



RADICEPURA
GARDEN FESTIVAL
biennale del giardino mediterraneo

organised by



with



Presents a

CALLforIDEAS

Fifth Edition

MAY-DECEMBER 2025

Radicepura, Giarre (Catania), Sicily, Italy

Chaos

(and) Order in the garden

-

Climate change and conflicts have determined a new approach to the environment, which in turn calls for a new perspective in landscape design, keeping abreast with our day and age: lines, paths, volumes, functions and gardeners are no longer enough to turn a place into a garden. Gardens have always required planning, although they need not be educational but leave room to our imagination. As certainty of formal spaces is wavering, a change of style is blossoming no longer fearing to identify

key values in small things. In the new gardens the wonderment of doing and making is not juxtaposed to leisure as it feeds on our greater awareness and respect for the environment, preferring slow time as the time of Nature.

Plants are the matter and the subject of all gardens in as much as they represent harmony and beauty: left unto themselves they initially require time find this balance, they change the shapes and sizes in a garden, they even need opposing forces to be controlled. Yet, a well designed project will enable plants to reach maturity, synchronizing with our expectations, completing the garden with virtuous variations able to fulfill even the most ambitious dreams.

We are aware of a biological network that draws energy from biodiversity: it means the boundaries between personal and collective spheres dissolve giving way to a more encompassing notion of Nature, an idea we are attracted to and which helps us recognize landscapes as a common good.

As we have changed, so have our ideas of Nature: garden designing will have to seek new forms based on a evolved concept of wilderness culture. New apparently chaotic gardens spring up, as an artistic expression to fulfill dreams, as a natural choice to create the most beautiful of gardens, where both the biological forces and the creative intuitions of the design blend into a balance. Nature lovers know that chaos is a transient state that does not pertain to us, but garden lovers know that nature accepts no imposition, unless care and constant presence are offered.

We are addressing designers from all walks of life who have good knowledge of Nature, artistic skills and humbleness, to identify style strategies and practices able to lightly balance order and disorder, to indulge Nature without domesticating it.

Antonio Perazzi, artistic director of the Radicepura Garden Festival

In the **first STEP**, designers are invited to answer our call illustrating an idea and will be selected. Following this, there will be a further selection of those who can access the **next step**: shortlisted applicants will be asked to send a detailed project for the specific area assigned to them. Lastly, the **seven winners of the final selection** will be asked to realize their gardens in the Park of the Radicepura Biennial. Projects will be on show throughout the Festival, visited, experienced and studied by thousands of visitors, as well as photographers and journalists from the world over who will appreciate their quality and beauty.

Selection

The Radicepura Garden Festival is pleased to announce an international competition for garden designers of **7 temporary gardens**. It is an international open call for ideas.

The Radicepura Garden Festival and the Radicepura Botanical Gardens

The **Radicepura Botanical Gardens** 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*.

Requirements for Participation

Anyone with the expertise to plan create a garden: individual professionals or a team of emerging landscape architects, agronomists, garden designers, botanists, nursery experts & owners, planners, engineers, artists, curators. The Festival encourages multidisciplinary teams. The competition is also open to companies, associations, cooperatives, schools and universities.

Participants can not be **over 36**. Students may have an over-36 university tutor. Seven gardens will be created inside the Radicepura Botanical Gardens.

All participants or members of a group of designers can only make one application. Winners of previous Radicepura Garden Festival editions cannot apply.

Applications

Applicants will submit their projects according to the guided on line procedure emailed to them upon registration. Applications must be received by (no later than) **October the 30th, 2024**. Participation is free

Selection

Selection will be a two-step process to identify winners.

STEP 1- IDEAS

Applicants will outline the idea underlying their garden design in a brief dossier in the form they choose: the project must include the garden concept with a title, a concise but exhaustive graphic project with a short text explaining by reference images and evocative sketches able to convey their vision. The Jury shall select the best projects. The shortlist will be drawn up for those taking part in Step 2. A specific area of the Festival will be assigned to them. They will have to finalize the project for the second step.

