

Application Form

**PART 1: BASIC DATA**

**Experience data** (complete the information below in a clear and concise manner)

<b>Title of the experience:</b> Senior Academy of Civil Protection		
<b>Name of the city or region:</b> Amadora		
<b>Inhabitants of the city or territory:</b> 171.179		
<b>Country:</b> Portugal		
<b>Institution presenting the candidacy</b> (name of the municipality, department, government, institution leading the candidate experience): Amadora City Hall		
<b>Website of the experience or institution:</b> cm-amadora.pt		
<b>Profiles in social networks of the experience or the institution:</b> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/amadora.resiliente">https://www.facebook.com/amadora.resiliente</a>		
<b>Start date of the experience:</b> September 2014		
<b>End date of the experience:</b> ongoing		
<b>Budget of the experience:</b> Included in the Municipal Service of Civil Protection		
<b>Type of candidacy</b> (Mark with an X in the right column)	New experience	X
	Innovation on an existing experience	
	Continuity of an experience	
<b>Type of experience</b> (Mark with an X in the right column) (you may choose more than one)	Participatory budgeting	
	Participatory planning	
	Standing council	
	Workshop/meeting for diagnosis, monitoring, etc.	
	Public Hearing/Forum	

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	Poll/referendum		
	Assemblies / Citizen juries / Deliberation spaces		
	E-government/Open government/Digital platforms		
	Citizen initiative		
	Other (specify): senior volunteering group		X
<p><b>Objective of the experience</b></p> <p>(Mark with an X in the right column) (you may choose more than one)</p>	To achieve higher levels of equality in terms of participation		X
	Including diversity as a criterion for inclusion		X
	Community empowerment		X
	To empower non-organised citizens		X
	To increase citizen's rights in terms of political participation		
	To connect different tools of participation within a participatory democracy "ecosystem"		X
	To improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the mechanisms of participatory democracy		X
	To improve the quality of public decision-making through the mechanisms of participatory democracy		
	To improve the evaluation and accountability of the mechanisms of participatory democracy		
To improve any public policy through the active participation of the public		X	
<p><b>Territorial area</b></p> <p>(Mark with an X in the right column) (you may choose more than one)</p>	All the territory	Local	X
		Regional	X
	District		

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	Neighbourhood	
<p><b>Thematic area</b> (Mark with an X in the right column) (you may choose more than one)</p>	Governance	X
	Education	X
	Transport	
	Urban management	X
	Health	X
	Security	X
	Environment/Climate change and/or urban agriculture	
	Civic associations, grassroots and new social movements.	X
	Culture	X
	Housing	
	Job creation	
	Decentralization	
	Local development	X
	Training/learning	X
	Economy and/or finances	
	Legal regulations	
	Social inclusion	X
	All	
Other (write the topic)		

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<p><b>Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) associated with the practice</b></p> <p><i>Mark with an X in the right column (more than one option can be chosen)</i></p> <p><i>You can also add the specific target</i></p>	SDG 1 - No poverty	
	SDG 2 - Zero hunger	
	SDG 3 - Good health and well- being	X
	SDG 4 - Quality education	X
	SDG 5 - Gender equality	X
	SDG 6 - Clean water and sanitation	
	SDG 7 - Affordable and clean energy	
	SDG 8 - Decent work and economic growth	
	SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	
	SDG 10 - Reduced inequality	X
	SDG 11 - Sustainable cities and communities	X
	SDG 12 - Responsible consumption and production	
	SDG 13 - Climate action	X
	SDG 14 - Life below water	
	SDG 15 - Life on land	
	SDG 16 - Peace, justice and strong institutions	X
	SDG 17 - Partnership for the goals	X

## PART 2: DESCRIPTION OF THE EXPERIENCE

Fill in the following fields clearly and concisely. You can add links if you consider it appropriate.

### **Context**

*Amadora has the highest populational density, with 171.179 inhabitants in 23.79 square kilometers, next to Lisbon (and well served by a public transportation network – train, subway and buses). The city has several asymmetries in social, economic and cultural terms, with more than 100 nationalities living in its territory. It is a city that's concerned with well being and life quality, considering inclusion in its decision making processes.*

### **Precedents**

*With more than 32000 elderly (aged 65 and above), one fifth of Amadora's population, this city needed to address the matter of active aging and empowering the senior citizens, increasing their quality of life and well being, but also contributing in a proactive way towards risk reduction and community bonding.*

*The city saw as extremely important to empower the elderly and use their knowledge and skills in a proactive, positive way, contributing to strengthen community resilience, teaching others (from small children to other elderly), and at the same time valuing even more the role of the elders as decision makers, key support and active members of the community.*

*Because of that, Amadora's Civil Protection Office created the Senior Academy for Civil Protection in 2014, a new and innovative project that relies on senior volunteering to promote awareness for safety and risk reduction. Senior volunteers provide support and are extremely helpful in several activities, revealing themselves as capable and cherished community members.*

*This is a new project for Amadora, and the first one in Portugal to promote senior volunteering for safety and civil protection. This project falls into the Amadora Resilient Campaign, integrated in the UNISDR's campaign Making Cities Resilient.*

### **Objectives of the experience**

We believe that community empowerment is the most important objective of this project, because empowered citizens are more informed, more able and more capable to promote

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awareness and good practices to others. An empowered community is a more resilient one, and a better prepared community to face risks and easy recovering after a risk situation.

