

Form to be completed by role models.

In the call text models are described as *rural landscapes which have demonstrably and successfully pursued a heritage-led regeneration.*

Role models will be recognisable landscapes with a diversity of actors that have collaboratively achieved social and environmental improvements through social innovation that has led to systemic change. Role models will be expected to actively engage, be open and reflective of their success, and help shape the European Community of Practice (CoP). They will be expected to mentor at least one replicator, and provide privileged contact through placements and exchanges.

Benefits for the role models include visibility of their success, access to new ideas (e.g. funding models, monitoring and reporting methods) and early access to the CoP.

Role models will be partners in the project. We expect that they will be the first ones to implement the monitoring proposal developed in the project. Some role models can have a partner to collaborate with them.

If role models have ideas of improvement of the model, that can be run during the first 1,5 year of the project, they need to justify very well in which way these new actions improve the model.

Role model name: Valdres Natur- og Kulturpark (VNK) / Valdres Nature and Culturepark	
Role model partner(s) Names of organization: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norsk Seterkultur (The Norwegian organization for transhumance and pastoralism) • Gards- og stølsnettverket i Valdres (network of small-scale farm- and summer-mountain farm- business) • Mat frå Valdres SA (Food from Valdres cooperative) • Valdres hytteforum (Holiday cabin- owners forum) • Oppland county, Department of cultural heritage • The County governor, department of agriculture 	
Role model contact(s): Jørund Ødegård Lunde, jorand.lunde@valdres.no Names of individuals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Katharina Sparstad, ks@valdres.no • Fredrik Holte Breien, Fredrik.Holte.Breien@valdres.no 	
Short description of the role model (max 250 words) Successful systemic cases with multiple actors / sectors, agriculture activities being compulsory. Describe the types of agrarian heritage products, services, activities or partnerships that are part of the role-model and the lessons that could be shared.	
<p>Valdres is located in the southern end of the highest mountains in Norway, Jotunheimen. Until about 10000 years ago there was still partly ice in the area, but the traces of human beings close to this area are from about 8000 BC. For more than 5000 years Valdres was settled by a hunting culture with elk and reindeers as main pray.</p> <p>The first settled farms in Valdres seem to be from the first 100 years AD. In the same period iron production from bog started to make a change in society and for wealth in Valdres. The population grew, and before the black death the farmers started using the mountain grasslands more intensively for pastoralism. Since there are great grasslands in Norway, this of course shaped the pasture landscape in Norway and in Valdres. In this landscape lies also knowledge about the use about 10000 years of harvesting the resources in the mountains. The summer mountain farms are reduced in number from about 100,000 in the mid-19th century to around 1800 at present. Valdres is the area in which they survived best. This is probably due to small farms with rich grassland resources in the mountains, and easy access to the summer mountain farms and the possibility to build roads. In Norway the national milk cooperative, TINE, has retrieve duty and makes the milk provision predictable. Today there are 230 surviving summer farms in Valdres, with an area of just under 5500 km² and a permanent population of just over 18,000.</p> <p>There has been completed a number of successful initiatives to strengthen the summer farm economy at the landscape scale in the region, involving both state and private actors. In 2007 the six municipalities in Valdres established a regional park, Valdres Nature and Culture Park (VNK). One of the main motivations was that the region has a special responsibility for the summer- mountain farming. The Park has been cooperating with departments of government responsible for both heritage and agriculture to encourage economic development connected</p>	

to the summer mountain farms.

Valdres has together with farmers mapped the biodiversity and cultural heritage in the mountain grassland areas. Right now VNK is making plans together with the municipalities and NGOs for the most important culture heritage areas where areas with pastoralism and biodiversity have high priority. The final plans will finally be implemented in local government.

Valdres has established partnership with different networks (see the names over organizations above). The partners will have a place in the regional council, Valdresrådet. The region council has 22 representatives, the 6 majors, representatives from the county, from tourism organization VisitValdres, from networks of stakeholders and festivals, the farmers, the museum etc. That means that they also have the possibility to influence the politics and development in the region.

At the time we are working especially with local food, and a network of stakeholders is established. They are working both with quality mountain food, logistics and distribution.

In Valdres there are about 18000 holiday cabins. This gives both possibilities for the local businesses. At the same time it also demands god plans for how to take care of valuable mountain areas.

Norsk Seterkultur is the national organization of Norwegian summer mountain farmers. They are providing a job-share for the secretarial role in Valdres Nature- and Culture park. <http://www.seterkultur.no/>

As a role model we can see that we also have things to develop. In this project we will also focus on

- Dissemination of the harvesting culture that shaped the landscape including the biodiversity and culture heritage. It can be in literature, posters, Internet and active guiding towards different audiences.
- Intensifying the production of quality milk and meat based on mountain grazing

Rural regeneration success in the role model

Role models must have demonstrated success in addressing at least one of the challenges outlined in the call text. Please explain successes below.

