



NEXTAGRI
 Innovative approaches to Education eExperimentation
 & entrepreneurship in peri-urban Agri-cultural territories



European Union
European Regional Development Fund



Driving change for
 better cities

INVESTMENT PLAN – VILA NOVA DE GAIA Gaia Agro-Hub



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THE INVESTMENT PLAN IN A NUTSHELL

Major Challenge	Circular Economy and Producing Locally				
	SDG 11 Sustainable Cities & Communities; SDG 2 No hunger; SDG 3 Good health; SDG 9 Innovation & Infrastructure; SDG 12 Sustainable Consumption & Production; SDG 13 Climate Action SDG 8 Productive employment and Economic Growth GREEN DEAL 2019 & FARM TO FORK 2020 – sustainable food production; sustainable processing and distribution; sustainable consumption; prevention of losses and waste				
Mission	Creation of an Open Innovation Hub on Peri-Hub Agriculture as an integrated strategy to deliver innovation.				
Objectives	Integration of urban agriculture into urban economy as a solution to improve urban environmental management, reducing urban poverty, enhancing urban food security and stimulating participatory city governance.				
Knowledge and Cross Sectors	Circular economy	Education & training	Land use management	Integrated urban development	Open innovation
	Social and economic equity	Clean energy	Food production & food supplies	Environmental & urban sustainability	Food waste
Projects Portfolio					

Idea Development | Gaia Agro Hub



1. THE POLICY CONTEXT

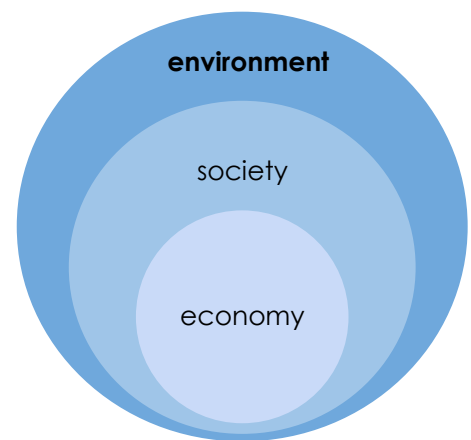
1.1 Need Analysis in the Territorial Context

In recent years, the municipality of Vila Nova de Gaia has shown a growing concern for the improvement of sustainable urban development and the implementation of policies aimed at energy and environmental sustainability, improving the quality of life of citizens.

The commitments, strategies and measures taken demonstrate a clear commitment to the implementation of energy efficiency measures at local level, measures that will contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and, consequently, facilitate the transition to a low carbon economy, proving to be a public management instrument, continuous and integrated with the objectives of the municipal executive. But also, a growing concern to create more resilient cities, promoting responsible, sustainable and clean urban development.

The pandemic exposed numerous weaknesses to be addressed: the resilience of cities; the importance of local production and distribution, related to an integrated food policy; the preservation and naturalisation of the peri-urban landscape; the availability of public space and more specifically nature and green public spaces.

The recognition of an intrinsic relationship between environment and urban development is not new and the importance of stimulating the relationship between urban, peri-urban and rural was even recognised in SDG 11. The promotion of agriculture, in urban areas, thus takes on a central role in protecting ecosystems, biodiversity and promoting adaptive capacity to climate change. When we place the environment in the sustainable development diagram, it should be recognised that without the environmental system, economic and social development is meaningless.



Vila Nova de Gaia aims to create an Open Innovation Hub on Peri-Urban Agriculture as an integrated strategy to deliver innovation, sustainable urban development and foster a greener economy. From a socio-economic perspective, there are many challenges facing European food and territorial policy, like: lowering the unemployment rate and job losses in the primary sector; developing prospects for rural economies; setting up youngsters in business; improving social inclusion, reducing poverty, and improved territorial cohesion. The complexity of this factors demands innovations to improve a more sustainable territorial development, focused on promoting urban green growth.

Given the complex web of factors behind the current planet's environmental crisis, innovations to improve food policy tend to be cross-cutting instruments. With each passing day better managing food policy is more and more widely recognised as the cornerstone on which to build more sustainable economic models. A systemic view of all these elements crosses ordinary and special policies that the municipality promotes in its fields of competence.

Seeking solutions to unemployment, the adverse impact on the environment of economic activity, adequate health and education for their inhabitants, the loss of identity and the need to offer quality of life to citizens, together with the decline of nearby rural areas, are on the agenda of all these cities. Food appears to be a common link related to each and every one of these sectoral policies.

When talking about green economy we intend to highlight the co-benefits associated with a land use that does not cause environmental damage, aligned with the principles of green urban development - such as reducing negative externalities on the environment and the consumption of natural resources and environmental services - and that simultaneously promotes health, employment, the attractiveness of urban areas, increased local production and increased land value.

Finding the story to tell is therefore a cross-cutting moment to the path that the municipality intends to run through, and the Municipality identifies **food and food policy** as the keynote to trigger behavioural change, within the public services, and among the citizens.

1.2 The Policy Response – Strategic Vision

Based on the existing challenges, the Municipality aims to create an Open Innovation Centre for Peri-Urban Agriculture as an integrated strategy to provide innovation, sustainable urban development and promote a greener economy.

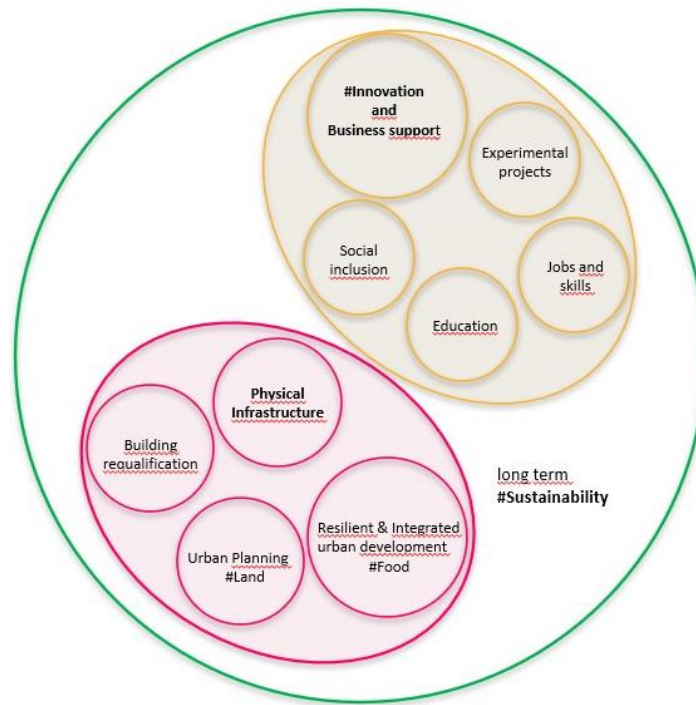
The search for solutions to unemployment, the negative impact on the environment of economic activity, adequate health and education for its inhabitants, the loss of identity and the need to offer quality of life to citizens, together with the decline of nearby rural areas, are on the agenda of all these cities. Food is a common link related to each one of these sectoral policies. Therefore, Vila Nova de Gaia intends to address the thematic policy challenge Employment and Skills, Sustainable Urban Development linked to land naturalisation, ecosystem restoration, and Green Economy. At the same time, with the development of this strategy and the materialization of the investment, the Municipality intends to achieve medium- and

long-term benefits that directly impact the citizens of Vila Nova de Gaia. First, we identify as potential beneficiaries' young farmers and entrepreneurs who want to start their professional career, through the development of products in the agro-food area, because they will find in Gaia Agro-Hub a safe space for experimentation and innovation. In the medium term, the project is also expected to bring benefits to distributors and local producers already established, through the creation and development of networks that enhance and leverage the work already developed. From an indirect benefit perspective, clear benefits are also identified for the population of Vila Nova de Gaia, since the promotion of more robust and continuous green areas, the stimulation of local production and the reduction of circuit chains, contribute to decarbonization, to the mitigation of the negative effects of climate change and, therefore, promote well-being, health and quality of life.

