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POSTED ON  
13 APR 2020

## Participatory Geology project in time of Covid-19 | Italy



How to make citizens, professionals, and musicians interact while they are “Between a rock and a hard phase”? This is what Andrea Giacomelli and his band have been working on...

The [pibinko.org](http://pibinko.org) network, with its hub in Southern Tuscany, is composed by professionals, working since 2007 in the development of projects concerning the protection and promotion of lesser known resources in the fields of culture, environment, and open innovation. These initiatives typically rely on a significant component of facilitation and engagement

components, including participatory methods and music (preferably live, as proposed with the [Metalliferous Hills Jug Band](#)).

Combining the **mobility constraints** from this period with some ideas that the network was in fact working on in the weeks preceding the COVID-19 crisis, we launched an initiative called “**participatory lithology**”.

This started by involving a number of families in Tatti, a small hamlet where two of the network members are based, and geologists from other regions. Tatti is in fact in a former mining district, and it is not uncommon in many households to have small stocks of minerals and rocks. These collections have often been created by previous generations, so most of the current owners do not know what their samples are. We then scanned our list of contacts for geologists around the country, and asked them to identify our samples via photos made available online.

It is possible to join the project in one of four roles. The three “standard” roles are the collectors (people who own samples), the classifiers (folks with a master in Geology), and the sponsors (supporting the project with funds or in kind, such as enticing food and wine from Southern Tuscany to reward the most active participants).

An interesting role is for what we called “**entertainers**”. With the Metalliferous Hills Jug Band project we are proposing the [combination of live music and outreach on environmental issues](#), so we adapted our mission to the Participatory Lithology initiative. We invited all band members, and other artists we interact with, either to identify songs related to rocks, stones, and minerals, or to think of new compositions, which will provide a cool soundtrack to the people involved in the project. In less than a week we identified 35 tunes, and wrote lyrics (for the moment based on well-known tunes in Italian or English) which describe well the spirit of Participatory Lithology, and will be released as the project unfolds.

Participatory lithology was launched on **March 21**, after one week of fast-track design. It is now in a pilot phase, but it has already gained attention by other potential “collectors” and “classifiers” as well as [national media coverage](#). At the time of writing we have engaged as active participants a community of around 20 people from four different Italian regions, but the project is open to all geographies, and we are curious of seeing where our stones will be rolling over the coming weeks.

For more information:

<http://www.pibinko.org/participatorylithology/>

<http://www.pibinko.org/jugbandcollinemetallifere/savethedate-may-16-20-participatory-lithology-laiv-show/>

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BY ANDREA GIACOMELLI

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