

BRING THE FOOD FOR HEALTHCARE WORKERS AND MORE

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Thanks to the collaboration between the Municipality of Fidenza, FBK and local restaurateurs, the Bring The Food app has been adapted for the medical staff of the Vaio hospital and more

From Fidenza, the beating heart of Parma's Food Valley, emblem of "Made in Italy" products, a small big lesson in resilience and innovation in the public administration, to look beyond the coronavirus crisis.

Bring The Food is a web application developed at FBK by the ICT4Good team led by Adolfo Villafiorita. The app helps with the recovery and distribution of food surpluses and generates documents to claim the tax benefits provided for by Act 166/2016 (Legge Gadda). In 2019, it helped to recover and distribute 2,209,195 150g-portions of food to the needy.

In the past few days, it has been customized to respond to a need expressed by the city of Fidenza. The new solution stemmed from the meeting between [Franco Amigoni](#), City Councilor for Economic Development and Innovation, FBK researchers and the generosity of Alberto Campanini, a businessman from Fidenza who, on February 15, launched the Gustincanto restaurant in the artisan district of La Bionda, a piece of a wider urban regeneration strategy.

Every day, thanks to the disintermediation enabled by the web app, the best local caterers prepare between 150 and 170 single portions at the moment, which are collected and distributed to the staff of the Vaio hospital, public service agencies, the Red Cross, the Guardia di Finanza [law enforcement agency under the authority of the Minister of Economy and Finance] and the Carabinieri [a Gendarmerie-like military corps with police duties].

A number of actors revolve round the app and the restaurant owners:

- volunteers (currently 5) as a transmission belt for the collection and distribution of meals,

- suppliers of food containers (all free of charge),
- the beneficiaries, health and law enforcement workers. Health workers receive the meals delivered by volunteers while law enforcement workers pick them up directly.

This technology solution is a pivot that facilitates a wider process of social innovation.

From a technical point of view, the cooks volunteered to prepare the meals and learned how to use the app in no time. As for teachers throughout Italy engaged in distance education out of necessity, for this app the Covid19 crisis has accelerated the digitalization and regenerated social relationships that have been seriously put to the test.

As far as tax regulations are concerned, the tax agency requires that the donation process be transparent. The setup of the app, originally designed for food surpluses, was adapted for the Fidenza version by adding dedicated preparations, and raw materials purchase options. So, users need to apply two different laws, and two different methods for reporting.

At the moment, 1,500 meals have been distributed; assuming the pace stays the same, they will reach 5,000 by the end of the month; for Easter and Easter Monday only, the system, fully tested by now, will also provide meals to the local Caritas charity, to allow their cook to rest and ensure a special moment for the guests.

The contribution of FBK could be translated at a later stage in the improvement of an app that can be used both for food surpluses and for donating meals. Food surpluses should gradually become the new center of gravity. Today the system is relatively simple, but as more players become involved, it will be crucial to minimize the work behind the scenes, which is now pretty high.

Need sharpens ingenuity. In this moment of inevitable reinvention, going beyond the emergency is not impossible. Collaboration instances like these actually show how solidarity can create new opportunities to look at the present and the future with greater confidence.

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