The Investment Plan prepared in the framework of the project, as well as the concrete activities and actions to be defined, will be focused on the action sphere of municipal intervention, and should promote a trajectory towards the main objective of the Plan - to implement and develop the Gaia Open Innovation Hub on Peri-Urban Agriculture (Gaia Agro-Hub) - with identification and systematization of financial opportunities in accordance with the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) foreseen in the next multi-annual financial framework for 2021-2027, Environmental Fund and municipal budget.

The Municipality intends to implement the Gaia Agro-Hub to promote resilient and integrated urban development while contributing to improve urban environmental management, green economy, reduce urban poverty, and increase urban food security and stimulate participatory city governance.

Therefore, our visions are fixed on the following key points:



In the **pink circle** we highlight the main activities of the Municipality, related to the specific strategic priorities and targets:

First, the physical intervention in the land, buildings and infrastructure, demands innovative and flexible urban planning, such as urban plans and other instruments capable to relate the several interests (public or private).

Second, the promotion of resilient and integrated urban development supported by food policy and recognition of local value chains.

The **yellow circle** shows the impact sphere of collaboration with stakeholders, such as private companies, NGO's, other public entities and local communities and citizens.

Thinking on the specific targets and policies addressed, the project aims to promote social inclusion, education, jobs and skills and territorial empathy, providing the opportunity for experimental projects development and innovation and business support. This yellow circle displays the relevance of establishing commitment and integration dynamics, capable of recognising the virtuality's of a connected urban development between the various actors.

Last but not least, the **green circle** gathers all together into an integrated public policy that promotes long term sustainability, both in terms of the continuity, replicability and relevance of the project in the municipality - ensuring its financial

maintenance through partnerships with stakeholders (in or outside the ULG) -, and in terms of promoting environmental and urban sustainability of the municipal territory, leveraging agriculture as an economic activity capable of generating economic, social, territorial and environmental value.

At the starting point, the Municipality hunt up for the perfect land to begin the project noting that, besides the geographic and territorial characteristics, there was also the need to find a property that aimed to develop social inclusion and territorial cohesion. However, the perception of the municipal territory shifted the initially designed strategy that integrated the recognition of the particularities of the municipality, especially regarding the dispersion of the territory and the need to ensure the inclusion of the entire population - see figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1 – agricultural aptitude map

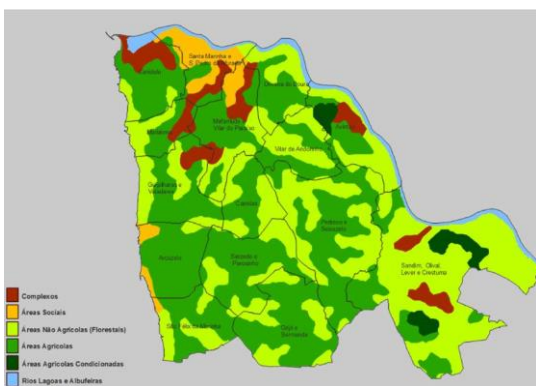


Figure 2 – soil classified as agricultural in the Municipal Master Plan



This Investment Plan study is an iterative document that should change along the implementation of the Gaia Agro Hub project. The Investment Plan uncovers opportunities for investors or entrepreneurs for investing in sustainable urban agriculture and brings together the different elements to leverage this market. It highlights the best investment opportunities for the peri urban areas in sustainable agriculture and urban development. With this IP study, we aim to create a strong base of information on the local value chain, challenges, opportunities, and partners to support further steps in the development of Gaia Agro Hub.

2. THE PROCESS TO BUILD THE INVESTMENT PROPOSAL

2.1 Background to the Proposal

NextAgri is an URBACT and Urban Innovative Actions (UIA) pilot transfer project mechanism for completed UIA projects. The pilot intends to support the transfer of **OpenAgri**, Milan's UIA project under the Jobs and Skills topic, to 3 European medium-sized cities:

- Vila Nova de Gaia (PT); (Population: 302.295; Area: 168.46 km²) – Metropolitan Area of Porto (Population: 1.721.038; Area: 2.040.31 km²);
- Stara Zagora (BG); (Population: 158.563; Area: 190.46 km²) – Province of Stara Zagora (Population: 333.325; Area: 5.151.000 km²);
- Almere (NL); (Population: 207.904; Area: 248.77 km²) – Province of Flevoland (Population: 423.021; Area: 2.412.00 km²).

OpenAgri aimed at testing an integrated strategy to deliver innovation in existing and newly created nodes of the agri-food value chain, focusing on new skills, training, pilot projects for SMEs and start-up ideas. The proposed solution is an “**Open Innovation Hub on Peri-Urban Agriculture**” as a tool to integrate into the Milan Food Policy and the Circular Milan strategy.

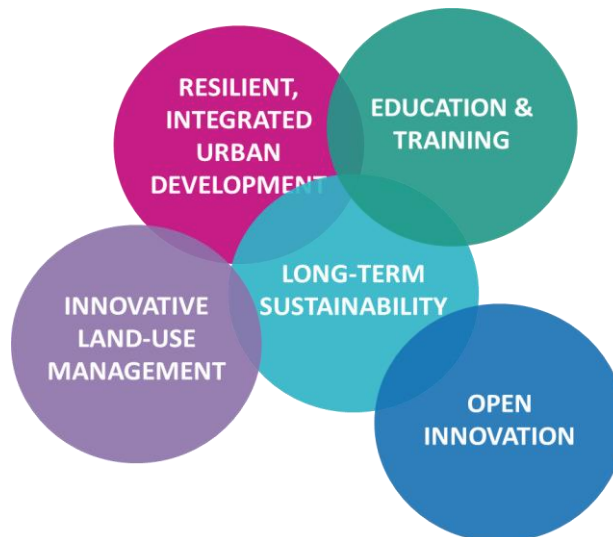
This experimental project challenged existing practices and regulations in cities, regions, policy fields and local contexts. The project proved to be an excellent testbed for UIA program approach, which takes a place-based approach to employment and skills strategies. It means not starting from physical regeneration *per se*, but stimulating new economic dynamics within a local area, with the ambition to connect the newly created skills and jobs to a wider system, at the urban and metropolitan level.

