



8<sup>th</sup> Slow Food  
International Congress  
Pollenzo, Italy - 2022 July 16-17



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Bra, April 15, 2022

Dear Slow Food members and Communities,

With this letter we formally convene the 8th Slow Food International Congress (and 1st Extraordinary Congress) which will be held in Pollenzo, Italy, at the University of Gastronomic Sciences, on July 16 and 17, 2022.

In a world turned upside down by the last two years of the Covid-19 pandemic, and at the mercy of an increasingly urgent climate crisis, with all its consequent conflicts and migratory flows, the Congress must be, above all, an occasion for reflection and stimulus for our future.

During the last Congress in Chengdu we launched the Slow Food Community model, a fundamental tool for representing the diversity of our movement. Since then, a thousand Communities have been founded across the world, giving a multitude of people the opportunity to play an active role in the movement. Thanks to them, Slow Food has been enriched and strengthened, showing itself to be a network for whom the value of diversity and the relational good are central. It's time to bring that transitional process to its completion, formally recognizing the right to representation of these Communities within our movement, and to continue the reflection that will allow Slow Food to be ever more open and inclusive, in order for our movement to play an ever more active and influential role in confronting the great challenges of our age.

This phase of reflection and change, which began in Chengdu, will continue through our new Congress and be developed in different phases that require your presence, be it in person or online.

A series of regional, national and continental meetings will be organized between now and mid-June, accompanied and moderated by members of the Slow Food staff, in which the future of our organization will be discussed; we'll analyze the political and organizational scenarios needed to make Slow Food the guiding voice of change for the food system at the international level. Then, the Congress itself will be held on July 16 and 17, with organizational measures that will be described below.

After the Congress, we'll take another two months to discuss and analyze the great challenges that Slow Food must face worldwide, and how it can do so. All this work will

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then be shared in Turin at Terra Madre (September 22 to 26, 2022), our biggest and most important international gathering.

This journey is based on political vision of the [Call to Action](#), the document which followed the Declaration of Chengdu and its motions – without forgetting all the documents which have been approved in the history of Slow Food and its previous Congresses, starting with the Manifesto signed in 1989. This Call to Action was written by the Executive Committee in 2019 following the Chengdu Congress of 2017, and since 2020 it has been widely shared within the Slow Food network, whose members have submitted more than 300 contributions to improve it and thereafter adopt it in their own daily actions.

The Call to Action confirms the philosophical and political outlook which has been developed over more than 30 years of Slow Food history, but also contains important developments: it systematizes the activity of the movement and defines its medium- and long-term objectives for the future of food and, therefore, our planet.

This document bears witness to the willingness our movement to work to ensure everyone can have access to food that is good for the them, good for the people who produce it and good for the planet. What's more, it defines the priorities of the movement as being: i) to protect biological and cultural diversity; ii) to educate, motivate and mobilize the general public; iii) to influence policy in the public and private sector.

From the formal point of view, the Congress, as well as discussing our strategic guidelines for the coming years, will also have the task of outlining the new structure of Slow Food and electing the new governing bodies which will take on the responsibility of directing the development of the movement over the next four years.

We have prepared a detailed document, written in a question-and-answer format, which explains the entire process behind the Congress. As you will see, the prolonged pandemic and the heavily-uncertain international climate, as well as the impossibility of holding a hybrid conference due to the limits imposed by Italian law, together with our own awareness that this moment of dialog and exchange cannot be delayed any longer, have convinced me and the Executive Committee to convene a Congress that will be somewhat different from past editions. There will be a limited assembly of Delegates (50 in total), but this will not mean it is less representative of the innumerable diversities in our network. It's a Congress in which, in defining the Delegates, we've tried to maintain the same criteria of geographic and thematic representation that contributed to the composition of the International Council voted for in Chengdu—both because of the significance of these criteria for the international network (and there will be 30 countries represented among the 50 Delegates), and because these criteria were ratified by a previous Congress.

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As you'll read in the question-and-answer document, the Congress will be called upon to vote for a change in the legal character of Slow Food International. That means transforming the Italian legal entity of Slow Food International into a “participatory foundation”, i.e. a not-for-profit organization which has the characteristics necessary for pursuing the objectives of Slow Food. This means being inclusive, and allowing for the formal membership of all those components of our network and civil society which today, with the associative model, are not completely integrated. This transformation into a participatory foundation would allow us to achieve what we committed to achieving in Chengdu: to open the network and allow formal membership of Slow Food not just to physical persons but also to other groups and subjects of a different nature, starting with the Slow Food Communities and their members. Finally, this will allow Slow Food to be aligned with new Italian laws regarding Third Sector Organizations.

The Congress will be called upon to vote for the Board of Directors of the Slow Food Foundation, its Board of Auditors and Board of Arbitrators. The Congressional rules state that candidacies for the new Board of Directors, together with proposals for four-year programme and related political and organizational guidelines, must be presented in writing by 11.59 p.m. CET on May 31, 2022 to the outgoing Executive Committee (at the International Headquarters of Slow Food). On our website you'll find the terms of reference for candidacies to the Board of Directors; it's important to note that candidacies are collective for the entire Council, not individual. The terms of reference for the Board of Auditors and the Board of Arbitrators will also be made available on our website.

I'd like to remind you once again that the Congress will be a stage of this important process for the future of Slow Food, but the journey will continue in the following months, culminating in another decisive moment: Terra Madre 2022.

In summary, these are all the documents you'll find on our website here (<https://www.slowfood.com/about-us/our-structure/international-congress/8th-slow-food-international-congress-turin-2022/>):

- An infographic explaining the collective process of the coming months;
- Our political document “An Urgent Call to Slow Down” — aka The Call to Action;
- A question-and-answer document regarding the Congress and the transformation process of Slow Food as a legal entity;
- An allocation table for the Congress Delegates;
- The Congressional rules;
- The terms of references for candidacies to the Board of Directors
- The terms of references for candidacies to the Board of Auditors



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- The terms of references for candidacies to the Board of Arbitrators

If you have any questions or comments please write to us at: [international@slowfood.it](mailto:international@slowfood.it)

With warmest regards,

Carlo Petrini

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