**MONALISA Community of Knowledge | Call for Young researchers**

**JUNE 2025**

**TOPIC: soil and land degradation, desertification, climate impacts on land. Particular attention to contributions related to AI, machine learning and remote sensing applied to LDD.**

**THE COMMUNITY OF KNOWLEDGE**

The [Community of Knowledge](https://monalisa4land.eu/community/) of MONALISA, a community to build a common arena for key experts, including researchers, technical experts, policymakers and civil society, to share insights, co-create solutions and scale up successful actions as well as stimulate ongoing discussions.

[MONALISA](https://monalisa4land.eu/) is an Innovation Action Horizon Europe Project under the Soil Mission devoted to monitoring, preventing and restoring Mediterranean drylands with innovative solutions to reverse Land Degradation and Desertification (LDD).

**PURPOSE OF THE CALL**

The aim of this open call is to offer early-career scientists an opportunity to share their ideas, research, and results related to land sustainability and desertification prevention.

This call is part of a program designed to promote research on LDD through a Community of Knowledge which foresees two calls per year (June and December) during the project life dedicated to young researchers, allowing them to present their ideas, research, and results about specific topics selected by the Community of Knowledge.

The selection will be carried out by the Scientific Committee of the Call.

**OPPORTUNITIES BY THE CALL**

The initiative would offer selected candidates the chance to present their work during MONALISA Community of knowledge **Café Talks, starting from the one in October 2025**, to participate in sessions in scientific conferences and special issues supported by MONALISA in scientific journals, fostering visibility, interdisciplinary dialogue, and integration into our ongoing community exchanges.

In collaboration with the DNI Academy, a partner of the MONALISA project, we also propose enhancing visibility by offering limited financial support to help cover the registration fee for selected scientific events. As an incentive, one young researcher per call, selected from among the call participants, may receive funding—decided by the Scientific Committee of the Call – specifically to cover the registration costs of a relevant event related to land sustainability and desertification.

While the exact amount may vary depending on the event, the expected limit is approximately **€400**. The selected candidate for each call will be asked to present a reguest with a copy of the registration to the conference.

**ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

* PhD students, or recent PhD graduates (≤3 years), or Master students and research scholarship holders aged under 40;
* Working on relevant topics such as soil degradation, desertification restoration, sustainable land management, or climate change impacts on soils;
* Able to present in English;
* Submitting a brief summary of their work for review.

**APPLICATION & DEADLINES**

The application form for the Call is available online at MONALISA Community website.

**The deadline for the submission is July, 20, 2025- POSTPONED sept. 10, 2025.**

The candidate will provide personal information about his/her academic career, as requested in the application format, and should upload the following documents:

* the curriculum vitae (short),
* the academic record,
* the extended abstract describing the idea, summarizing research, published or unpublished, on topic of the call.

The extended abstract should be in English, limited to 2,400 words, excluding references. Tables and figures must be placed within the text, immediately after they are mentioned. The submission must also include a 300-words summary.

For a more effective selection, it is strongly recommended that applicants clearly specify the relevance of their work to Land degradation and desertification, including knowledge and proposed solutions.

By submitting the application form, applicants accept all the terms and conditions set out in this notice. Applications submitted after the deadline, as well as incomplete or not finalized applications, will be automatically excluded from the evaluation process.

If the number of applications received is deemed insufficient, the Scientific committee may extend the deadline. All the relevant information will be published on the MONALISA website.

**EVALUATION OF THE APPLICATIONS**

The Scientific Committee of the Call will evaluate the applications and establish a ranking for the selection of young researchers’ submissions.

The evaluation of the applications, at the incontestable discretion of the Scientific Committee, will be based on the following criteria:

* Suitability for the role of a young researcher and alignment with the aims of the program and the topic of the call;
* Research skills related to land degradation and desertification;
* Relevance and originality of the proposed ideas or solutions.

A short report on the selection process will be prepared and the list successful candidates - along with the ranking - will be published on the official website **by August, 31, 2025** **POSTPONED to September, 30, 2025.**

Candidates will be notified by email within the same day.

The Scientific Committee will contact the top-ranked candidate, who will be invited to present her/his research in the Café talk taking place in October 2025.

Members of the Scientific Committee are:

* **Francesca Assennato**, Italian Institute for Environmental Protection and Research
* **Vicenc Carabassa**, CREAF
* **Cristina Domingo**, CREAF
* **María José Marqués Pérez**, DesertNet International
* **Antonio Pulina**, University of Sassari
* **Daniela Smiraglia**, Italian Institute for Environmental Protection and Research
* **Cristina Tarantino**, National Research Council of Italy
* **Marcello Vitale**, Sapienza University of Rome

**NON-DISCLOSURE TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

MONALISA project manages research data in accordance with open science and in line with the FAIR Data Management principles.

Permission to share the works submitted within the MONALISA Community will be granted upon acceptance to participate in the call.

In the case of scientific works not yet published, the Monalisa project undertakes to maintain confidentiality and not to disseminate the contents outside the Project.

However, the Monalisa project undertakes, where necessary and upon request of the candidate, to sign specific confidentiality or non-disclosure agreements.

**FURTHER INFORMATION**

The information and forms related to this call are available on the website of the [MONALISA project](https://monalisa4land.eu/), which is the official communication channel. It is also possible to contact the following email address Monalisa\_kc@isprambiente.it for more information and clarifications.

**PERSONAL DATA PROCESSING**

The Monalisa project processes the personal data provided by the applicants as declared in the information given in the online application, in compliance with the relevant European and Italian Law.