

ARTISTS FOR PLANTS

in collaboration with
Fundación Otonga

presents

FROM THE BACKGROUND TO THE FOREFRONT

Plants becoming protagonists

INTERNATIONAL CALL 2024

Artistsforplants has taken up the desire of many artists from all over the world to bring their contribution towards a more conscious awareness of the centrality of plants in life, both for Human beings and the Planet.

That's why our 2024 International Call is focused on artworks dedicated to the plants coming to the forefront: from acting as a backdrop, plants must become true protagonists in human perception.

Be a protagonist does not just mean taking centre stage, being in the foreground, in the spotlight, it means playing the main character: the primary role in terms of merit, value and importance. It means being highlighted, in the best lights. It means being the fulcrum around which everything revolves.

Being the protagonist means that others are *comprimarios*. And if plants are the protagonists in this world of ours, it means that we are the supporting players.

This is the significance of Artistsforplants 2024 Call: a change of perspective that is also, and above all, a paradigm shift, to emphasize - once again - the centrality of the plant world.

From background - however beautiful, but very often disregarded and mistreated - to main actor who makes key decisions that affect the plot, primarily influencing the story and propelling it forward. A necessary step for our survival on the planet.

If you are at the forefront of an activity, you have a leading and influential position. Frontline is the position of most prominence, responsibility or action.

If something is in the front line, people think a lot about it because it is particularly important to them. If someone or something is in a prominent position, it is well known and important. Furthermore, physical proximity leads into emotional proximity and a bond of attachment.

In a painting or photograph what is in the foreground is what we see and feel closest.

This is the heart of the message: to move plants to the forefront means to stop ignoring them and restore their true role in the theatre of life.

Artworks are to be submitted to Artists for Plants by 15th September 2024

by email to artistsforplants@gmail.com.

The proposals will be selected by the organizers and will be presented, in form of a video gallery within the end of the year, in the premises of Otonga Foundation (Ecuador).

Furthermore, the selected artworks will become part of a digital gallery, visible at our websites and social medias. The digital gallery will be a virtual sensitive and meaningful art network to create and spread attention and need for knowledge, respect and protection for the plants.

Artists for Plants



FROM THE BACKGROUND TO THE FOREFRONT IN BRIEF

GENERAL INFORMATION: International call for any kind of artworks and creative projects dedicated to the plants world. The organizer invites the production of artworks and proposals dedicated to the plants coming to the forefront: from acting as a backdrop, plants must become true protagonists in human perception as above explained.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE: All authors of any nationality who have reached 18 years of age at the competition expiry date can take part in the competition. Individual authors, collectives and formal corporations can enter. No registration fee is required.

ARTISTS SUBMISSIONS: Artworks are to be submitted by email to: artistsforplants@gmail.com.

Submission should be in a PDF format including:

- Details of the Author/Authors: name, surname, nationality, date of birth, email address;
- Title of the Artwork;
- Explanatory text.

Please note that only artworks specifically related to the title of this Call will be accepted; more generic works will be considered off-topic.

We accept maximum 3 works per Author; works that have already been published can also be sent.

The submitted artworks will remain property of the artists who produced them.

Submitting your work/works, you certified that the information provided is correct and true, and that you are the owner/legal owner of the artwork/artworks submitted.

DEADLINE for the submissions: September 15th, 2024.

EXHIBITIONS VENUES: The selected artworks will be displayed at the Otonga Foundation premises. The organizers plan to make a special event to celebrate the conclusion of the Call.

SOCIAL MEDIA COPYRIGHT AND AUTHORIZATION: The selected artworks will remain property of the artists who produced them. Submitting their works, the Artists (will) accept and allow that their artworks can be published by Artistsforplants and the Otonga Foundation, in their websites and social media channels within the framework of the 2024 Call “FROM THE BACKGROUND TO THE FOREFRONT” and various related activities, and without any further authorizations.

Rights to use and publish the works will be automatically transferred free of charge and in non-exclusive form.

Moreover the selected artworks that will be displayed will be accompanied by full credits, specifying that they have been created in response to the Call “FROM THE BACKGROUND TO THE FOREFRONT”.

SELECTION COMMITTEE: the Jury will be composed by leading experts from different fields, from arts to environmental and social sciences.