OpenAgri has been able to focus simultaneously on business incubation, training, awareness raising, communication, and innovation and experimentation. Hence, the project fostered a prototype of integrated urban policy that copes with pressing urban challenges through the reconstruction of a strong link between production and access to food.

In other words, **OpenAgri** promoted an innovative approach that leverages on the multitude of dimensions related to the production and consumption of food to trigger an incremental and integrated urban development process which is capable of addressing a wide range of urban issues, such as the regeneration of fringe/peripheral areas; the preservation and valorization of the peri-urban landscape; the development of new skills and jobs opportunities; and the inclusion of the most fragile components of the local society (e.g., youth unemployed, migrants, etc.).

2.2 The Adapted Version of the UIA Project

The **OpenAgri** good practice was organized into five transfer Modules that can be flexibly adapted to local contexts, according to transfer city's needs & objectives. These are presented as standalone Transfer Modules, however there are plenty of connections and linkages across them. Our city can grasp this knowledge and flexibly make use and re-adapt the concepts and findings of the five Transfer Modules to our specific needs and objectives.



The Modules learning for our city:

- **Module 1: Open Innovation** – learnings from the capacity to engage local stakeholders, first in mapping and activate existing, emerging, and latent local potential (actors, processes) through a very broad and open call, then narrow down in a collaborative way to develop synergies and partnerships among local actors that can ultimately result in feasible actions on the ground.
- **Module 2: Education and Training** - learnings on: (1) One-to-one mentoring and peer-to-peer techniques appeared to be the most effective methodologies to facilitate the learning process on specific, innovative technical matters; (2) the diversities in terms of background and interests of the participants to an educational programme adds a level of complexity that may be hard to handle; (3) the adoption of an international standard digital credentialing system such as Open Badge is an essential element to guarantee the validation and recognition of skills and competencies beyond the scope of the project.
- **Module 3: Innovative Land-use management** – learnings from a land-use management perspective, stimulating the generation of innovative entrepreneurial activities in the agri-food field requires the deployment of specific tools to allow, on the one hand, the highest possible degree of

flexibility required when testing/experimenting new solutions on the ground and, on the other hand, to minimize the investment risks for the stakeholders. In this sense, the availability of publicly owned-land and its concession on a free, temporary basis to innovative businesses proved to be a crucial success factor. The development of an integrated masterplan for the use of agricultural land for experimental purposes is also a key element to be replicated. Such a tool, in fact, allows to plan for flexible, temporary uses while providing all the necessary services and infrastructures. And this, furthermore, allows to designate specific parts of a city's agricultural land as areas of experimentation where innovative, start-up projects/ideas can be tested on a rolling basis, ultimately facilitating the triggering/activation of a loop of innovation.

- **Module 4: Resilient, Integrated Urban Development** - learnings on: (1) the multifaceted understanding of the topic of food can be used as a leverage to rethink the relationship between the city and its rural surroundings, and it offers the opportunity to trigger integrated urban development initiatives under many strands (i.e., social, environmental, economic, cultural, etc.); (2) the public actor may play a pivotal role in promoting and facilitating interinstitutional agreements for the collaborative management of services and resources; (3) the public actor may facilitate the development of arrangements among local farms and agriculture-based business geared towards aggregating their commercial offer and enhance their market positioning, and/or to shorten the city's food supply-chain; (4) the public actor, through green procurement tools, may stimulate and support experimentation and innovation in the agri-food entrepreneurial sector.
- **Module 5: Long-term Sustainability** - learnings on: (1) Innovation and experimentation are characterized by high levels of uncertainty in terms of success and financial return and therefore constitute a high investment risk. Identifying stakeholders from the private (profit or non-profit) sector willing to bear such risk proved to be a challenge. Hence the need to mobilize a publicly owned company, which can operate as a market actor, but with a stronger financial protection when embarking in innovative/experimental investments; (2) the public actor's capacity to facilitate networking, linkages and connections beyond traditional relational spheres is a crucial factor to generate in the city a fertile environment for innovation bound to last on the long run; (3) the public actor's needs to set at policy level, the conditions (i.e., long-term strategies; training opportunities; facilitated access to land and resources; flexible regulations; availability of infrastructure and services; etc.) for testing new ideas and solutions on a rolling basis, in a continuous innovation loop.

Based on the above-mentioned learnings from UIA-OpenAgri project, the following table shows the direct connections between NextAgri transfer modules and the specific investment projects elaborated in the next chapters.

Project investments	Specific connection with transfer modules
Investment Project 1 – Place making	<p><i>Module 1 #Open Innovation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a network of people (producers and local-scale investors) and spaces (connected to agri-food production and consumption) <p><i>Module 2 #Education and Training</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engagement and empowerment of the local community in the theme of peri-urban agriculture <p><i>Module 5 #Long term Sustainability</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of cultural and recreational program to be repeated every year
Investment Project 2 – Experimentation and demonstration	<p><i>Module 1 #Open Innovation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development and test the Agro-hub concept engaging stakeholders to identify form and functions of the new space <p><i>Module 2 #Education and Training</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dedicated workshops and seminars based on the needs of local food producers and buyers.
Investment Project 3 – Physical Intervention (Land and Infrastructure)	<p><i>Module 3 #Innovative Land Use Management</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analysis of the agricultural potentialities of the lands to be activated and development of a masterplan for the agricultural uses <p><i>Module 4 #Resilient Integrated Urban Development</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Renovation of existing infrastructure/buildings for the implementation of the Gaia Agro-hub
Investment Project 4 – Physical Intervention (Buildings)	<p><i>Module 4 #Resilient Integrated Urban Development</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Renovation of existing building (farmhouse and related rural buildings) to host Gaia Agro hub services ▪ Creation of community meeting center not just for agricultural entrepreneurs but also for citizens ▪ Maintenance plan to guarantee the durability of the physical investment
Investment Project 5 – Capacity building and Business support	<p><i>Module 1 #Open Innovation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engagement of external support to develop dedicated educational programs

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Acquirement of the equipment and material for the trainings <p><i>Module 2 #Education and Training</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Management of courses and for the local communities on agriculture, biodiversity, sustainable lifestyles and food chains ▪ Promotion of new jobs and skills to reinforce the project with a strong commitment of the territories and communities engaged
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2.3 The Integrated Approach and the Participative Process

Vila Nova de Gaia ULG builds on a new group created for NextAgri project. To achieve the maximum effect of the transferability process, a wide spectrum of stakeholders was called upon and engaged. A new an optimal pool of stakeholders was composed of all main stakeholder groups, such as government organizations/decision making bodies, NGO-s, civil and non-profit partners as well as public sector partners/municipalities. Also, institutional partners must be taken into consideration as a special group of key stakeholders. The goal was to involve all key members of the group, who can have an impact on the project implementation, and in the design of the investment plan.

