

GETTING TO KNOW PLANTS FORESTAMI ACADEMY RETURNS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PRADA GROUP

For the Academy's third year, international experts will guide participants in an exploration of tree and shrub species and their role in adapting to climate change

Milan, 22 April 2025 – On Earth Day, the **Prada Group** and **Forestami** announce the third edition of the **Forestami Academy**, the project aimed at engaging and raising citizens' awareness of the importance and role of nature in the city. Coordinated by **Maria Chiara Pastore**, Associate Professor at the Politecnico University in Milan, the program includes three meetings – one of which is an outdoor lesson – that will take an in-depth look at the role of plants in modern urban settings, with talks by international experts from cultural, academic and scientific spheres.

The title of this year's cycle is ***"Plants in cities: do we really know them?"***, which will be a journey through green architecture, biodiversity and invisible connections among plants, soil and citizens.

Lorenzo Bertelli, Prada Group Head of Corporate Social Responsibility, said: *"We are excited to be alongside Forestami for the third year running, actively collaborating in promoting urban greenery and the well-being of the people of the city of Milan. This year, the Forestami Academy's activities will be dedicated to teaching how to recognize green spaces, which will help make citizens more aware and better informed. Protecting and promoting plant biodiversity, after having explored it and become familiar with it first-hand, is not only a mark of respect for the environment, but a vital step towards a more sustainable future."*

Stefano Boeri, creator and founder of Forestami, commented: *"The Forestami Academy initiative is vital for building a deeper understanding and appreciation for urban forestry and biodiversity – the very building blocks of our cities' future. People want to connect with the environment around them and to be an active part of a shared ecological culture. This has been key to the Academy's success. As we reach the culmination of its current three-year cycle, we want to see it evolve and continue its mission. We're incredibly proud of our partnership with Prada Group. It's a brilliant example of how businesses and local entities can join forces to bring about tangible environmental change."*

The first of the three events in 2025, called ***"Plants in the city"***, will be held on **Thursday, 15 May** at the Triennale Milano with **Paola Bonfante**, Professor Emeritus of Plant Biology of the University of Turin, affiliated with the Accademia dei Lincei.

Paola Bonfante, one of the leading Italian experts in plant microbiology, will guide Academy members in discovering the world of urban plants, exploring their environmental and social impact. Including such topics as photosynthesis, biodiversity, the history of the trees on nineteenth-century boulevards and the criteria for selecting the most suitable species for contemporary urban environments, the focus will be on the interactions between plants and microorganisms in urban soil, which are key elements for the wellbeing of big cities. The event will benefit from an experience in the field, learning to recognize species of trees and shrubs in the Triennale Milano garden, set in Parco Sempione.

"Greener cities, better lives: the role of plant biodiversity and ecosystem-based services in urban spaces" is the title of the second meeting, scheduled for **Wednesday, 18 June** at the Triennale Milano, with **Tiziana Ulian** of the University of Turin, Honorary Research Associate, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (UK).

An expert in plant ecology and biodiversity conservation, Tiziana Ulian will explore the strategic role of urban biodiversity and ecosystem-based services for more livable and inclusive cities. Exemplary cases from around the world, such as Kew Gardens in the United Kingdom, the Jardín Botánico Nacional, Santo Domingo and the Orto Botanico in Turin, will be discussed in their role as conservation tools, but also as drivers of urban transformation. Afterwards, there will be field activities and workshops with an introduction to recognizing plants.

The third and final lesson from the Forestami Academy, to be held in **September 2025**, will be an outdoor experience focused on the recognition of urban forestry that will enable practical use of the knowledge gained.

Forestami Academy is open to citizens, students and professionals who wish to deepen their knowledge of urban greenery and actively contribute to transforming the ecology of their cities. Participation is free of charge, but registration is required. Each event is expected to last around three hours, from 10:00am to 1:00pm. The classes will be limited to a maximum of 100 participants per meeting. All the details can be found at www.forestami.org and www.pradagroup.com.

Prada Group

Prada Group is socially engaged to contribute to the sustainable development of the communities and stimulate the cultural debate in all its forms of expression. The Group partners with recognized players and international entities to develop educational and training programs, value talent, support scientific research, foster women's empowerment, and promote local culture and artistic heritage. Prada Group operates in the luxury sector through the Prada, Miu Miu, Church's, Car Shoe, Marchesi 1824 and Luna Rossa brands.

Forestami

Forestami was born from an initiative by architect Stefano Boeri, based on research conducted by the Politecnico di Milano, supported by Fondazione Falck and FS Sistemi Urbani, on the potential and benefits of urban forestry in the metropolitan area of Milan. It later evolved into a project promoted by the Municipality of Milan, the Metropolitan City of Milan, the Lombardy Region, Parco Nord Milano, Parco Agricolo Sud Milano, ERSAF, Fondazione Cariplo, Fondazione di Comunità Milano together with Fondazione Comunitaria Nord Milano and Fondazione Comunitaria Ticino Olona, as well as the Milanese universities Politecnico, Statale and Bicocca. The project aims to plant 3 million trees by 2030, enhance the natural capital of the urban and peri-urban fabric, help reduce air pollution and improve the quality of life in Greater Milan while also combating the effects of climate change. In April 2025, the Forestami Foundation was established, becoming the Third Sector Entity (ETS) responsible for implementing and developing the Forestami project. The new Foundation continues its work thanks to collected donations and can also develop additional projects both within the Metropolitan City of Milan and on a national scale to help improve the environment.

For more information

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