



RISERVA DELLA BIOSFERA DELLE ALPI GIULIE

BIOCOMICS 2026 – Comics in the Biosphere

Regulations and Procedures

INTRODUCTION

“*BIOCOMICS 2026 – Comics in the Biosphere*” is a project of the Regional Natural Park of the Julian Prealps (lead partner), carried out in collaboration with the Regional Natural Park of the Friulian Dolomites, Triglav National Park, Forum Ljubljana, the Institute for Art and Cultural Production, and the Austrian Österreichische Gesellschaft für Comics (Austrian Association for Comics).

The project consists of the organization of an exhibition event with a comics competition, open to 10 young artists between the age of 18 and 35 (completed) from Italy, Slovenia, and Austria. The selected artists will create their comics during an artistic residency in the Julian Alps Biosphere Reserve.

The two main themes at the core of the project are environmental sustainability and the relationship between the environment and human life.

WHO CAN APPLY

“*BIOCOMICS 2026 – Comics in the Biosphere*” is open to 10 comic artists aged 18–35 (completed) from Austria, Italy, and Slovenia. Higher evaluation scores will be awarded to applicants coming from the territories of the Italian and Slovenian Julian Alps Biosphere Reserves and the Salzburger Lungau & Kärntner Nockberge Biosphere Reserve.

WHEN

The artistic residency will take place within the territory of the Julian Alps Biosphere Reserve from 20 to 25 May 2026. From 20 May to 10 June, the selected artists will be required to create and submit their comics to the Julian Alps Biosphere Reserve. The completed works will then be exhibited in a travelling exhibition scheduled for the second half of 2026.

ACCOMODATION

From 20 to 25 May, the artistic residency will take place in the Julian Alps Biosphere Reserve, and the selected artists will be accommodated in hosting facilities, which may also include shared dormitory-style rooms.

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MEALS

Lunch will not be provided on the first day, while on the following days in the Julian Alps Biosphere Reserve, breakfasts, lunches / packed lunches, and dinners will be provided by the accommodation facility where participants are staying.

No additional meals beyond the three main daily meals will be provided by the organization. Any snacks must be arranged independently by the participants. Each participant must bring their own personal water bottle.

MEETING POINT and TRANSFER

The meeting point for the artists is scheduled for Wednesday, 20 May 2026, in Venzone, at the entrance of the train station, at a time that will be communicated to the selected participants. Transfers to the accommodation and to the scheduled destinations during the stay will be organized by the Park Authority.

CLOTHING and EQUIPMENT

Participants are asked to bring appropriate clothing suitable for the activities planned within “*BIOCOMICS 2026 – Comics in the Biosphere*” (such as trekking, sports activities, and evening leisure time).

In particular, participants will need to bring:

- materials for creating their comics (tablet, computer, drawing paper, sketchbooks, colors, pencils, etc.)
- footwear and clothing suitable for mountain environments (sweatshirt, windproof/rain jacket, trekking shoes)
- a small backpack for daily outings a personal water bottle

Participants are requested not to bring valuable items with them. If they choose to do so, the Regional Natural Park of the Julian Prealps shall not be held responsible for any loss or damage.

THE PROGRAM

During the days of the residency, the program will unfold across mountain natural settings, focusing on the exploration of the Julian Alps Biosphere Reserve and its potential enhancement and interpretation through the language of comics.

The program will address themes such as biodiversity, the environment, and sustainability, and how these can serve as a source of inspiration for the creation of artistic works related to the art of comics.

Wednesday, 20 May 2026

Arrival of the artists at the Venzone train station at a time that will be communicated to the selected participants.

Guided visit to the Resartico Mine Exhibition and the Galleria Ghiacciaia in Resiutta. Transfer to Resia and luggage drop-off.

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Visit to the Park Visitor Centre and presentation of myths and legends of the Julian Alps Biosphere Reserve area.

Dinner and Resian dance workshop.

Overnight stay in Val Resia.

Thursday, 21 May 2026

Departure by Park vehicles to Dordolla, in the municipality of Moggio Udinese, guided visit of the village and start of the hike towards the Vuât mountain shelter. Packed lunch at the mountain shelter.

Return with a stop to visit the abbey complex of Moggio Udinese.

Dinner and free time for the creation of artworks and/or the sharing of reflections.

Overnight stay in Val Resia.

Friday, 22 May 2026

Departure by Park vehicles to Lusevera.