Despite the initial composition of the ULG, during the implementation of NextAgri some bottom-line learning was achieved that motivated a readjustment, such as:

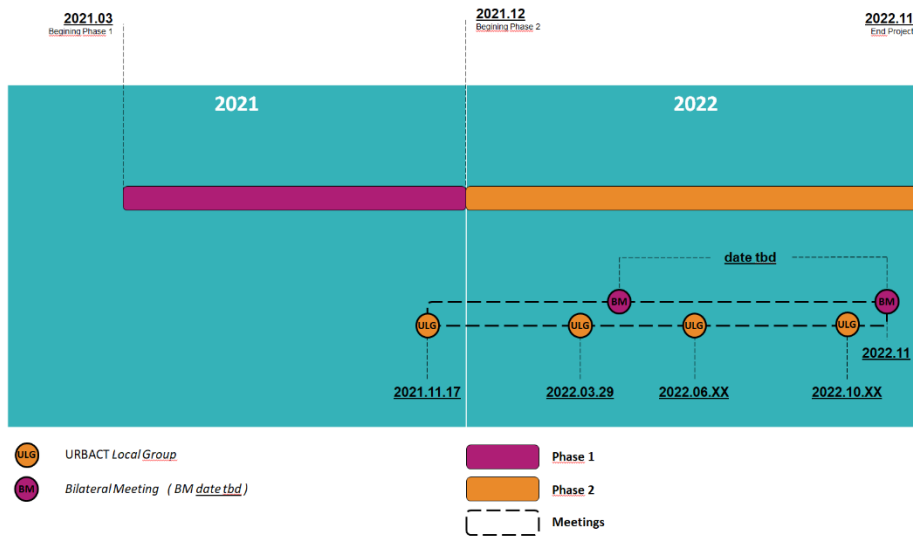
- **Lack of available concrete land:** difficult perception of the investment to be made and impact in the commitment and motivation of partners.
- The **reduction of the ULG's central core** contributed positively to the involvement of the chosen partners. Essentially these partners are internal - departments and municipal services - but third sector partners were also included who were able to contribute positively with their experience to the identification of risks.
- **Election periods:** the commitment of Leaders is an important pillar to guarantee the success of the project.
- **Step-by-step implementation:** the project must be implemented gradually, given the territorial dispersion existing in Vila Nova de Gaia.

This conclusion motivated the concentration of efforts on a ULG that can ensure and respond to the intended replicability potential.

Stakeholders	Role
City Executive	Policy makers
Gaiurb, E.M.	Municipal companies/ Strategic Partners
Inovagaia	
Education Department	Internal departments
Urbanism and Planning Department	
Environment Department	
Health Department	
Parish Council	Local community executive and policy makers
Primary Schools	Schools
Cantinho das Aromáticas	Private sector companies
My sweet green	
Sim, Somos Capazes	NGO's

The operation of the ULG has suffered some setbacks given that during Nextagri project, despite the limitations imposed by the pandemics, Vila Nova de Gaia went through two electoral periods - one of them at local level - which affected the commitment of the ULG partners and prevented us from taking a definitive position on some issues. Nonetheless, the meetings were programmed and realized with the ULG partners:

ULG Meetings Plan



2022

March	April	June	July	September	October
Meeting with the ULG to present the Investment Plan Draft submitted	Collaboration of the ULG in the transnational meeting in Vila Nova de Gaia 11 – 12 April 2022	Meeting with the ULG to debate the project and the Investment Plan;	Feedback about the Investment Plan	Contributions for the final version of the Investment Plan	Meeting with the ULG to present the final version of the Investment Plan

Brief notes about the 2nd draft of the Investment Plan to analysis and feedback

The ULG contributed to the investment plan and identified investment projects with expertise and policy demands that relate to the strategic vision and the benefits expected. During the implementation of the project, meetings were held with the ULG to collect inputs and visions for the investment plan and to better link the strategic challenges marked as priorities by the Municipality. These approaches were based on participative work methodologies, allowing all stakeholders to present their perspectives and experiences and, also, whenever possible, to promote the knowledge of good national and international experiences, contributing to the capacity building of all stakeholders. The promotion of an

integrated and resilient urban development supported by a food policy that promotes and recognises local value chains requires from partners - public or private - an approach based on innovation and intersectoral partnerships.

Given that Vila Nova de Gaia is currently reviewing its Municipal Master Plan, efforts are being taken to align the vision and configuration of the project with the urban strategy defined for the municipality and which aims to enhance territorial systems based on their landscape potential, **consolidate, and qualify the economic sustainability of non-urban land**, promoting carbon neutrality and energy efficiency in urban mobility and promoting environmental quality, among others.

3. OUR INVESTMENT PROPOSAL

3.1 The Value Proposition

With this Investment Plan, the municipality aims to provide a strong base of information on the local value chain, challenges, opportunities, and partners to support further steps in the development of an Open Innovation Hub on Peri-Urban Agriculture in Vila Nova de Gaia.

The main objectives of the Investment Plan are the following:

1. Selection and analysis of high potential value chains on which to focus when developing the Agro Hub concept.
2. Identification of the possible functions and functioning of the Agro Hub regarding the needs of the value chains. This includes an overview of a possible location and management structure.
3. Identification of possible Location of the Agro Hub.
4. Identification of potential partners.
5. Rough quantification of investment and operational costs.
6. Identification of potential funding instruments.

Therefore, the Investment Plan explores 5 Investment Projects that contribute to the promotion of the main objective - integration of urban agriculture into urban economy as a solution to improve urban environmental management, reducing urban poverty, enhancing urban food security, and stimulating participatory city governance – and address the major challenged identified.

Investment Project 1 – Place making, as the kick-off of the structural, territorial, environmental, and social change expected to outcome from the implementation of the Gaia Agro-Hub

Funding: € 89.000,00

Expected Impacts: Territorial and cultural appropriation; Social cohesion and inclusion.

Investment Project 2 – Experimentation and demonstration, to promote co-creation and engage stakeholders

Funding: € 34.000,00

Expected Impacts: Enhance Food Security; Research and Investigation Development

Investment Project 3 – Physical Intervention (Land and Infrastructure), with special focus on land acquisition and land preparation for the implementation of the Gaia Agro-Hub

Funding: € 1.500.000,00

Expected Impacts: preservation of existing green areas and increase of the areas available for agro-food production and experimentation

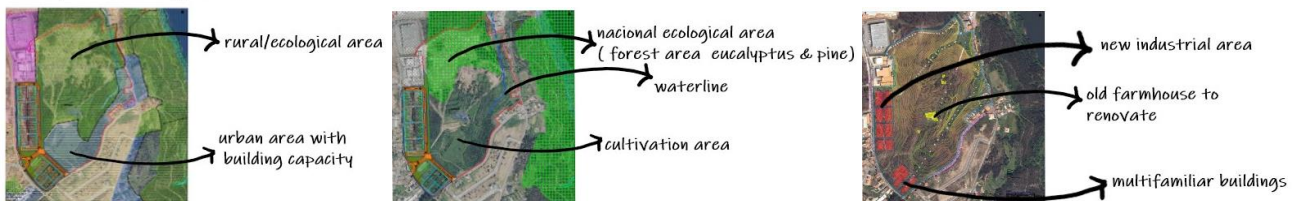
The possible location will be in Olival, in the southeast of Vila Nova de Gaia, in an old urban farm near the Douro River, with an area of 22 hectares.

