

PARTNER SEARCH

HORIZON-NEB-2026-01-REGEN-03



Kruitfabriek, Villooijde 07/2024

**VOLLE
GROND**

Transforming Underused Roofscapes into
Regenerative Urban Commons

We are building a European consortium for a proposal under the New European Bauhaus (NEB) Horizon Europe 2026 programme — REGEN-03.

We invite universities, research institutes, cities, architecture and design organisations, and active urban regeneration projects to explore collaboration. We are also looking for an experienced partner to take on the coordinating role.



The Challenge

European cities face increasing pressure from climate change, biodiversity loss, heat stress, flooding and social inequality. At the same time, vast areas of urban space remain underused — especially rooftops and vertical surfaces.

We believe these spaces can become key infrastructures for ecological regeneration.

Our central research question is:

How can underused roofscapes be transformed into regenerative, productive and inclusive urban commons that improve ecological performance, climate resilience and social cohesion?

Through applied research and real-world demonstration sites, the project aims to develop scalable models for European cities.



Project Vision

We investigate how multifunctional rooftops and vertical spaces can become regenerative urban infrastructure delivering multiple benefits:

- climate adaptation and water buffering
- biodiversity enhancement and urban cooling
- circular resource management
- local food production
- community wellbeing and participation
- cooperative economic value creation

Urban agriculture serves as a catalyst for ecological restoration, education and neighbourhood activation.



Core Research Themes

1. Spatial & Technical Potential
2. Ecological Regeneration & Climate Resilience
3. Regenerative Urban Agriculture
4. Social Inclusion & Community Stewardship
5. Economic Replication



Demonstration Site

Kruitfabriek, Vilvoorde (Belgium)

A former industrial gunpowder factory being transformed into a mixed-use neighbourhood hub integrating:

- affordable housing
- co-working and social enterprise spaces
- horeca and community functions
- scalable rooftop regenerative agriculture
- circular energy and water systems

Kruitfabriek serves as an integrated research environment where technical, ecological, social and economic innovation converge.



Living Labs

- PAKT & Zuiderdaken (Antwerp) — existing cooperative rooftop farms
- Social housing rooftop garden (Antwerp – 2029)
- School edible gardens and educational growing spaces
- Emerging rooftop pilots in Belgium



Expected Outcomes

- Evidence-based environmental performance data
- Scalable rooftop typologies
- Climate adaptation metrics
- Governance and business models
- Open-source implementation toolkit
- Policy recommendations for European cities



Who We Are Looking For

Research & Knowledge Partners — urban ecology, climate adaptation, hydrology, circular systems, social innovation

Architecture & Design Partners — regenerative architecture, adaptive reuse, NEB design methodologies

City & Public Partners — urban regeneration, climate adaptation, food transition

Demonstration Partners — rooftop farms, cooperative developments, social housing pilots

Priority Roles in Consortium

- scientific coordinator
- work package leads
- additional city pilot partners
- monitoring & impact experts
- dissemination / policy partners



Experience in Horizon Europe, NEB, DUT, Interreg or URBACT is a strong asset.

Who is Volle Grond? (Initiating this partner search)

Volle Grond operates innovative, climate-adaptive rooftop farms in Antwerp where neighbourhood residents grow food together under professional guidance. We open our farms to the wider public through tours, workshops, school visits, and cultural events — reconnecting urban residents with where their food comes from.

By bringing working farmers into the heart of the city and connecting them directly to local consumers and hospitality businesses, we create a short supply chain that gives farmers a market in the city.

Beyond the rooftop, we also bring our circular growing expertise to ground level — guiding schools, care homes, and community organisations in setting up their own food gardens — spreading the practice of urban food production and restoring the relationship between city and nature.



Rooftop Farms

- 2 rooftop farms in Antwerp
- 150-200 rooftop farmers
- 4,000 visitors per year
- 5 tons of vegetables, fruit & herbs (0 food miles)
- 230,000 liters rainwater collected
- Demonstrated climate impact — to be further measured

Awards

- Rooftop Hero — Rotterdamse Dakendagen 2026
- PAKT — 2nd most innovative rooftop of Europe, Paris Rooftop Days 2025
- Zuiderdaken — selected as 'Climate roof' — Embuild 2026

Vegetables

- 3 local (organic) producers B2C
- 1 cluster of 5 local organic farmers B2B
- 30 loyal hospitality clients

Support / Consulting

- 10 ongoing support programs in the construction sector and collective community gardens



Interested in Joining?

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