Stop to admire the Fontanone Barman waterfall.

Arrival at the Sella Carnizza pastures and lunch at one of the traditional “stavoli”.

Departure for Pian dei Ciclamini and luggage drop-off at the hiking lodge.

Hike along the “Percorso Fuori” trail.

Dinner and free time for the creation of artworks and/or the sharing of reflections.

Saturday, 23 May 2026

Hike along the Valle Musi Nature Trail. Lunch at Agriturismo La Alegra. Visit to the Villanova Caves. Return to the Pian dei Ciclamini hiking lodge. Dinner and free time for the creation of artworks and/or the sharing of reflections.

Sunday, 24 May 2026

Transfer by Park vehicles to Venzone, the venue of Parkfest, a traditional event that brings together Biosphere Reserves and Parks of the Eastern Alpine Arc, not only from Italy but also from Austria, Croatia, and Slovenia. Participation in the activities organized as part of the event. Guided visit to the historic centre of Venzone and to the permanent exhibitions “Bosc – Piccolo Museo Naturalistico” and “Tiere Motus”.

Dinner and free time for the creation of artworks and/or the sharing of reflections.

Overnight stay in Venzone.

Monday, 25 May 2026

End of the residency. Departure of the artists by private or public transportation from Venzone.

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During the artists' residency, audio, video, and photographic materials will be produced and later included in a final exhibition event.

The works created will subsequently be the focus of a travelling exhibition taking place between 2026 and 2027, which will also be enriched with photographic and video materials documenting the residency.

Subject to available financial resources, the possibility of publishing the three winning comic works in a specialized magazine will be evaluated.

CODE OF CONDUCT

All participants are required to follow the instructions and regulations issued by the staff of the Regional Natural Park of the Julian Prealps. The staff may interrupt or modify activities at any time if weather conditions are deemed unsafe, if the behaviour of an individual participant or the group is considered unsuitable for individual or collective safety, or if the staff's instructions are not respected. The guide or staff may suspend an individual participant from activities if their physical or psychological condition is deemed inadequate or if they fail to comply with the guide's instructions.

During the structured activities of the residency, participants are advised to limit the use of mobile phones (except for agreed activities) and not to leave the group independently. During free time, participants may leave the group only after informing the staff of the Regional Natural Park of the Julian Prealps.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND SELECTION CRITERIA

To apply for "*BIOCOMICS 2026 – Comics in the Biosphere*", applicants must:

1. Download the application form and carefully read this document;
2. Send the completed and signed application form to info@biosferaalpigiulie.it **by 15 March 2026**, including a personal cover letter and statement of motivation, as well as at least one drawing / illustration / graphic work representing the applicant.

If the number of applications exceeds the available places, an international jury of experts will select the participants on the basis of:

- the eligibility requirements outlined in the Regulations (see "WHO CAN APPLY");
- the motivation letter;
- the drawing / illustration / graphic work submitted

The three criteria outlined above carry the following maximum scores:

- Place of residence:
 - **40 points** if residing in a municipality within the Italian Julian Alps, Slovenian Julian Alps, or Salzburger Lungau & Kärntner Nockberge Biosphere Reserves;

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- **20 points** if residing in a municipality located within another Italian, Austrian, or Slovenian Biosphere Reserve;
- **0 points** if residing in a municipality not included in a Biosphere Reserve;
- Motivation letter: maximum **30 points**;
- Drawing / illustration / graphic work: maximum **30 points**.

In the event of a tie, priority will be given to the application received first.

If necessary, the organizers reserve the right to conduct an interview, either in person or remotely, with candidates who have demonstrated that they meet the required criteria.

The results of the selection will be communicated to all applicants **by 16 April 2026**.

Application and participation in “*BIOCOMICS 2026 – Comics in the Biosphere*” are **free of charge**.

The same international jury of experts will subsequently select the three winners of the competition. The prizes consist of three weekend stays for two people in the Ledrensi and Judicaria Biosphere Reserve, the Salzburger Lungau & Kärntner Nockberge Biosphere Reserve, and the Slovenian Julian Alps Biosphere Reserve.

PARTICIPATION FEE

No participation fee is required.

The initiative is funded with the support of the Cultural Activities Service of the Central Directorate for Culture and Sport of the Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia, for the organization of exhibitions and other cultural activities, including educational and training initiatives, in the fields of figurative arts, visual arts, photography, and multimedia, pursuant to Regional Law No. 16/2014.

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