Investment Project 4 – Physical Intervention (Buildings)

Funding: € 2.200.000,00

Expected Impacts: building rehabilitation with circular economy principles and methodologies; urban regeneration of the surrounding territorial area.

Quinta do Casalinho - 22ha
 Olival, Vila Nova de Gaia



Investment Project 5 – Capacity building and Business support, to promote jobs & skills to empower citizens by creating opportunities for personal and social development

Funding: € 440.000,00

Expected Impacts: Citizen empowerment and business, economic and social development

The first demanding step for Vila Nova de Gaia's team was mapping and selecting the territorial opportunities alongside with the process of decision making.

The definition of the Agro Hub strategy is an iterative process. The methodological approach followed so far was mainly based on desk research (exploitation of NextAgri modules and OpenAgri project and other GP in Portugal, e.g., Cantinho das Aromáticas & My Sweet Green in Vila Nova de Gaia and Terra Sintrópica, Mértola), field visits and round table meetings with policy and decision makers to outline the strategic functions of the Agro Hub.

Our aim is to implement with the Gaia Agro Hub a networked innovation system of agro-production, processing, marketing, training, and social inclusion taking advantage of the territorial dispersion.

Promoting the combination and integration of various agricultural activities and services in peri-urban areas of the city. It aims to facilitate the urban agricultural value chain to strengthen the position of local food producers and food suppliers and to improve its performance in agriculture.



3.2 Investment Project 1 – Place Making

Adapted from Module:	<p>Module 1 #Open Innovation</p> <p>Module 2 #Education and Training</p> <p>Module 5 #Long term Sustainability</p>
Project Short Description:	<p>Organisation and promotion of cultural and recreational activities such as concerts, masterclasses, workshops, solidarity meetings, with the aim of making the project known to the local community and placing the Gaia Agro-Hub on the cultural and tourist route of the municipality.</p> <p>Create a local marketplace that drive commerce between farmers and consumers.</p>
Project objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to make the project known to the local community and contribute to its involvement in the theme of peri-urban agriculture - to empower the local community for the challenges of sustainable urban development in a logic of caring for our common home - enhancing the culture around food and agriculture for citizens.
Links to others city strategy:	<p>Municipal Smart City Strategy e community involvement</p> <p>Urban Farmers project</p>
Project Owner:	<p>Municipal companies' & Internal departments</p> <p>Parish councils</p> <p>Schools</p> <p>SME's</p> <p>Local farmers and Local food producers</p>

Stakeholders to involve (from or outside the ULG):	Municipality Culture Department Local Cultural partners
Timescales and Spend profile:	Timeline: 60 months (1 Agro-Hub event once a year for 5 years) Spend Profile: € 4.000 (1st year – 2022) + €45.000 (year 2 to 5)
Project financial ask and match funding:	€89.000 (5 years)
Risks & Mitigation:	Overlap with the municipality's cultural agenda (HL; LP): Timely planning of events to be held and compatibility with the municipality's cultural agenda, through the connection between municipal services and other cultural agents involved Lack of interest from cultural groups and local community (ML; LP): conducting surveys among cultural groups and the local community to identify the main areas of interest; adopting co-creation methodologies

Workplan – Delivery Plan				
Actions	Objective	Timescale	Outputs	Monitor Progress
A1. Mapping the sites with potential for agri-food production	Create a network of spaces with agricultural potential and for other activities associated with agri-food production;	6 months (From Nov 2022 on)	Elaboration of a map with the network of spaces with vocation for agri-food activities	

	identify producers and potential smaller-scale investors		Creation of a Local marketplace solution both physical and digital	
A2. Definition of a placemaking strategy with a focus on natural-based architecture and walkability	Enable public access to the space, raise awareness and foster ownership	6 months (From Nov 2022 on)	Cleaning and treatment of spaces Implementation of pedestrian accesses and places to stay	
A3. Development of an annual agenda for cultural and recreational activities	Evolving citizens, stakeholders, and investors	From Nov 2022 on	Establish an annual plan	

3.3 Investment Project 2 – Experimentation and Demonstration

Adapted from Module:	Module 1 #Open Innovation Module 2 #Education and Training
Project Short Description:	Develop the Agro-Hub concept and identify activities of interest. Compile previous research on agro-hub best practices and needs of local food producers and buyers. Test feasibility of Agro-Hub options for Gaia. Engage stakeholders, specifically those that are investing in the Agro-Hub, in identifying the form and function of the Agro-Hub.
Project objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote co-creation activities - Engage stakeholders - Undertake research and review of best practices
Links to other city strategy:	Afurada Living Lab Escola Oficina
Project Owner:	Municipality/ Gaiurb, E.M.
Stakeholders to involve (from or outside the ULG):	Schools SME's Local farmers & food producers Academia Health & nutrition companies ULG members

Timescales and Spend profile:	Timeline: 24 months (year 2 and 3) Spend Profile: € 14.000 (1st year – 2023) + € 20.000 (2nd year – 2024)
Project financial ask and match funding:	€34.000 (2 Years)
Risks & Mitigation:	

Workplan – Delivery Plan				
Actions:	Objective	Timescale	Outputs:	Monitor Progress
A1. Promotion of workshops and seminars	Promote discussion, dissemination and research	24 months (year 2 and 3) From March 2023 on	Establish an annual plan	
A2. Developing pilot actions	Test in real context pilot actions	24 months (year 2 and 3) From March 2023 on	Selection and implementation of a minimum of 3 Pilot actions	

3.4 Investment Project 3 - Physical intervention (Land and Infrastructure)

Adapted from Module:	Module 3 #Innovative Land Use Management Module 4 #Resilient Integrated Urban Development
Project Short Description:	Given the unavailability of land with agricultural capacity owned by the municipality, for the implementation of the project it is necessary to acquire a property that can accommodate the installation of a peri-urban agriculture hub. Assessment of the potential agricultural of the land selected. Acquisition of the land. Implementation plan and physical execution of the infrastructure construction work.
Project objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide land for farming - promote a masterplan to redesign the intervention area - Infrastructure project execution
Links to others city strategy:	2nd review of the Municipal Master Plan (PDM) R2CS –Circular Network for Sustainable Construction
Project Owner:	Municipality/ Gaiurb, E.M.
Stakeholders to involve (from or outside the ULG):	<p>Politicians</p> <p>Parish councils</p> <p>SME's</p> <p>Rural landowners</p> <p>Municipal companies</p> <p>Urban Planning & Environmental departments</p>

