throughout the festival. Designers must be on site to assist and work manually for the week of garden completion, and for the opening of the Festival between the end of April and the beginning of May. Designers who have elected to participate will work according to the Festival programme.

Special work, such as power connections and points – pumps, lights and the like -, machines and plants – such as tractors, ploughs – will be carried out with the help of the Radicepura staff. All participating students will attend a Health and Safety Training Course provided for them, before working on site.

Festival gardens may be exhibited for more than one edition: designers will be required to update their garden after two or more years, through replanting. The Radicepura Garden Festival retains the right to change garden plants or to make other changes after the end of the Festival. Not all gardens will be kept beyond the 2027 edition.

## **Budget and Extra-Budget Management for Construction**

The total budget for the realization of each garden is **€ 10,000**, divided according to the following expenditure categories:

1. **Up to € 5,000** for the purchase of plants: Designers can draw from the collection of the Festival's botanical partner. For the choice of varieties and cost estimation, the [FARO PLANTS CATALOGUE](#) is available, to **which a 50% discount** will be applied exclusively for the selected projects.
2. **€ 5,000 for construction materials and technical assistance:** This quota covers all other out-of-pocket costs necessary for the creation of the garden, including:
  - a) **Materials:** furniture, structural elements, aggregates, and construction materials.
  - b) **Labor:** support from the Festival's team of gardeners and workers.
  - c) **Technical means:** use of machinery (tractors, excavators), soil, substrates, and systems (electrical/water).

The **€ 10,000** budget is strictly for construction costs and does not include professional fees for the designers.

If the design proposal exceeds this threshold but is deemed of high artistic value by the Jury, the designer may cover the additional costs through the following methods:

### **1. Technical or Direct Sponsorship:**

Delivery of specific materials provided directly by a sponsor.

Direct mandate for the execution of the exceeding works, subject to an agreement between the sponsor and the contractor appointed by the Festival.

### **2. Direct Coverage:**

Payment of the exceeding amount by the designer themselves, following the signing of an economic agreement with the construction company.

**Note on Sponsorships:** Every garden can be supported, in part or in its entirety, by external sponsors. The Festival guarantees donors and technical partners visibility proportional to the size of the contribution (in cash or supplies), according to a dedicated benefits plan.

## **Gardenia Prize**

At the conclusion of the 6th edition of the Radicepura Garden Festival, the garden best developed in the course of the six months of the event will be awarded the **Gardenia Prize**, a special recognition by the garden magazine.

## ***Documentation to be produced***

***All documentation must be submitted in both Italian and English.***

### **PHASE 1 - IDEA**

***Designers are required to present the idea behind their garden through texts, evocative images/sketches, and a botanical concept.***

To participate in the first phase, candidates must submit their proposal by sending **two separate PDF files (File A and File B)**, under penalty of exclusion. The two documents serve different purposes: File A ensures the anonymity of the proposal, while File B contains personal and professional information.

**FILE A (Project - ANONYMOUS)** A PDF of maximum 4 pages, horizontal A3 format, maximum weight 20 MB, containing:

1. The project title (the project must remain anonymous);
2. A text of maximum 2,000 characters (including spaces) describing the garden concept, the proposed visitor experience, and a description of the necessary maintenance;
3. Sketches and free-technique images that suggestively illustrate the core design idea, ensuring the botanical choices are described.

**FILE B (Personal Data)** A PDF of 1 horizontal A3 page, maximum weight 10 MB, containing:

1. Project title, name of the designer or team members and their profession or experience; if the designers are students, specify the name of the mentor and the reference school or university;
2. Contact details of the designer or team leader (address, phone, e-mail, website, social networks);
3. A brief presentation of the designer or team (maximum 1,000 characters including spaces);
4. Photo(s) of the designer(s) with the following technical characteristics: close-up, horizontal orientation, high resolution.

### **PHASE 2 - PLACEMENT IN SPACE**

***Designers are required to place their garden idea within the assigned area by developing technical drawings, a planting plan, and a bill of quantities for the project.***

**FILE C** - A PDF of minimum 4 pages, horizontal A3 format, maximum weight 20 MB, containing:

1. A technical masterplan of the garden (minimum scale 1:50) with captions and notes on the materials used. The drawing must be presented in A3 format;
2. At least one 3D view (perspective or axonometric) illustrating the garden;
3. Significant sections and elevations of the project;
4. A planting plan with a list of the intended plants (scientific names);
5. A cost estimate for materials and plants.

For a more comprehensive evaluation of the project, during the second phase, the **submission** of a physical model of the garden is recommended and appreciated (models and maquettes will not be returned). Please send to the following address:

**RADICEPURA - BOTANICA S.r.l. Via Fogazzaro N.19 - 95014 - Giarre (Ct), ITALY**

*Participation in the above Call for Ideas implies Project Designer(s) and the winners of the Contest irrevocably cede all rights – without restrictions nor exceptions – exclusively to the Radicepura Garden Festival, that retains the right to any economic utilization of the winning projects in any time or place. Furthermore, applicants authorize the Festival to publicize, exhibit and circulate their projects. All Projects must be submitted in Italian and English.*

### ***Bonuses and Sponsors***

Each selected project will receive a **€ 1,000.00** (one thousand Euro) bonus to be used **exclusively to cover travel, transport and food expenses**. Bonuses will be managed directly by the Festival staff.

Throughout installation, designers will be housed in one of the guestrooms on the estate. **Should designers choose alternative accommodation, they shall bear all costs and it will not be covered by the above bonus.**

Designers are also encouraged to seek donations or funding for materials and other expenses and to involve any sponsors interested in the theme and to the value of promotion, dissemination and conservation of landscape culture pursued by the Radicepura Garden Festival and by each and every project proposal.

### ***General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)***

Processing of personal data (GDPR)

The Botanica srl gathers and processes your personal data, namely: - name and surname - date of birth - e-mail address - telephone number - nationality - country of origin - profession – newsletter for the purpose of implementing the programme. Personal data will be processed and stored in accordance with the provisions of the European Regulation No. 2016/679 (GDPR). The relevant national data protection legislation Consent allows the Controller to gather process and store personal data and will serve as the basis for the processing of personal data by the Data Processor. By submitting an application, participants consent to the processing of their personal data, which is part and parcel of the programme, and express their consent to the transmission, collection, processing and storage of their personal data. Personal data will be stored for as long as is strictly necessary for the implementation of the programme and, thereafter, exclusively for the purpose of fulfilling any legal obligations connected with or arising from the programme.

Users (participants/applicants) also agrees to allow the Botanica srl and its staff/members to use the materials received through any type of communication without any remuneration, both for the reviewing and the judging purposes, as well as promotional purposes with the name of the author(s).

### ***Selection Organiser***

The Radicepura Garden Festival

### ***Address***

Organisational Secretariat

Via Fogazzaro n.19 Giarre (CT) Post Code 95014 Phone + 39 095 964154

### ***Calendar and deadlines***

- Deadline STEP 1 10/30/2026
- STEP 1 – Finalist announced 11/30/2026
- Deadline STEP 2 01/05/2027
- Winner announced 01/15/2027
- Site work February -April 2027
- Inauguration of the Radicepura Garden Festival May 2027

## Contacts

Web site: [www.radicepurafestival.com](http://www.radicepurafestival.com)

Mail: [application@radicepurafestival.com](mailto:application@radicepurafestival.com)

Tel: +39 095 964154

Instagram: [@radicepuragardenfestival](https://www.instagram.com/radicepuragardenfestival)

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