

Curiosiol artathon 2025 - Exploring the Art of Soil

Open call for artists and selection process

We welcome artists of all discipline's fields and from all levels to participate (both professional and amateur). Selection criteria include the quality of the project, capacity for public engagement, level of the use of the senses (multisensory) and artworks related to enhancement of soil health and ecosystems literacy. The artist must be based in Europe.

Both individual and group approaches and proposals are eligible. Proposals that engage the audience and trigger behavioural change are favoured. The selected artworks will be part of the interactive exhibition that will be organised in the Netherlands (Wageningen), Portugal (Aveiro) and then will continue as a travelling exhibition. The exhibit will be presented in digital/digitized format online. The exhibition aims to increase soil literacy and better understanding of soils and associated themes. Artworks must be produced in a timeframe of six months, starting from June 2025, and will be exhibited from February 2026 in the Netherlands in Wageningen and after that in Portugal (Aveiro).

Selection and evaluation of art proposals

The evaluation of the submitted concepts for proposed artworks is done by a commission. A maximum of four concepts are selected from the submissions. The artists of the selected concepts are then invited to develop their proposed artwork. The judgment of the Commission is final and not appealable.

The total maximum score for each proposed concept is 100 points, which are divided as follows:

1) Up to 30 points for innovative ideas and proposals that generate curiosity, excitement or discussion on the topic of with soil health, 2) Up to 30 points for the capacity to stimulate public engagement/interactivity, 3) Up to 20 points for robustness of the art for public display and adequacy for travelling between exhibition venues, 4) Up to 20 points for previous experiences and projects aimed at integrating art, science, technology.

Co-creation of art of participants from different disciplines is favoured. Proposed art may include work in the field of video and photography, digital arts, collaborative and relational art, installations, sculptures, plastic arts. The art may be targeted on the youth (<12 yrs), on adolescents and adults (12-18 yrs and > 18 yrs) or both. The selected artists will get support from an art Mentor who will be available throughout the duration of the process of development of the art to provide guidance and feedback (Swiss based curator).

About the interactive travelling exhibition on Soil Health

To engage the wider public an interactive exhibition will be displayed in the World Soil Museum of ISRIC starting early 2026, and after that in Aveiro, Portugal, on the Campus of the University of Aveiro, notably, in the Science education centre, the Fábrica da Ciência) in 2027. The interactive exhibition will leverage on best educational practices and artistic pieces from the artathon. Before the exhibit in Portugal a second artathon will be organised. The interactive exhibitions will target two main age groups: below and above 12-years-old. Artists develop a concept in their own environment. A curator will be hired to guide the process of exhibition and the integration of the art into the exhibition plan.

An exhibition design plan will specify the layout of the exhibition, the content (text, visuals), required materials and objects (and owners of the objects), and the (time)planning. Materials of the exhibitions will include movable panels (with text and images and QR codes that link to audio-visual files, hand pieces such as soil materials (may include lacquer peels), documents, or maps. The physical exhibition will also be accessible as a digital and online exhibit, amongst others through the website of the World Soil Museum and will be available for other CURIOSOIL project activities. All physical components of the exhibition will also be produced in digital format.

All the materials will be archived and be accompanied by an exhibition catalogue. Upon request, both physical and digital materials will be made available for utilization by other museums or science shops, incurring no expenses except for transportation and potential insurance charges. After the exhibitions in the Netherlands and Portugal, the Exhibition will be accessible on demand (pop-up), facilitating increased public exposure.