Timescales and Spend profile:	Timeline: 36 months (year 3 to 5) Spend Profile: € 1.500.000,00
Project financial ask and match funding:	Municipal investment
Risks & Mitigation:	<p>Difficulties with landowners (HL; LP): promote a negotiation that emphasises the social function of the project and focuses on territorial areas without urbanistic pressure; offer the landowner compensations capable of mitigating the losses resulting from the transfer of the property</p> <p>Promotion of land-based finance depending on private initiative: cooperate with owners through instruments for the implementation of urban plans that promote collaboration between the parties involved; find compensatory solutions that reduce public and private investment</p> <p>Land unavailability: focus on areas of low housing pressure</p>

Workplan – Delivery Plan				
Actions	Objective	Timescale	Outputs	Monitor Progress
A1. Pre-feasibility study	site appraisals for: –landscape analysis –geotechnical studies; assessment of any contamination; evaluation of the agricultural potential of land use	December 2024- April 2025	Identification of strengths and weakness along with opportunities and challenges and discovered critical gaps	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - availability/construction of roads infrastructure - availability/construction of water and power infrastructures - assessment of the potential to re-use existing buildings - etc. 			
A1. Land acquisition	- provide land for farming	May 2025-July 2025	Land Acquisition or/and identification of other possible locations for the Gaia Agro-Hub	
A3. Infrastructure project execution	- provide the required infrastructure for operation of Gaia Agro-Hub	July 2025-March 2027	Creation of all the conditions for the implementation and operation of Gaia Agro-Hub in the selected location	

3.5 Investment Project 4 – Physical intervention on buildings

Adapted from Module:	Module 4 #Resilient Integrated Urban Development
Project Short Description:	<p>Rehabilitation of the existing old farmhouse and agricultural outbuildings to accommodate facilities and services to develop Gaia Agro Hub: Promote buildings rehabilitation; designing buildings with flexible use of space in order to provide opportunities for accommodate a variety of activities, some fixed in their use (such as a kitchen lab or storage spaces) and others more flexible for workshops, seminars, community health education, etc.</p> <p>The main goal is to build a model of Agro Hub that could act as a "meeting place", a community centre, an education hub, an exhibition space, and a local food hub providing a one-stop shop for food production. In addition, it would provide spaces for local agricultural groups allowing for knowledge sharing and community building.</p>
Project objectives:	Build a centralized Agri-complex to accommodate the services required for the operation of the hub
Links to other city strategy:	R2CS – Circular Network for Sustainable Construction Municipal urban gardens
Project Owner:	Municipality/ Gaiurb, E.M.
Stakeholders to involve (from or outside the ULG):	Municipal companies & departments (Urban Planning, Environmental & Public Procurement)
Timescales and Spend profile:	Timeline: 24 months (year 4 to 5) Spend Profile: € 2.200.000,00

<p>Project financial ask and match funding:</p>	<p>National funding (e.g. Recovery and Resilience Program, Structural Fund, ERDF, etc.)</p>
<p>Risks & Mitigation:</p>	<p><u>Political risks:</u> political environment. high-level political support is a prerequisite for successful achievement of the goals of this experimental project. It's particularly relevant in scenarios of political instability, that can bring conditionals to the definition of national strategies and financing - Accept the risk</p> <p><u>Finance risk sources:</u> changes in financial support schemes; financial requirements and conditions; lack of financial resources to implement and scale strategies and innovations. Mitigation: Collect information on available fundings, thus lessening the hurdle of decision-makers to find additional funding for implement Project 2.</p> <p><u>Regulatory risks:</u> key regulation in place or unfavourable laws changes that could affects the project with complex licensing and consent processes. Mitigation: the direct involvement and continuous monitoring of legislative framework changes by municipality officers will provide information in time to incorporate the changes or new requirements into the plan.</p>

Workplan – Delivery Plan				
Actions	Objective	Timescale	Outputs	Monitor Progress
<p>A1. Architectural project and functional scheme definition</p>	<p>Development of the Programme and Project for Agro Hub</p>	<p>May 2025 to December 2025</p>	<p>Project approved by the client by October 2025</p>	

	buildings Design and Construction		Project completed in December 2025	In progress
A2. Public tender procedure	To select a supplier for the construction and rehabilitation works	January 2026 to March 2027	Starting construction and rehabilitation works in July 2026 Completion construction and rehabilitation renovation works in March 2025	In progress
A3. Operational costs	Definition of a maintenance plan including the cost of maintaining Gaia Agro Hub and the buildings	From March 2027 on	A Maintenance Plan defined in March 2027	

3.6 Investment Project 5 – Capacity building and business support

Adapted from Module:	Module 1 #Open Innovation Module 2 #Education and Training
Project Short Description:	Developing processes to strengthen the skills, instincts, abilities, processes, and resources that communities need to survive, adapt, and thrive in a fast-changing world, promoting social inclusion and urban development through people, establishing a strong commitment between people, their community and territory. Promote jobs & skills to consolidate the project's objectives and promote social inclusion, citizen empowerment and peri-urban agriculture as a reference economic activity with an important impact on the food policy implemented and on citizens' health and quality of life.
Project objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote jobs & skills to empower citizens by creating opportunities for personal and social development. - Promote the advisory and technical support necessary for the development of business in agriculture, using innovative and disruptive methodologies.
Links to others city strategy:	Related to municipal policies regarding education, jobs and inclusion explained in the Municipal Main Planning Options
Project Owner:	Private partners NGO's
Stakeholders to involve (from or outside the ULG):	Education and Health Department SME's Local farmers & food producers

	<p>Academia</p> <p>Health & nutrition companies</p> <p>(e.g. Sim, somos capazes; Cantinho das Aromáticas; My sweet green)</p>
Timescales and Spend profile:	<p>Timeline: 24 months (year 4 to 5)</p> <p>Spend Profile: € 440.000,00</p>
Project financial ask and match funding:	<p>Private capital investors</p>
Risks & Mitigation:	<p><u>Finance risk sources</u>: changes in financial support schemes; financial requirements and conditions; lack of financial resources to implement and scale strategies and innovations. Mitigation: Collect information on available fundings, thus lessening the hurdle of decision-makers to find additional funding for implement Project 2.</p> <p><u>Regulatory risks</u>: key regulation in place or unfavourable laws changes that could affect the project. Mitigation: the direct involvement and continuous monitoring of legislative framework changes by municipality officers will provide information in time to incorporate the changes or new requirements into the plan.</p>

Workplan – Delivery Plan				
Actions	Objective	Timescale	Outputs	Monitor Progress
A1. Selection of the private partner	Select the private partner capable to develop an	From March 2025on	Establishment of a contractual relationship with the	

	educational and formative program, aligned with the Project objectives and which shares the strategic vision established.		private partner for the development of an educational, training and advisory programme	
A2. Provide Gaia Agro Hub with work equipment for new entrepreneurs	Select and acquire the necessary equipment and material for the development of training and educational programmes related to agriculture, biodiversity, sustainability, and sustainable lifestyles	From March 2025 on	Providing the necessary equipment and material for the development of training and educational programmes	
A3. Develop courses and training	Develop courses and training for the local communities and population on the issues of agriculture, biodiversity, sustainable lifestyles, and food chains.	From May 2025 on	Plan of courses and training available in Gaia Agro-Hub	

3.7 Governance and Delivery Model

The leadership of the investment plan and the investment projects is in the Municipality of Vila Nova de Gaia that assumes the management of the implementation of the Gaia Agro Hub, in closer articulation and cooperation with all the partners involved.

