

Regione Toscana

Youth Entrepreneurial Spirit Specialists E+ Project

Smart working Villages in Tuscany

Smartworking villages across Tuscany

As remote work due to Covid19 will not (unfortunately or fortunately) be a fad, finding the right location to carry out our business, if our home is not a totally adequate place, will become a concrete need for many professionals.

It is therefore not too surprising that in this period the proposals related to smart working flourish in places outside the large urban centers.

In Tuscany there are several initiatives aimed at combining the possibility of staying in the midst of nature and continuing to carry out your profession away from the office with all the necessary requirements.

We are not yet in the presence of an organized network devoted to converting tourist facilities into destinations for agile work, but the road seems to be marked, also thanks to the active participation of local authorities.

The Santa Fiora Smartworking Village Initiative



The first smart working village in Italy has come to life in Tuscany.

In Santa Fiora, a historic village of 3 thousand inhabitants on the slopes of Monte Amiata, is now a candidate to become the refuge for all remote workers looking for a different lifestyle.

Smart working, which exploded to stem the Covid-19 pandemic, can in fact become for many an opportunity to leave the cities and (re) discover the countryside and its attractions: lower expenses, greater contact with nature, distances to human measure.

Nature, history and ultra-broadband


Santa Fiora is a medieval jewel set among the Amiata chestnut woods which tries to attract the new digital nomads with a specific call recently launched by the Municipality.

It offers economic incentives to those who come to live in the village for a period, providing for a contribution that covers up to 50% of the rent for those who move.

The town can boast not only a splendid 16th century fish pond, built around the sources of the Fiora river, but also the ultra-wide band, a fundamental tool to allow smart workers to work comfortably from here.



The Municipality perspective



"The experience of Covid-19 forced us to review the organization of work by experimenting smart working on a large scale - explains the mayor of Santa Fiora, Federico Balocchi - some tourist facilities have seized this opportunity with a tailor-made offer for the worker looking for a relaxing environment, by the sea or in the mountains.

In the case of Santa Fiora it is an entire municipality that proposes itself as a smart working village. We believe, in fact, that remote work is not only a temporary solution to deal with the emergency, but can represent the future, at least for certain professions, a smart way to put people in the position to work at their best for their company and at the same time to be happy, without forgetting that feeling good also means being more productive. "

A contribution that covers up to 50% of the rent

The call is aimed at providing a voucher for those who rent a house in the municipality of Santa Fiora for at least two months.

The incentive will cover up to half the cost of the lease for a monthly amount not exceeding 200 euros and lasting up to six months, but possibly extendable. The call is open to all: public and private employees and freelancers, who can apply until December 31st.



Facilities and services


To bring supply and demand closer, the Municipality has created the site www.vivinpaese.it where all the announcements of the houses that could be rented are posted.

At the moment there are about twenty of them, ranging from apartments in the historic center of the village to larger houses in the open countryside.

The portal also provides for information on useful services for those planning to transfer, such as babysitting, assistance for the elderly, electricians, plumbers and meals home delivery