**Methodology**

*This project followed a series of steps in order to disseminate and engage volunteers to join the Senior Academy for Civil Protection:*

*Step 1 – Presentation of the project to stakeholders and partners*

*Step 2 – Presentation of the project to associations and institutions with social responses for the elderly;*

*Step 3 – Presentation of the project to senior members and volunteers integrated in these associations;*

*Step 4 – Identifying volunteers with leadership skills and proactive thoughts that might want to join the project and disseminate our ideas to them even further;*

*Step 5 – Interested volunteers fill out an application for the project and (if not already) become members of Amadora's Local Volunteering bank;*

*Step 6 – Volunteers (senior agents of civil protection ) are given proper training in several areas (fires, self-protection, earthquakes, first aid, psychological help, health risks, etc) and participate in specific training sessions (how to teach children, how to use technological tools, etc);*

*Step 7 – Volunteers are integrated in initiatives of Amadora's Civil Protection Office, in multiple areas (awareness sessions to schools, awareness to community, mass trainings, public dissemination, exercises and drills, etc)*

*Step 8 – Volunteers share their progress and activities to their peers, alongside with disseminating good practises and self-protection measures to others in and out of their institutions*

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**Innovation**

*The most innovative of this project is taking something like volunteer work, which is quite common, and civil protection activities, and creating a group that “uses” the amazing resource that is the elderly, their knowledge and experiences, combining all aspects to form a senior volunteering community that helps others, learns and teaches, promotes active aging and increases quality of life, alongside with reducing the city’s vulnerability to risks and stresses. This was the first and only project in our country using this methodology, goals and strategies.*

**Inclusion**

*Despite being a volunteering group aiming to engage seniors in resilience, this group accepts members from other ages, integrated in institutions, retired or working, that serve as a plus to promote a safety culture in the municipality of Amadora. The project has members in their 30s, 40s and 50s, as well as their “core” age (65 and above). We opened the project to others that wanted to donate their time, knowledge and motivation, in order to strengthen even more resilience in Amadora.*

**Communication**

*The project is disseminated through:*

- Sessions for institutions and associations*
- Dissemination of initiatives and events in social media*
- Dissemination through handing out a brochure inviting others to get to know the project*
- Inclusion of the project*

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**Articulation with other actors**

*This is not an isolated project between Amadora's Civil Protection office and their volunteers. Despite being managed by this service, the initiative counts with a large number of partners in multiple areas (safety, prevention, social work, local agencies, etc) that aim to enrichen not only the volunteers' know-how, but also the project's goals.*

*Some of the organizations that work alongside us are:*

- Amadora's local civil protection office (manage the project, provide support and organize activities and events);*
- Amadora's municipal services (provide administrative support, divulgation, materials and spaces, etc);*
- Amadora's police division (provide training for senior agents);*
- Amadora's fire department (provide training for senior agents);*
- Amadora's local red cross (provide training for senior agents);*
- Amadora's local volunteering bank (provide insurance and aid to volunteers);*
- Local parishes;*
- Institutions and organizations in the municipality, from both the private and public sector.*

**Evaluation:**

*Evaluation is done by participation. Both local government (through Amadora's Civil Protection Office), alongside with the volunteers, represented by their chosen spokespeople, meet on regular basis to discuss positive aspects of the project's initiatives, as well as needed changes and improvements for the following periods. Evaluation is done through SWOT analysis, identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, as well as proactive measurements for the future. This is a project that adapts itself to its realities and the objectives of strengthening community resilience and promote risk reduction.*

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**Impacts and results**

*Our volunteers have been increasing throughout the years. In 2022, the project has 34 active members, equally divided between men and women (17 men and 17 women), with an average age of 69 years. The project is linked to 12 different institutions, counting with other stakeholders, such as local government and civil protection agents.*

*Each of these volunteers has impacted directly their peers, in their institutions, families and social groups, through awareness and promotion of proactive self-protection measures. This project inspired others to join and share our initiatives not only in our country, but also worldwide.*

**PART 3: EXPERIENCE SUMMARY**

*With more than 32000 elderly (aged 65 and above), one fifth of Amadora's population, this city needed to address the matter of active aging and empowering the senior citizens, increasing their quality of life and well being, but also contributing in a proactive way towards risk reduction and community bonding.*

*The city saw as extremely important to empower the elderly and use their knowledge and skills in a proactive, positive way, contributing to strengthen community resilience, teaching others (from small children to other elderly), and at the same time valuing even more the role of the elders as decision makers, key support and active members of the community.*

*Because of that, Amadora's Civil Protection Office created the Senior Academy for Civil Protection in 2014, a new and innovative project that relies on senior volunteering to promote awareness for safety and risk reduction. Senior volunteers provide support and are extremely helpful in several activities, revealing themselves as capable and cherished community members.*

*We, as a local government, believe that community empowerment and citizen participation is key to achieve a resilience culture and strengthen community's ability to prevent, respond and recover after a disaster situation. That is why this project is so important: it empowers senior citizens to use their knowledge and skills to promote awareness on risks and disasters, and to achieve an active role in society and their local communities.*

*To join this project, interested parties only need to be integrated in an association or*

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*organization with social responses for the elderly, as well as enrolled in Amadora's local volunteering bank. Volunteers are given proper accident insurance and training to tackle several aspects of civil protection activities, such as event planning and support, awareness sessions for schools and communities, digital skills, etc.. All that enriches even more the knowledge of the most wise and available members in Amadora's community.*

So far, this project has had a huge impact in our city, country, and even abroad, with high praise by organizations such as the Nippon foundation, the UN and others.

The project is regularly monitored and evaluated through a series of meetings (in the senior academy office, installed in Amadora's civil protection office and municipal police's headquarters) with the senior agents' representatives, where new ideas are exposed and approved, and older ideas can be remade or improved.

This is an innovative, never before done project, that involves the elderly in citizen participation, governance, decision making processes, and awareness actions. The project currently counts with a total of 34 senior agents of civil protection, with different ages, genders, cultures, and backgrounds, that bring huge skills and know-how to the table, proving

themselves to be active and valuable members of the society.