The role of the municipality is spread over the investment projects and is assumed by its internal departments and the municipal company Gaiurb, E.M. The governance model of investment projects 2 and 5 is intended to be iterative, to allow the involvement of partners and the full assumption of responsibilities in the development of projects and planned activities. Nevertheless, it is intended that all governance models are based on communication, accountability, and long-term sustainability, so a project **steering committee** will be created to act as a facilitator and mentor in the implementation of activities. In this committee the Municipality will assume a steering role, thus being able to take part in the decision of the priorities to be addressed.

Investment Project 1 – Place making

The following partners will be involved in the implementation of the Place Making activities of this Investment Plan and in supporting its implementation:

- City Hall – the Municipality will coordinate the activities until the end of the NextAgri project and support the network
- Parishes – the Parish Council will coordinate the communication with the local stakeholders, identifying the local partners in each parish that work in agriculture and food related industries.
- Companies, NGOs, and Entrepreneurs – these actors will help in attracting local stakeholders, make the ideas trustworthy among the local community and promote urban change.

Investment Project 2 – Experimentation and demonstration

The governance model of this investment project is intended to be iterative and innovative, to allow the involvement of partners and the full assumption of responsibilities in the development of projects and planned activities. Nevertheless, it is expected a governance model based on communication, accountability and long-term sustainability.

The following partners will be involved in the implementation of the Experimentation and demonstration activities of this Investment Plan and in supporting its implementation:

- Steering Committee – the Committee will facilitate the use of open innovation in the implementation of the activities.

- Academia, Universities and Schools – these stakeholders will contribute with their knowledge and research methods to compile previous research on agro hub best practices and needs of local food producers and buyers. Test feasibility of Agro-Hub options for Gaia.

Investment Project 3 – Physical intervention (land and Infrastructure)

The following partners will be involved in the implementation of the physical intervention in land and infrastructure activities of this Investment Plan and in supporting its implementation:

- Politicians and Municipal Executive – the decision-making sets on these stakeholders that have the competence to determine the acquisition of the land.
- Parishes Council – mapping and identifying potential locations for the development of the Agro Hub.
- Rural Landowners - the decision-making sets on these stakeholders, that own the land, to recognize the priorities addressed and assume accountability in its implementation.
- Municipal companies and Urban Planning & Environmental departments – these stakeholders assume the infrastructure project elaboration and execution, with care being taken to prepare the land for the development of agricultural activities.

Investment Project 4 – Physical intervention on buildings

The following partners will be involved in the implementation of the physical intervention on buildings activities of this Investment Plan and in supporting its implementation:

- Municipal companies and Urbanism Department – these stakeholders assume the architectural project and functional scheme definition to the rehabilitation of the existing buildings and idealization of new buildings, when needed.

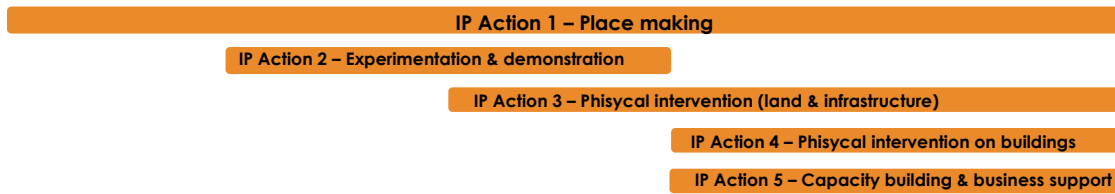
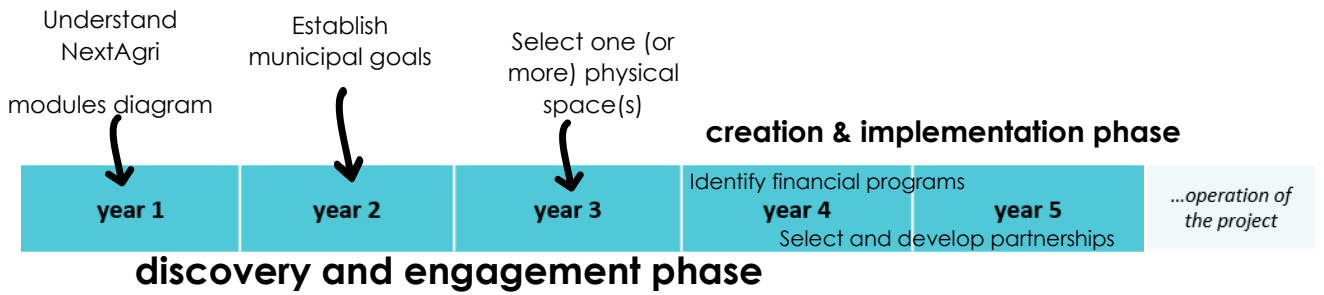
Investment Project 5 – Capacity building and business support

The governance model of this investment project is intended to be iterative and innovative, to allow the involvement of partners and the full assumption of responsibilities in the development of projects and planned activities. Nevertheless, it is expected a governance model based on communication, accountability, and long-term sustainability.

The following partners will be involved in the implementation of the Capacity building and business support activities of this Investment Plan and in supporting its implementation:

- Steering Committee – the Committee will facilitate the use of open innovation in the implementation of the activities.
- Academia, Universities and Schools – these stakeholders will contribute with their knowledge and research methods to compile previous research on agro-hub best practices and needs of local food producers and buyers. They will also mentor the entrepreneurs in the developing businesses on agro food.
- SME's and Health & Nutrition Companies – the partners will contribute with their knowledge to provide Gaia Agro Hub with work equipment for new entrepreneurs and to the operationalisation of the activities, such as courses and training.
- Local farmers and producers – are both providers and recipients of skills and training.

GAIA AGRO-HUB



4. MATCH FUNDING

4.1 Our Asks

The first step must be to draw a funders map: to collect all the potential funding sources gain understanding of what type of relevant funders match the specific funding needs for the different phases of the project.

