

## CALL FOR YPP PARTICIPANTS

### YOUNG PLANNING PROFESSIONALS WORKSHOP

*Side Event - 60th ISOCARP Anniversary, World Planning Congress – Diamond Edition (3 Oct – 7 Oct 2024)*

## *THE VALLEYS OF SIENA GLOBAL IDEAS FOR LOCAL CONNECTIVITY*

### 1. Background about the Programme

The Young Planning Professionals' Programme was initiated in 1991 by one of the most appreciated members of our society – Estefanía Chavez de Ortega at the 26th ISOCARP Congress in Guadalajara, Mexico. Since then, ISOCARP has been organising International YPP Workshops, which provide young planning professionals with an opportunity to work in a multi-cultural setting as a source of meaningful debate, new ideas and rejuvenation for the Society, to share their experiences on real-life planning problems, to transfer knowledge and skills in an attempt to resolve complex and multi-dimensional planning issues, exchange ideas and learn from each other as well as from seniors, in the name of the universal vision of promoting and enhancing planning profession.

Up to today, around 50 YPP workshops have been organised worldwide; including 31 congress workshops in USA, South Africa, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Australia, Japan, Russia, China, Kenya, Portugal, Belgium, Turkey, Spain, Switzerland, Egypt, Greece, Mexico, Germany, Japan, Israel, Czech Republic, the United Kingdom, Indonesia since 1991; 17 national and regional workshops in the United Kingdom, Russia, Poland and China; and 4 Intensive Training Programmes have been organised in the United Arab Emirates since 2011.

All Young Planning Professionals Programmes are designed to build up a lifelong partnership between ISOCARP and partners.

### 2. Background and Motivations for a YPP Workshop in Siena, Tuscany, Italy

**Tuscany** belongs to the historically, artistically, and economically most important regions in Italy and Europe. It is considered the birthplace of the Italian Renaissance (it contains the largest concentration of Renaissance art and architecture in the world) and the foundation of the Italian language. It fosters therefore a strong linguistic and cultural identity. Its wines, castles, art galleries, palaces, villages and piazzas make it the second most popular travel destination in Italy, after Veneto.

Tuscany also is the birthplace of many influential figures in the history of literature, arts, and sciences. Representative figures of Tuscan history include Galileo Galilei, Dante Alighieri, Niccolò Machiavelli, Leonardo da Vinci, Amerigo Vespucci, the Medici family, and Carlo Collodi (creator of the fairy tale figure Pinocchio).

The economy in Tuscany is not only based on tourism. It also produces textiles and clothing, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, steel, glass, ceramics, paper, marble and wooden furniture.

**Siena** is considered one of the most beautiful cities in Italy. It still maintains an authentic character of the ancient Italian Gothic of the Middle Ages. In the medieval period, Siena was in the route between Rome and France (so-called Via Francigena). Pilgrims travelling along this crucial trade route contributed to the

growth of the communities while spending for food and shelter. Arezzo, Florence, Luca, Pisa and Siena were the richest towns. Siena itself joined the province of Tuscany only in 1555, until then it had enjoyed its own "Sienese Renaissance", which was more conservative than the Florence Renaissance. After that moment, it suffered an economic and political decline. However, because in this crisis many Sienese works in churches and public buildings were not discarded or destroyed by new ones, Siena kept and maintains until today a remarkably well-preserved Italian late-Medieval town.

Since the end of WW2, and since the transition to the modern Italian republic, Siena and Tuscany have flourished as the cultural centre of Italy. Today, the historical centre of Siena is one of eight Tuscan localities that have been designated World Heritage Site by UNESCO. It also has one of the oldest universities of the world, University of Siena, initially called Studium Senese, founded in 1240, and the oldest bank of the world, the Monte dei Paschi bank, still functioning today since 1472.

Similarly to many medium cities in Italy, in recent years Siena has been affected by demographic change and population shrinkage. This phenomenon, despite not being as severe as in many other cases, will have implications in the near future of the city and its vulnerable community. These include the cost, viability and sustainability of basic service provision, mobility, and public facilities.

As of today, 74% of Italian municipalities shrink. Studies identified so far no homogeneity in the history of this phenomenon, neither a linear behaviour. Policies to anticipate this fragile situation tend to benefit metropolitan and capital cities, but have seemingly neglected the "in-between country" (Italia di mezzo)

### **3. Italo Calvino**

Siena was the last residence city of the famous writer, Philosopher and urban thinker Italo Calvino. Calvino was an idealist for a long time in his life, and a world citizen. We want to think of him as a YPP Pioneer and honour him during the Siena WPC60, celebrating the 100th year after his birth in 1923.

