

Added Value of Networking

Success Story

Success Story title	<i>Rural4Youth</i>		
Theme	<i>1. Network communications; 2. Knowledge exchange</i>		
NRN	<i>Italy</i>	Coordinator	<i>RuraLand team, National Rural Network</i>
Partners	<i>8 Pilot Universities distributed across the country, with study programmes involving landscape, environment and communications</i>		
Period	<i>From October 2011 till present</i>	Resources	<i>47,000 Euro</i>
Geo-location	<i>Italy</i>		
Beneficiaries	<i>University students (senior year students, recent graduate students, postgraduate students)</i>		

Background

The debate on the correct use of natural resources and the essential role of rural areas in Italy's cultural identity appears particularly opportune in consideration of the significance that such themes take on in institutional policies. There is also evidence that the valorization of biodiversity, climate change, renewable energy and water resource management, is one of the main objectives of the CAP post-2013. For this reason, in order to contribute to communicating the successful experiences of rural areas and to creating a link between institutions and universities across the country, the Italian NRN has devised an initiative specifically addressing ideas worth spreading by giving younger age groups a more central role in a change aimed at preserving/valorizing rural heritage, which belongs to all of us.

Main activities

- **Implementation of a web site**, to support activities and present text and images on 4 topics: biodiversity, energy, water and climate;
- **Use of social networks** (i.e. Facebook, Twitter and the practice community YouRuralNet), to share opinions and experiences, to ask questions and receive answers and to participate in interactive working groups;
- **Launch of the project** at the Italian Ministry of Agriculture, illustrating the reasons, the methodological approach and the innovative nature of our project, explaining it in depth;
- **Targeted workshop** at the pilot university, to increase both knowledge and awareness/responsibility among university students;
- **Field experience to be done by students**, in order to create a short video valorizing the environmental value of an area and in order to identify, through images and text, innovative examples of rural communities, and explaining why choices made in rural areas are successful; and,
- **Realization of a video collage of contributions received**, to be done by the rural network, to present a narration of the environment – in particular of those rural areas far from tourist places of interest – according to new patterns and languages essentially based on the process of observing the territory we are surrounded by and then telling the story of what has been observed.





Contribution of the NSU

The communications staff has been involved through participation of its experts, which have been specifically involved in the planning stage.

Contribution of the partners

Contribution of the pilot universities - throughout teachers involved in the project as referees - is:

- *Helping students to identify case studies and derived insights; and,*
- *Participating in exploring new and innovative contexts, like new media and digital information.*

Success factors

1. *The field experience which helps university students to approach concrete projects, obtaining interviews with local stakeholders, identifying positive examples to overcome situations of degradation and identifying peculiarities and strong points of each territory as well as the rural land resources; this experience also helps students approaching agriculture not only under its traditional aspects but also as a resource that creates employment opportunities;*
2. *The possibility to share every step of this video – idea, screenplay, shooting, music – on the web where also the final editing phase will take place; and,*
3. *The use of images in communicating EU RDPs.*

Additional information

www.rural4youth.it