Unemployment

The agriculture is still the mainstay in Valdres. Because of economic difficulties for small farmers, more farmers have additional jobs. In this mixed economy, unemployment in Valdres is kept to a minimum despite its relative remote location. On the other hand it also means that the job-offer is limited, and many young people choose not to move back to Valdres after education because lack of knowledge-based jobpossibilities. That gives a depopulation-situation.

Disengagement

Poor economy and efficiency requirements has resulted in a reduction of milk producers in Valdres.

	<p>Milk quotas are sold out, and more and more farmers have now cows in cooperative barns with milk robots. Most of these farmers have quit using mountain grasslands. This again causes loss of pasture landscape in favor of forest, including all species and <u>knowledge</u> linked to harvesting culture. Our work is to maintain the link with the semi-natural landscape for the remaining summer farmers and the knowledge about the traditional harvesting of the mountains.</p>
Depopulation	<p>Valdres is a depopulating area. There is no university here, and many young people move out to get education, and settle down in more central areas where they find knowledge-based work environment.</p> <p>Most development initiatives are being launched to strengthen the population.</p>
Marginalisation	<p>Although there is depopulation, there is also a problem of marginalisation within the local economy and in agriculture – the work aims to boost the economies of summer farms through raising their profiles and better binding them to more direct opportunities to participate in the wider economy, e.g. through direct selling of food and better engagement with the tourist industry.</p>
Loss of cultural diversity	<p>When the small farmers stop using the summer farm areas in the mountain, a whole culture, which has proved to be sustainable over a very long period of time is lost, along with the associated knowledge. This means knowledge of how to process milk, but also about nature and the possibilities of a perfect balanced relation between humans, animals and nature for mutual benefit. Physical heritage like stone walls no longer necessary and memories of their significance are also disappearing because they are not in use.</p> <p>Some summer farm areas are built down for other activities, usually for summer cabins, alpine resorts and infrastructure. Often earlier use is forgotten despite interest amongst cabin owners, many owners wish to get to know and to share local history and traditions. This gives us possibilities for future planning including this important cultural heritage.</p>
Loss of biological diversity	<p>Like in many, rural areas, there is a reduction in</p>

	<p>numbers of grazing animals. Parts of the grasslands are now becoming forest. Our work aims to safeguard semi-natural pastures and nationally-significant species, including on designated sites. Another challenge is that the open grassland-areas are attractive for new holiday cabins because of the open landscape and existing infrastructure. In that way valuable areas are often built down.</p>
<p>Inequities (gender, ethnicity, migration) (this is not in the call but we want it)</p>	<p>Most of the population connected to agriculture in Valdres is natives. That is mainly because Norway has a ca 1000 year old law that secures farms not to be sold out of the family (Odelslova). Some farms are still sold out of the family.</p> <p>Summer mountain farming was traditionally, and still is, driven by women labor. The men were usually down on the farm harvesting the fields.</p> <p>In the stakeholder networks for local food and summer farm experiences there about half of the participants are from other parts of Norway, a few are from Germany and Netherlands.</p>
<p>Other successes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A survey of milk quality from the mountain region of Valdres has been carried out, documenting its specific beneficial qualities by measuring different fat-acids, CLA and e-vitamins combinations, amongst others. Norsk seterkultur is now looking to get protected designation for 'real mountain butter' • Valdres is an attractive area for holiday-cabins. This gives us challenges, but also possibilities to offer sustainable nature- and culture based experiences. Many of the cottage owners are high educated and can offer know how in to the development of the region. In the same time, the cabin owners also have an interest in the open, pastoral landscape, and can be involved in the locale heritage, traditional harvesting, food production and clearing pastures and trails. • At last but not the least; Valdres has established a <u>knowledge shearing platform</u> that is including NGOs, stakeholder-networks, museums, tourism, the youth, cabin owners and politicians to develop