Being *Invisible Cities* one of his most internationally known works, and probably a book that most urban planners have read during their studies, we will use it as an inspiration to get introduced into the modern Italian literature, connected with an international background. More about this in the requirements for applying.

### **4. Goals of the YPP Workshop**

The municipality of Siena has launched and is executing for the period 2021 – 2027 a project called "**Conversi - Conessioni Verdi Siena**" (*Green Connections of Siena*). Its main objective is to improve the quality of the public space by rehabilitating the green corridors that surround the ancient city wall. These green corridors connect historical monuments and points of interest of Siena: the Medici Fortress, the San Marco-Complex, the valley of Follonica, the Villa Rubini, the Giardina della Lizza, the Doccino Path, the Botanical Gardens, the Fonte delle Monache, Porta Tufi, the areas of Porta Romana and Porta Pispini, the Val di Pania, the area of San Francesco and the corridor of Ravacciano.

The design strategy of this project involved neighbours, researchers and students. The collaborative aspect for the creation of a common vision wants to enable a more inclusive use of the public space and infrastructure, but also to strengthen networks and human interaction.

Concerning human interaction: Siena has a very low crime-rate, which is connected to the way its districts and neighbourhoods (called Contrade) are organized, based on democratic and socially relevant principles, a tradition that is almost unique in the world. Citizens identify with their immediate surroundings and contribute to the discussion of issues that affect the well-being of the community.

The Contrade have been a binding element in the *Green Connections of Siena* project, but also existing local associations and schools.

A master plan was elaborated as a result of the project, in which roles and visions for each of the sites and connecting paths are defined.

In this workshop we want to combine the legacy of historic Siena being an ancient intermediate station of pilgrims (see above Via Francigena) and the current wish to reconnect the city and its monuments with the use of existing inner-city valleys and green corridors once again:

- Our international group shall interpret Siena's heritage monuments, cultural landscape, current challenges and values into **a strategy of connections in different levels**. The city that once was, the city that neighbours want and the city that we can today *reinvent*. (see Italo Calvino legacy of *The Invisible Cities*)
- We will re-connect Siena in three different **local elements**: (1) Sites and monuments, (2) Its community, (3) Urban Siena with its rural surroundings
- We will explore **three different planning topics**: (1) Business & Sustainable Tourism: experience, authenticity, placemaking, cultural landscape, heritage, etc. (2) Improved Mobility & Connectivity with lower emissions and better efficiency. (3) Nature & Climate Change related: heat-island effect, conservation of wildlife corridors, aquifer recharge, natural based solutions, etc.

## 5. Main Target of the Workshop

Connecting the previously named elements into an integral strategy, working in groups and with different topics that can be combined, and presenting it in an inspiring way.

## 6. Methodology of the Workshop

We will work in two phases, a short preparation phase and an on-site phase. The preparation phase will start with at least one introductory virtual videoconference few days before the arrival in Siena. Local YPP alumni and representatives of the host will introduce the group to the site and topic, answer questions and inspire the elaboration of first ideas that we want to incorporate together in Siena. The host will also prepare an information package for participants, including cartographic material and background information.

## 7. Work on site

The groups will work each with a different "type" of connection that they will use for their story. Connections may be intangible and based on values, historical elements or artistic heritage. Or they can be spatial and punctual in a particular valley of the city. They can also imply a vision between today and the future (future workshop, utopia, a fictional Siena). Another group's connection may also try to use an existing path to tell a story related to Siena's past, or to a particular group of the population (children, the elderly, migrants, students).

Each group will identify and elaborate its own topic or inspiration, different from the rest of the groups, but complementary and compatible with the general vision. Once the groups have come to define their strong and coherent 'concept', they should prepare a sequence of presentation slides and summarise their creative vision in an interesting and inspiring story. Each group will present their vision on the last day of the workshop, in front of urban actors of Siena, partner representatives and the local community. The vision will also be reflected by each group in one or two A1 size posters, which will be displayed after the final presentation.

## 8. Eligibility of Participants

Each participant will commit to arriving before and leaving after the workshop, to making their best efforts for the success of the collective work and to adhering to a code of conduct.