STEP 2 – SPATIAL POSITIONING

Designers shall locate their idea of a garden in the area assigned to them with an executive project, complete with technical drawings, construction details, project manager (aka developer) and planting plan, as well as costing estimates. Project costs shall not exceed €10,000, unless designers independently find sponsors to cover any costs in excess of the afore mentioned sum.

Gardens will be selected by a Jury of experts who will assess their technical and artistic qualities.

STEP 1

- *A creative response to the 5th edition's theme.*
- *Innovative, clear and consistent project proposal and its potential interaction with the public.*
- *The contribution of the project to garden art and culture and to innovation.*

STEP 2

- *Consistency of the design with the initial idea, feasibility and consistency with the assigned budget.*

Step 1 participants shortlisted for **Step 2** will be informed by email by **10/30/2024**.

The **7 winning projects** shall be created by the project team, guided and supervised by Radicepura staff members.

Further information is available contacting

website: www.radicepurafestival.com

email: application@radicepurafestival.com

Phone: +39 095 964154

Deadlines

Digital submission of project proposals:

STEP 1 deadline: October 30, 2024

STEP 2 deadline: November 25, 2024

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 2025 edition.

Allocated Budget

€ 10,000 (ten thousand Euros) will be allocated to each selected project (person/group). The cost of materials should not exceed **€ 5,000**.

To choose plants and get an estimate of costs, you can consult the *Piante Faro Catalogue*, with a 50% discount at the following link:

<https://www.piantefaro.com/piante-faro-catalogue.pdf>

In the event of the Budget not covering all costs and if the project interests the Artistic Jury, participants can:

- 1) Add one's own Sponsor who can:
 - a) send materials; and

- b) subject to a prearranged agreement with those building the project, may proceed with the section not covered by the budget as set by the present call.
- 2) the designer may pay the balance directly to those building the project, subject to an economic agreement.

Every garden can be partly or wholly sponsored by one or more.

The Festival offers many visibility opportunities to donors and sponsors, according to the size of their contribution or of donated products/materials.

Gardenia Prize

At the conclusion of the 5th 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.

Required Documentation

STEP 1- The IDEA

Designers will describe the idea underlying their garden project using text, images and evocative sketches and the botanical concept.

A - 1 max 4 page PDF file, horizontal A3 format, max weight 20 MB, specifying:

- the title of the project; the project must not include the name(s) of the designer(s), but must be anonymous;
- a text max 2,000 characters (spaces included) describing the concept of the garden, the presentastion of the experience suggested by visitors and a description of required maintenance; and
- sketches, free hand images illustrating the concept underlying the project, with a description of botanical choices.

B - 1 one-page PDF horizontal A3 file, max weight 10 MB, specifying:

- the title of the project, name of the designers or of the team members and their profession(s) or

experience; in the event of designers being students please specify the name of the tutor/mentor or of the relevant university;

- contact details of the designers or of the team leader (address, telephone, email, website and social media);
- short 1,000 character (spaces included) presentation of the designer or of the team; and
- a photo of the designer(s) with the following technical features: closeup, horizontal image orientation, and high resolution.

STEP 2- SPATIAL POSITIONING

Designers shall position the garden concept in the space assigned to them, developing technical drawings, planting plan and a metric calculation (aka as the area) of the project.

C – Minimum 4 page horizontal A3 PDF file, with a max weight of 20 MB,with:

- a technical plan of the garden (min 1:50) with captions and notes on materials. The drawing will be in an A3 format;
- at least one perspective or axonimic view showing the garden;
- meaningful elevations of the project;
- planting plan with a list of the planned plants using their scientific names; and
- estimated costs of plants and materials.

For a more comprehensive assessment of STEP 2 we suggest and appreciate if you can send a model that will not be returned, addressing it as follows:

RADICEPURA

BOTANICA S.r.l. 19, Via Fogazzaro - 95014 - Giarre (Catania), 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

- Deadline STEP 1 10/30/2024
- STEP 1 – Finalist announced 11/15/2024
- Deadline STEP 2 01/05/2025
- Winner announced 01/15/2025
- Site work February -April 2025
- Inauguration of the Radicepura Garden Festival May 2025

Radicepura Garden Festival

FIFTH EDITION 2025

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