It is important to differentiate which activities of the project can be implemented by which funding sources and consider a multi-fund approach:

- With the help of external funding.
- By accessing internal budget allocations of the city; or
- Without any additional funding needed

Track	Prepare	Do
<p>Track funding sources opportunities, gain awareness of info providers at EU and regional/local level</p>	<p>Plan, develop evidence and documents</p>	<p>Before submitting the application</p>
<p>Recovery and Resilience Programme Portugal 2030 Horizon Europe ERFD Venture capital Angel Investors Incubators and accelerators programs Crowdfunding (...)</p>	<p>An inventory checklist of what we need to know about the finance and funding assets and processes at our organisation/municipality.</p> <p>A SWOT diagram permitting the analysis of the available funding assets.</p> <p>An inventory matrix to identify potential finance and funding capacities across different departments and/or partner organisations.</p>	<p>Check all the call documentation.</p> <p>Match the funders requirements.</p> <p>Write a high-quality financing bid.</p> <p>Consider external support.</p>

	Costs breakdown (Name and value €)	Source of Funding 1 (programme/initiative)	Source of Funding 2 (programme/initiative)	Source of Funding 3 (programme/initiative)	Total of funds that are needed for each type of cost
Project 1	A.1 Place making on year 1 - €14.000	Own municipal funds			
	A.1 Place making years 2 to 5 - €75.000	Own municipal funds	National Funding (National programme PRR and Portugal 2030)	Crowdfunding	
Project 2	A1. Promotion of workshops and seminars - € 34.000	Own municipal funds	National Funding (National programme PRR and Portugal 2030)		
	A2. Developing pilot actions (e.g., Milan Food policy signature)	Own municipal funds			
Project 3	A1. Pre-feasibility study €100.000	Own municipal funds			
	A2. Land acquisition €400.000	European Funds	EU structural national Funds	Own municipal funds	European Investment bank, loans from banks
	A3. Infrastructure project execution 1,1M€	European Funds	EU structural national Funds	Own municipal funds	
Project 4	A1. Architectural project and functional scheme definition €300.000	European Funds	EU structural national Funds	Own municipal funds	

	A2. Public tender procedure – 1,9M€	National Funding (National programme PRR and Portugal 2030)			
	A3. Operational costs	European Funds	EU structural national Funds	Own municipal funds	
Project 5	A1. Selection of the private partner				
	A2. Provide Gaia Agro Hub with work equipment for new entrepreneurs €400.000	Private capital investors			
	A3. Develop courses and training - €40.000	National Funding (National programme PRR and Portugal 2030)	Own municipal funds		
Proposal Budget	€ 4.263.000				

5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

5.1 The monitoring and evaluation approach

During the implementation of our Investment Plan, we and our local stakeholders will keep a close watch on the progress and quality of implementation, identify deviations and obstacles and develop adequate responses to ensure that objectives are met.

Monitoring is the regular, systematic collection of data about the implementation of the Investment Plan. This will typically include information about the progress of activities and the delivery of outputs (using indicators), about the use of available resources (financial, staff and other) and about other relevant.

Performance management means using the collected monitoring information to analyse progress and adjust activities as needed to reach the objectives.

The related concept of *evaluation* rather deals with the independent analysis of and reflection on the performance of an action plan once it has been (nearly) implemented. It is meant to collect independent feedback on the achievements, scope and quality of outputs and results. Evaluation also aims to investigate what changes the Investment Plan has really brought about in the pre-existing situation (the impact of the plan). Evaluation will combine information about the result and output indicators with other data sources and independent data collection to draw lessons and conclusions.

Our intention is to keep Monitoring and performance management as simple and practical as possible.

5.2 The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Investment Project Name	Specific Objective	Result Indicator	Output Indicator
Place making	Development of an annual agenda for cultural and recreational activities	Promotion of 1 main event/year regarding food and/or agriculture	Number of events organised Number of visitors/participants
	Promotion of workshops and seminars	Promotion of up to 5 workshops and seminars	Number of workshops organised Number of seminars organised Number of attendees
Experimentation & demonstration	Developing pilot actions	Milan Food policy subscription	Milan Food policy signature
	Pre-feasibility study	Identification of possible locations and site appraisals	Number of viable locations
Physical intervention (land & infrastructure)	Land acquisition	Provide land for farming	Granting of the purchase and sale contract or other document that operates the transfer of property
	Infrastructure project execution	Contracting the Infrastructure project	Approval of the Infrastructure project by the municipality Project completed
	Architectural project and functional scheme definition	Contracting the architectural project for Agro Hub buildings Design and Construction	Approval of the architectural project by the municipality Project completed
Physical intervention on buildings	Public tender procedure	Adjudication of the service provision for the preparation of the architectural project	Compliance with deadlines for execution delivery of the architectural project
	Operational costs of maintaining Gaia Agro Hub and the buildings	Definition of a maintenance plan	A maintenance plan defined
	Selection of the private partner for the development of an educational, training, and advisory programme	Establishment of up 2 contractual relationships with local partners	Number of contractual relationships established
Capacity building & business support	Provide Gaia Agro Hub with work equipment for new entrepreneurs	Definition of a Checklist with the necessary equipment	Number of acquired and installed equipment's

		and material to be acquired	
	Develop courses and training for the local communities and population on the issues of agriculture, biodiversity, sustainable lifestyles, and food chains	Develop of up 4 courses and training sessions	Number of educational trainings organised Number of participants

6. COMMUNICATION STRATEGY AND PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The communication activities as well as the public consultation will be delivered in coherence with the communication plan of the project and with rules established by our municipality. More in detail, two main types of communication channels can be distinguished:

- **EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION** – between the ULG members and the broader local audience with the scope to inform citizens on the activities of the ULG, the IP content and progress made as well as to gather inputs, opinions and additional suggestions that can derive from (consultation). These external communication processes will be delivered by press releases, reports, and social media. At the level of each action, there should be also communication activities during detailed planning (like co-creation sessions with stakeholders, target groups) and implementation.
- **INTERNAL TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION** – this activity will be delivered to increase the interest on ULG members, investors, local managing authorities, administrative experts, and specialists. The final scope is to ensure the coherence between the activity of different sectors and the actors during the implementation of each Investment Project.
- **INTERNAL INSTITUTIONAL COMMUNICATION** – this activity seeks to coordinate the actors of different departments of our Municipality to guarantee the implementation of the IP or part of it. This communication activity should be targeted to decision and policy makers at the local level as well as those that might be interested at the provincial and regional level.

7. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Message from the Vice-Mayor of Vila Nova de Gaia:

First, I would like to thank, on behalf of the Municipal Executive, the municipal team, policy makers, and technicians involved in the project, without whom the realization of this project would not be possible. I also thank the ULG members who have dedicated themselves to this project and who have contributed to making the IP a document that is both realistic and idealistic. We must also thank the Milan team and all the technicians from the partner cities and all the experts who accompanied the implementation of the project and who allowed for the practical knowledge of good practices, with enormous potential for replicability, re-usability, and transferability, with visible and scalable results. It was a very rewarding experience, of intense work and mutual learning.

Patrocínio Azevedo

Message from the Project Coordinator:

We have come to the end of an extraordinary journey, where the entire project team had the opportunity to learn, grow and identify challenges for the future. The opportunity to learn about good practices, already implemented in partner cities, is a differentiating element of this initiative and the detailed analysis of the UIA project, OpenAgri, is a very important learning for the development of this IP and the project that Vila Nova de Gaia intends to develop in the future. On behalf of the team, I thank the Milan team, the teams of Strara Zagora and Almere, with whom we have shared knowledge and grown during this period, and the Lead Expert who has dynamically followed all the hesitations and changes that the project has undergone throughout NextAgri. A special thanks to the Urbact secretariat, for the accompaniment and support given. I end with an inspiring challenge by José Saramago (Nobel Prize winner for literature) "The paths are not made; it is by walking that each of us makes our own path."

Carla Pires