Punctual mandatory requirements:

### Young Professional Planners:

- Applying Young Planners must submit an abstract and, if selected, present their individual submission at the World Planning Congress in Siena. They also must register as delegates (all accepted applicants must cover a special YPP registration fee of 100 EUR, intended to cover all meals during the congress). They will receive all the conference provisions offered to regular conference participants.
- Applicants must present all the required documentation specially prepared for applying to the workshop: a letter of motivation, an updated curriculum vitae (ISOCARP TEMPLATE) relevant to the workshop and fill out the online form prepared for applications. Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- Additionally to the usual documents (letter of motivation and CV, explained above), as part of their application, Young Planners must select one of the 55 fictional/ utopian cities of Italo Calvino's book *Invisible Cities* and compare it with the city where they live today, explaining in few sentences why. The book is offered free of charge by many university libraries and faculties online, you can easily find it. Please be concrete and keep your description simple.
- Being an active professional in urban planning, landscaping, spatial design, urban design, regional planning, architecture, urban sociology, and related fields.
- The workshop will be open to international and local participants (residents of any nationality).
- Applicants may not be older than 35 years (exceptions may apply in coordination with the host)
- We encourage the participation of Young Planning Professionals with artistic skills, in particular music (singing, dance, playing an instrument) – please specify in your application under “artistic skills”.
- The official language of the workshop will be English. For practical reasons for communication with the local community, it would be appreciated to receive applications from professionals who have knowledge of Italian language.
- Previous experience in similar workshops is an advantage (not a requirement).
- A letter of recommendation by an ISOCARP member may help to identify the strengths of the applicant.

## 9. Basic Schedule/ Work on the site

Day	Task	Location
<b>Arrival Wednesday 02.10.2024</b>	Informal welcome gathering with all participants	local gastronomy/ nearby location
<b>Thursday morning 03.10.</b>	Site visit in the morning – transport ideally from accommodation as a group	study site(s)
<b>Thursday afternoon</b>	brainstorming with the group, optional: talks with local experts/ presentations about the site, Q&A	working venue in Siena Municipality
<b>Friday 04.10.</b>	interviews to local experts in the morning, studio work in groups in the afternoon: visions and objectives, work in scales (macro to local)	working venue in Siena Municipality
<b>Saturday 05.10.</b>	studio work in groups, strategy and action plan, interviews to residents and civil representatives	working venue in Siena Municipality
<b>Sunday 06.10.</b>	Fine tuning concepts and visions, exploring presentation options and roles	working venue in Siena Municipality
<b>Monday 07.10.</b>	Final concepts and visions, work on posters. Afternoon: Final rehearsal with the participation of local host, feedback	working venue in Siena Municipality, auditorium
<b>2nd Day of conference 9.10.</b>	<i>Condensed presentations</i> during plenary session, feedback and discussion by audience	Plenary Hall in conference venue

## 10. Final Product

Participants must prepare a draft report of their proposal based on a scheme designed by the coordinators and the director of the programme. This report will be delivered immediately after the end of the workshop. The coordinators will complement this first report with a summary of the general vision. The host will be able to respond and be considered in the preparation of the final and more detailed version.

The final and comprehensive report, including descriptions, illustrations, and visualizations, collated by the workshop coordinators into a consistent and comprehensive document, should be finalized by the end of December 2024. This product should be of the highest professional quality, graphic and topical that characterizes the YPP program. It will be delivered in digital format to the host.

## 11. Additional Observations

- The venue of the workshop is **Siena Municipality, Tuscany, Italy**
- Participants must arrive the latest Oct 2nd and leave after the last day of the conference on October 11<sup>th</sup> 2024.
- The programme will cover accommodation costs (available option to share rooms in affordable local hostel, very close to the main event site), from 2<sup>nd</sup> October until 11<sup>th</sup> October 2024.
- Meals during the days of the workshop will be offered at a low cost in Siena University Mensa (about 5EUR per meal, drinks excluded).
- All participants will be guided in their travel to Siena. Closest airports are Florence, Pisa, Bologna and Rome. Local railway and bus connections are available.
- Participation of Young Planners and Senior Experts is voluntary and without any remuneration or compensation. No financial support can be provided to cover travel costs of participants or coordinators.
- A working facility in studio style will be provided by the host, ideal for group work, discussions, and exchange of progress reviews.
- Each participant must take care of covering their entry visa, health insurance and travel insurance costs, in accordance with consular requirements. An invitation letter for visa purposes will be issued upon selection.
- Participants are free to arrive before 2<sup>nd</sup> October and leave after 11<sup>th</sup> October, however, they must take care of covering extra costs (living and transport), as well as to make sure that their migratory requirements (permission to stay in the country as visitors) are met.
- Deadline for Applications is June 30<sup>th</sup> 2024

## 12. Key Dates

**Call for Applications:** 5<sup>th</sup> June 2024

**Deadline for Applications:** 30 June

**Announcement of selected participants:** 14 July

**Confirmation by selected participants:** 21 July

**Travel Arrangements by participants until:** 15 September

**Introductory Meetings with Participants:** between 19 and 25 September

**5 days Workshop:** 3<sup>rd</sup> October – 7<sup>th</sup> October

**Plenary Presentation:** 9<sup>th</sup> October

**Departure of Participants:** not before 11<sup>th</sup> October

**Final Report Submission:** 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2024