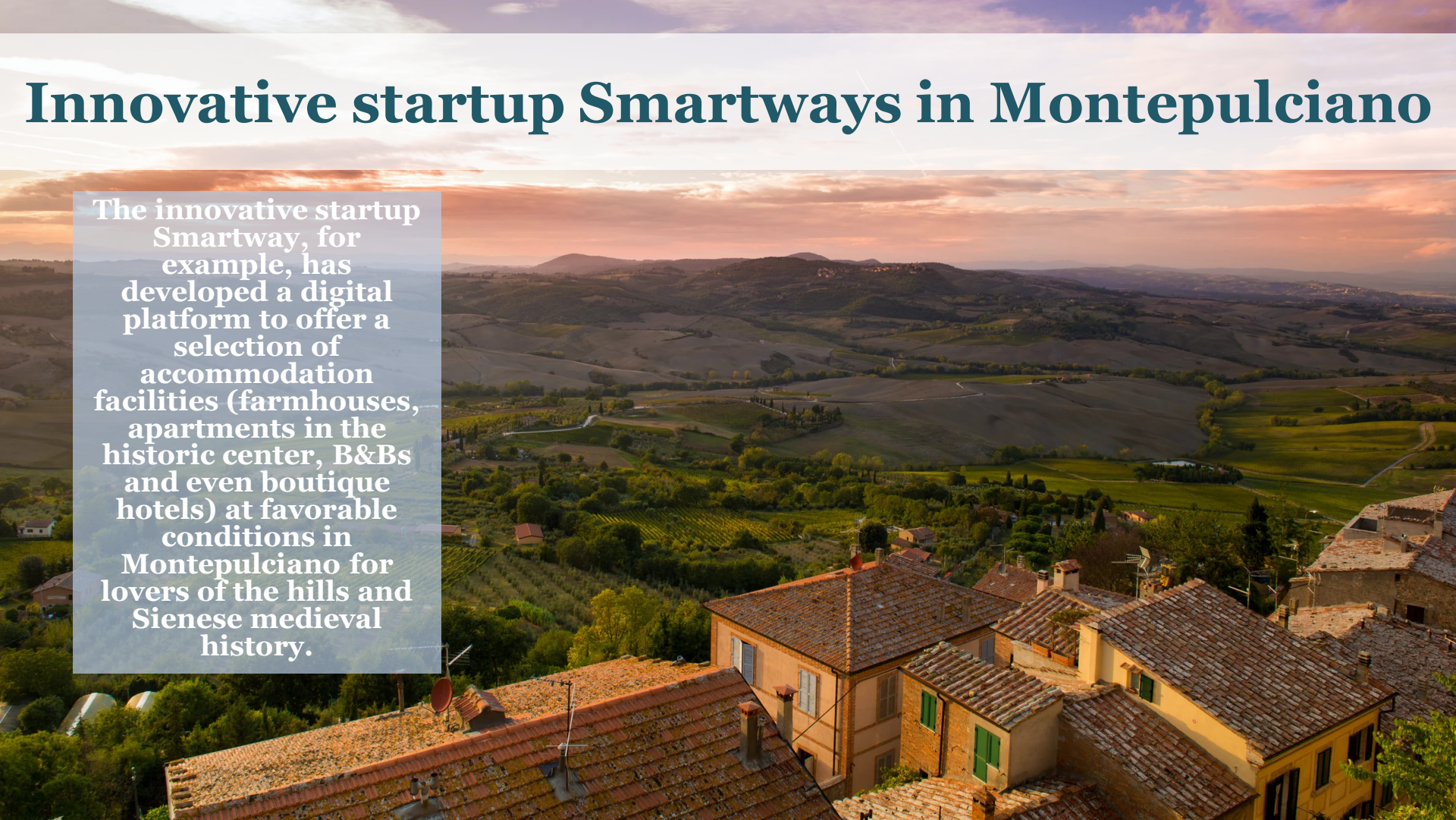
The financial support objectives

An aerial photograph of a medieval village, likely Santa Fiora, showing a dense cluster of buildings with red-tiled roofs. A church tower is visible in the center. The village is surrounded by green fields and a river or stream. The image is used as a background for the text.

“We want to offer an incentive to stimulate this type of choice, but obviously the hope is that after a trial period, for some Santa Fiora will become a permanent choice by coming to live here permanently with the family - concludes the mayor Balocchi - also taking into account the advantages we offer in terms of services for children and adolescents, at very low cost. From the nursery to the nursery, from the school camps to the summer camps, to the youth center for the older ones, in Santa Fiora there are facilities capable of managing children from morning to late afternoon throughout the year. And this is a great help for families where both parents work ”.

Innovative startup Smartways in Montepulciano

The innovative startup Smartway, for example, has developed a digital platform to offer a selection of accommodation facilities (farmhouses, apartments in the historic center, B&Bs and even boutique hotels) at favorable conditions in Montepulciano for lovers of the hills and Sienese medieval history.



SMARTWAY Philosophy

<https://www.smartway.work/>

#WORKERS AND NON TOURISTS

Everything starts from a new point of view.
Smartway wants to help #smartworkers find wonderful places to live and work.
Everything tailored to workers ... and not just a tourist.

#NO TOUCH AND GO STAYS

On average, a stay for smart working lasts over 10 days.
The worker is a type of customer who can discover in depth the area chosen for his working stay.

#COMMUNITY

They have #hosts who have joined the project because they are attentive to the change that the world of work is experiencing.

RURALITY

Smartway wants to actively contribute to enhancing #rural areas, wonderful, underestimated in absolute terms but very potential for a balanced type of stay in terms of work / life balance.



START-WORKING

Smartworking in Pontremoli

In Pontremoli, in the heart of Lunigiana, the idea of attracting smart workers from all over Italy came to the Association for Responsible Tourism “Farfalle in Cammino” which, with the patronage of the municipality, launched a non-profit project, www.startworking.live, intended precisely for those looking for accommodation to work remotely.

Last but not least...Smart villages within ENRD



European Network for
Rural Development

'Smart Villages' is the sub-theme of the broader ENRD thematic work on 'Smart and Competitive Rural Areas'.

A Thematic Group (TG) has worked on this topic between September 2017 and July 2020.

The TG contributed to the EU Action for Smart Villages by enabling exchange on innovative ways of creating more vibrant, sustainable and attractive rural areas and by exploring how the Rural Development Programmes (RDPs), the EU's Cohesion policy and other financing instruments can be best used to support this.

The work of the Thematic Group

In its **first year**, the TG explored ideas and initiatives around revitalising rural services through digital and social innovation. It looked at how rural services – such as health, social services, education, energy, transport, retail – can be improved and made more sustainable through the deployment of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools and through community-led actions and projects.

In its **second year**, between September 2018 and July 2019, the TG acted as a sounding board for developing practical orientations for using all the policy tools available to help Smart Villages emerge and develop. At the same time, it continued to provide a platform for linking the various initiatives taking place, reflecting the growing momentum and interest in the topic at all levels.

In its **last third year**, between September 2019 and July 2020, the TG turned the considerable momentum that has been created around Smart Villages, into concrete proposals for designing support for Smart Villages in the new programming period, implying at this stage in the programming cycle a reinforced focus on supporting Managing Authorities, alongside other stakeholder groups.

https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/enrd-thematic-work/smart-and-competitive-rural-areas/smart-villages_en

A scenic view of a Tuscan landscape. In the foreground, the terracotta tiles of a roof are visible. The middle ground shows a rolling green hill with a small, square stone building perched on its crest. The background features distant blue mountains under a clear sky with scattered white clouds.

Thank you!

Contacts

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