



The Costa Crociere Foundation Launches 6 New Social Betterment and Marine Environmental Projects

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Five new initiatives offering assistance to women, and educational and employment opportunities to disadvantaged youth from all over Italy.

In the environmental field, a new project kicks off for the recovery and reuse of marine litter.

Genoa – July 21, 2016 – The Costa Crociere Foundation (www.costa-crociere-foundation.com) has concluded the annual selection process reserved for Italian non-profit organizations and has chosen six new social **betterment and marine environmental protection projects for funding**.

During the period of the call for proposals – from January 18 through February 14 – around 240 projects were submitted by non-profit organizations and associations working in either of the Foundation's areas of interest. The selection criteria used by the Foundation's Advisory Board and Board of Directors prioritized candidate projects capable of satisfying the individual's basic needs, offering initiatives directed at women and at "NEETs" – young people who are Not (engaged) in Education, Employment or Training – and introducing best practices associated with the "circular economy" applied to the sea.

The projects in question are managed by associations and organizations operating all over Italy. Thanks to the financial support provided by Costa Cruises and its partners, and also to the synergies generated by other projects already in progress, the successful candidates can achieve their aims of offering assistance, providing training for disadvantaged youth, and raising awareness with regard to marine litter and pollution. More specifically:

- **"Un dentista per amico" ("A Caring Dentist"):** proposed by the *Associazione ARKÈ Onlus* from the Province of Genoa, this project will provide dental care free of charge to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds living in foster care or shelters and in deprived families.
- **"Le vie del Mare" ("A Vocation for the Sea"):** presented by the *Associazione Non solo vela Onlus*, this project is addressed to youth at risk of social exclusion in the Genoa metropolitan area and will provide vocational training for various trades linked to the sea and seafaring; the professionals teaching the courses will include staff members from the Costa Campus. The apprentices taking part will learn how to become galley chefs, skippers, lifesavers and so on and, at the end of their period of instruction, each participant will have a 3-month internship with a business selected on the basis of personal preference and local opportunities. This will give the trainees valuable on-the-job experience while the companies concerned can assess the interns and decide whether to offer them permanent employment.
- **"La Bottega dei miracoli" ("The Shop of Miracles Sea"):** the aim of this project, submitted by the *Cooperativa Sociale Alzaia*, is to facilitate social inclusion and employment opportunities for people with Down syndrome and for NEETs, by opening and running a retail outlet selling typical regional products in Pisa's famous Piazza dei Miracoli. The project will also involve the creation of a permanent training laboratory, with places for at least 4 NEETs and 5 young people with Down syndrome every year; after the course they will be able to take part in internships assigned individually according to each person's talents and aptitudes.

- **"Women In Technology"**: this project, based on an idea conceived by the *Fondazione Mondo Digitale* headquartered in Rome, has the objective of helping young female NEETs enter the world of work by setting up their own ICT entrepreneurial ventures. The pilot phase involves experimentation in three high schools in Campania, Calabria and Sicily, plus provision of project design and development support services for a total of 150 young women.
- **"La casa senza violenza" ("A Safe Haven")**: this project, presented by *Il Cerchio delle relazioni - Cooperativa sociale onlus* in Genoa, provides support for women who are victims of domestic violence and who make the crucial decision to leave home. The initiative aims to extend the range of essential services offered in such situations; this includes emergency shelters and medium-to-long term accommodation for battered women and their children.

In the environmental field, the Costa Crociere Foundation is supporting the initiative proposed by the *Scuola di Robotica* of Genoa, with the goal of recycling plastic to make items using a 3D printing process. More specifically, the plastic waste recovered by Ligurian fishermen selected through their trade associations, from the Marine Protected Areas of Liguria, by the Ligurian Observatory on Fishing & Environment (OLPA) and by the Costa Crociere Foundation itself, for example thanks to the *Collavoriamo* project run by the *Cooperativa "Il Laboratorio"* in Genoa, will be recycled to make educational kits enhancing the marine environmental awareness of visually impaired children.

The Costa Crociere Foundation is an independent organization which was set up in October 2014 with a mission to promote the social and environmental betterment of Italian communities. Italy is the country where Costa Cruises was established and where it is headquartered. Since its inception, the Foundation has selected and funded some 15 social and environmental projects (including those chosen this year).

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