

DAY 2

CLUSTER B

TUESDAY 20 OCTOBER

BO LO GNA

Science,
Systems &
Circular Innovation



Why **Bologna**?

Climate challenges rarely exist in isolation. Energy affects how we produce and move things. The materials we use determine what eventually becomes waste. Food, water, infrastructure and cities all depend on systems that constantly interact with one another.

Bologna is a fitting place to explore those connections. The city sits at the heart of Emilia-Romagna, a region known for advanced manufacturing, agri-food excellence, cooperative traditions and public utilities that operate at territorial scale. Its close links between research, industry, public services and innovation make it an ideal setting to look beyond individual solutions and consider the wider systems they depend on.

During the Bologna programme, participants will explore how the energy transition, circular economy, materials and resource management connect in practice. Through discussions with experts working on these challenges at scale, young innovators will be encouraged to look at their own projects as part of a bigger picture: what systems does your solution depend on, where are the bottlenecks, and what would need to change for it to create impact at a larger scale?

DID YOU KNOW?

The city **slowed down.**

Bologna became Italy's first major city to introduce a widespread 30 km/h urban speed model, designed to make streets safer and support more sustainable mobility.

By 2025, the city reported lower traffic volumes, increased cycling and bike-sharing use, and reduced traffic-related nitrogen dioxide compared with the pre-implementation period.



Practical **Information**

- **Getting around:** Bologna's historic centre is compact and easy to explore on foot, while buses connect the centre with the wider city.
- **Weather:** October is typically mild and autumnal, with cooler mornings and evenings and the possibility of rain. Bring a light jacket and umbrella.
- **On foot:** Expect plenty of walking. Luckily, Bologna's porticoes provide shelter from both rain and sun. Comfortable shoes are recommended.
- **Try while you're here:** Tortellini, traditionally served in brodo (in broth).
- **Don't miss:** Piazza Maggiore, Basilica di San Petronio, Le Due Torri, Quadrilatero, Santo Stefano, Bologna's porticoes.

Institutions and organisations to **discover.**



Hera Group is Italy's leading aggregation of municipally owned utility companies. Founded in 2002 and listed on the Italian Stock Exchange since 2003, it provides energy, water, environmental services, public lighting, and telecommunications. Through a multi-business model focused on shared value, Hera promotes innovation, the circular economy, and ecological transition. More than 10,500 employees serve 7,5 million citizens across 316 municipalities in five Italian regions.



Why we are part of Youth4Climate: Connecting Solutions

Our organisation is participating in Youth4Climate because we believe that building a sustainable future requires the active engagement of younger generations. This event offers a valuable opportunity to connect with young innovators, exchange ideas and experiences, and contribute our expertise while developing partnerships that can accelerate innovation and sustainability. We also see Youth4Climate as a platform to strengthen collaboration among institutions, businesses and youth-led initiatives, fostering skills, awareness and concrete actions that support climate goals and create long-term value for both society and the planet.

We hope participants will gain a practical understanding of how the climate transition depends on the transformation of interconnected systems, from energy and materials to food. Through real-world examples and expert insights, we hope to inspire new ideas, highlight future skills needs, and show how innovation, circularity and collaboration can drive a more sustainable and resilient future.

Your Bologna Challenge

- ☐ Choose one resource connected to your project (energy, water, food, materials or waste). Trace what happens before it reaches you and after you use it. Compare your system with another awardee's.
- ☐ Ask an expert you meet today: "What is one thing that becomes more difficult when a climate solution moves from a pilot to large-scale implementation?"
- ☐ While walking through Bologna, pay attention to its porticoes. Beyond their original purpose, what climate or social function do they provide today? What already exists in your own city that could be adapted for a new purpose?
- ☐ Identify one example during the day where something traditionally considered waste, an output or a problem becomes an input or resource for something else. How could the same kind of thinking apply to your own solution?

Some of the best insights come from taking a moment to reflect. Use this space to record your thoughts, new connections and key takeaways as you travel through Italy's climate innovation ecosystem.