

Common Themes

The pilot revealed recurring opportunities across activities: the value of circular material practices; the role of storytelling and design in reactivating identity; the importance of accessible public spaces; and the potential of participatory governance to strengthen resilience. These patterns can guide future municipal projects across the region, especially in rural and inner areas facing similar demographic and economic pressures.

Contributions to a Future Toolbox

The pilot generated transferable tools: participatory formats (World Café, hybrid voting), templates for circular material reuse, guidelines for inclusive public-space design, and governance models linking municipalities, universities and local enterprises. These methods proved effective in fostering co-creation, ensuring community ownership and enabling scalable, place-based innovation.

NEB Values

BEAUTY

Design Excellence - Emotional Connection
Cultural Revitalization – Enhanced Public Spaces

AMBITION I: to activate

AMBITION II: to connect

AMBITION III: to integrate

The pilot enhances the aesthetic and emotional quality of Minucciano through design excellence and context-sensitive interventions. Urban furniture and public elements made from marble waste blend functionality with artistic value, reinterpreting local heritage in contemporary forms. The revitalisation of lakeside spaces strengthens the emotional bond between residents and their landscape, creating places for gathering, contemplation and recreation. Design Excellence: the initiative focuses on creating visually appealing urban furniture and design elements from marble waste, blending functionality with artistic value. Emotional Connection: the project fosters a sense of pride and belonging among residents while offering visitors a memorable, emotionally enriching experience. Cultural Revitalization: the initiative celebrates the local marble heritage, transforming industrial waste into cultural assets. Enhanced Public Spaces: the creation of cycle paths, picnic areas, and artificial beaches improves the quality of life for residents and tourists, offering spaces for recreation, relaxation, and social interaction.

Sustainable

Waste Reduction and Circular Economy - Environmental Regeneration
Climate Resilience - Sustainable Tourism

AMBITION I: to repurpose

AMBITION II: to close the loop

AMBITION III: to regenerate

The pilot promotes sustainability by transforming marble waste into durable public elements and design components, reducing landfill pressure and supporting a circular local economy. The regeneration of the Gramolazzo lakeshore integrates ecological criteria, improving biodiversity, water quality, and landscape resilience. The initiative aligns with EU climate goals by encouraging low-impact production, responsible resource use, and awareness of renewable energy. Slow, eco-friendly infrastructures such as cycling paths, hiking trails and small bathing areas support a model of sustainable tourism that enhances the territory while minimising environmental impact and helping supralocal adaptation. The creation of eco-friendly slow infrastructures (e.g., cycling routes, hiking trails, and meditation areas support a mode of sustainable tourism that enhances the territory while minimising environmental impact.

Together

Accessibility for All - Affordability - Participatory Governance
Design for All - Social Equity:

AMBITION I: to include

AMBITION II: to consolidate transform

AMBITION III: to

The pilot strengthens social inclusion by ensuring that new public spaces — paths, picnic areas, lakeside facilities — are accessible to all age groups and abilities. By offering free or low-cost amenities, it reduces socio-economic barriers and supports community wellbeing. Participatory governance is central: residents, students, businesses and institutions co-designed priorities and evaluated proposals through hybrid voting. The initiative promotes social equity by creating opportunities for young people, artisans and marginalised groups within the local production chain, reinforcing community cohesion and shared responsibility for the territory. The initiative ensures that redeveloped spaces, such as cycle paths, picnic areas, and beaches, are accessible to everyone, including people with disabilities, families, and elderly residents. By integrating cultural memory, natural beauty and thoughtful design, the project elevates everyday environments and reinforces a shared sense of belonging.

NEB Working Principles

Participatory process

Ambition II: to co-develop

AMBITION I: to consult

AMBITION II: to co-develop

AMBITION III: to self-govern

The pilot is grounded in an inclusive and iterative participation model. A World Café brought together citizens, associations, professionals and students to identify needs and visions for Minucciano. These insights informed the idea contest, the excellent work done by the young designers under the supervision of the DIDA professors, and the promotion of local community’s evaluation of received project ideas through both in-person and digital voting. Public events onsite created spaces for dialogue, feedback and collective reflection. The process strengthened trust, ensured alignment with local priorities, and empowered the community to shape the direction of territorial regeneration.

Multi-level engagement

Ambition II: to work across levels

AMBITION I: to work

AMBITION II: to work across levels

AMBITION III: to work globally

The initiative connects municipal action with regional strategies and academic expertise, forming a governance ecosystem capable of scaling beyond Minucciano. Cooperation between Regione Toscana, the Municipality, the University of Florence, local enterprises and the B4M network enables knowledge exchange, resource sharing and coordinated planning. This multi-level structure supports replication in other Mediterranean inner areas and positions Minucciano as a top noded demonstrator of integrated rural innovation.

Transdisciplinary approach

Ambition I: to be multidisciplinary

AMBITION I: to be multidisciplinary

AMBITION II: to be interdisciplinary

AMBITION III: to be beyond-disciplinary

The pilot brings together design, architecture, material science, environmental studies, social sciences and local craftsmanship. Students, researchers, artisans, businesses and citizens collaborated around a shared problem definition, merging diverse skills and perspectives. This transdisciplinary approach enabled solutions that are technically feasible, culturally grounded and socially meaningful, demonstrating how complex territorial challenges benefit from cross-sector creativity and integrated thinking.