Artistsforplants is an international network of creatives of various natures and backgrounds, born out of an artistic residency in the Amazon Rainforest in 2019.

In **2020**, Artistsforplants in Italy made a documentary in support of plants world, with the participation of some of the greatest musicians and opera singers of the national classical world (among them Salvatore Accardo, Fiorenza Cedolins, Giovanni Sollima, Beatrice Rana and many others) and Stefano Mancuso, expert and author of many essays on plant life. The film concert has been presented at Biennale Cinema 2020 - 77 Mostra internazionale d'Arte Cinematografica (by Fondazione Ente dello spettacolo), and it can be viewed on the social channel of Artistsforplants or at this link:

<https://yewtu.be/watch?v=1PvG1ZCISUs>

In **2021**, Artistsforplants launched the international call "**The Art Network**" to support valuable green areas considered at risk. In particular, the Italian group was focused on the Alberoni Dune in Venice - Lido, and the Colombian representatives focused their efforts on the Tropical Forest of Chocò. Artists from all over the world responded through their installations, works and creative events of any form, throughout 2021.

In **2022**, Artistsforplants launched the international call "**Seeds planting Art**" focused on artworks dedicated to seeds—symbols of hope and renewal—linked to generative emotions and to a vision of a future in harmony, in collaboration with the Svalbard Global Seed Vault. Over the summer of 2022, we received a highly diverse range of works from many countries around the world (Argentina, Australia, Canada, Croatia, Finland, France, Germany, India, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Mexico, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Spain, Switzerland, the UK, the USA, and from a stateless person), which were then selected by a jury that included actress and writer Lella Costa, as well as a representative of the Norwegian **Svalbard Global Seed Vault**. The collaboration with the Svalbard Global Seed Vault was born to create a dialogue between art, science, and economy: each of them sustaining the other, in order to pursue new models for thriving on earth.

In **2023**, Artistsforplants launched the international call "**Rooting our cities - focusing on the unexpected guests**" in collaboration with the Botanical Garden of the University of Palermo (Sicily, Italy). The aim of last year's Call was to find new artistic visions of greener and more balanced cities of the future, collecting works dedicated to urban greenery and to the plants that grow in the city. We received an amazing richness of submissions: in terms of numbers (more than 230 artists sent in their works), in terms of location (they came from 47 different countries from all around the world), and in terms of artistic techniques (13 different genres, including photography, video art, digital art, installations, music, painting, dance, sculpture, poetry). From these entries, a jury of well-known experts selected 22 works of art and awarded a special mention to one school. The selected artworks were announced on 30 October 2023 at the Botanical Garden of the University of Palermo (Italy). At this occasion, Artists for Plants also launched the **video gallery** of the Call's results.

The Otonga Foundation is a private, non-profit, non-governmental organization, established in 1998, dedicated to the conservation of Ecuador's biodiversity through scientific research, sustainable management of natural resources and environmental education, promotion of social ethics and environmental responsibility.

The Otonga Foundation manages several protected areas in the Ecuadorian Chocó, the Andes and the Amazon of Ecuador, protecting approximately 2000 hectares. Among the protected areas is the Otonga Integral Forest.

One of the Otonga Foundation main objectives is the administration of the Otonga Integral Forest, a protected area established to conserve one of the last remnants of cloud forest in the western foothills of the Ecuadorian Andes.

In addition to research and biodiversity management, the Otonga Foundation promotes the acquisition of new conservation areas, and is active in youth education and community training programs.

The Otonga Foundation has contributed significantly to the vocational training of Ecuadorian and foreign students by promoting research on local fauna and flora. Our facilities are visited annually by around 300 scientists, technicians and students, many of whom stay in the same facilities as the Centre for Environmental Education.

The Otonga Foundation is also a destination for foreign **universities** that have chosen to bring their students to our protected areas as a living laboratory of biodiversity. These include: Dayton University, Ohio USA; Boston Latin School, MA, USA; University of Florence, Italy; McGill University, Montreal, Canada.

Also many Ecuadorian universities (Universidad de Guayaquil, Universidad de las Américas, Universidad Central del Ecuador, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador) visit the Centre for Environmental Education and its botanical garden to **introduce their students to the local flora and fauna.**