	Valdres together after a long term charter with common goal under the brand <i>Valdres</i> .
<p>Motivation for joining (max 100 words) Explain who would benefit, which actors would be involved in peer-learning, any existing partnerships or programmes etc.</p>	
<p>Valdres is now working with development as well as better management of culture heritage. In the grassland area we have through years documented the biodiversity and culture heritage connected to the sustainable harvesting culture. We have tools for better planning, facilitating and use of the valuable areas.</p> <p>At the same time Valdres still has active summer mountain farming and pastoralism. That could be in conflict with cabin tourism, but we are trying to turn it around and make the cabin tourist an active part of a positive, caretaking development. We have started a project cooperating plans by the local government and with cabin owners to maintain semi-natural pastures and to learn about the biodiversity in the grassland areas. We will also develop knowledge-based tourism based on the interest of the cabin owners. That includes better planning of new cabin areas, combined with protection by use of the information that lies in the landscape. Since the milk and meat from the mountains has proven to be of high qualities, there is a possibility to connect these areas to quality food with special qualities from the mountains.</p> <p>In this project it is also necessary to cooperate with different interest groups, NGOs, science institutions and different administration levels.</p> <p>Joining this project will give us the opportunity to learn by sharing experience with other regions about one of the things who are most important for us.</p>	
<p>How did the experience started (bottom-up, top-down) and which stage of development is (consolidated, emergent) (number of years)?</p>	
<p>The idea of a region park started with the summer- mountain farm area (Stølsvidda) in one of the municipalites, Nord-Aurdal. This area is listed as a Nordic biotope protection area because of open grasslands, moors and birdlife. The farmers succeeded in getting support from the county for developing the area, and for two seasons farmers followed the cows on the pasture to map an document the biodiversity. They cooperated with a national organization, Norges Vel, in the project “Levande stølar” (Active summer mountain farms) and started milk processing and smalls scale tourism on different summer farms in Valdres.</p> <p>At the same time the local governments in all the municipalities wanted to take their responsibility for the culture heritage in Valdres, and both established the region park 2007) and joined become a pilot for “ value creation based on culture heritage” under the National institution for Cultural Heritage for four years. The main focus was the summer mountain farms and the six stave churches in the region.</p> <p>As a pilot we soon realized that we had to work on different levels and sectors. The anchoring was also essential. Therefore there were networks and fora’s established for different purposes. The concept with networking is functioning well as long as it is relevant; the network</p>	

has a possibility for real, practical influence, good information flow and ability to cooperate.

The long term charter has been evaluated many times by local politicians, and also by science institutions following our process. One of the conclusions in the evaluation by the Science institution Agerforskning in 2015 was that the way we are organized has created several new arenas for cooperation between private at public sector. Our challenge has been defining the roles of the different institutions participating. In 2017 we established a new charter for another 10 years.

For some projects we have also established “ad hoc” networks for involvement, ownership and getting access to the knowledge within the population in different stages. One example is how we now are working with the culture heritage-plans in each municipality. In this work the municipality invites NGOs and private persons to participate and define what is the most important. Involving of GNOs may increase the chance for a plan with substance and functionality.

Can you highlight any specific action you believe is the blueprint of your project? (ej. Innovative governance, innovative financing system)

As a regional park we have established a more bottom – up- based development structure. For the first 10 years as a region park we have worked after a long term planning with a 10 year charter with common goals for all the six municipalities and business partners. This charter in now renewed for another 10 years.

The main idea is to develop and take care of our culture heritage for the coming generations. Every decision we make must be based on this.

Communication, anchoring and (mentally) ownership are key-words. With the structure we have established in VNK, with partnerships and representations, we have established the first step for a common understanding for a knowledge based, sustainable development of Valdres. Our history is our identity, and this is also manifested in a new charter for the next 10 years.

Pictures of the role model

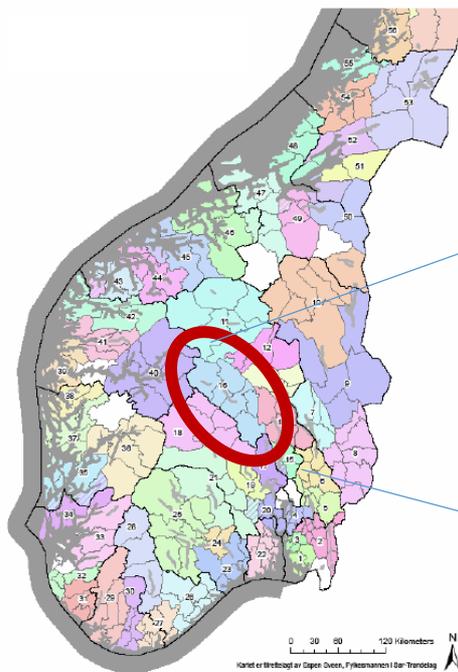


This picture shows the farmlands in the valley, and the mountain forest and grasslands above. The rock in front shows round whole-shaped carvings/petroglyphs, probably from the first agriculture in the bronze-age.



School class learning about traditional summer mountain farming and the culture heritage in the landscape)

Google maps screenshot of role model location Southern Norway



Valdres – one region with six municipalities

