

Agualiciosa: Cofounder Call

Restoring Mediterranean headwater landscapes, community by community.

Agualiciosa is an early-stage NGO restoring degraded headwater streams in the Iberian drylands using low-tech, process-based structures (one-rock dams, Zuni bowls, media lunas) built by hand on volunteer weekends. The technical model draws on Ricardo Codorníu's pioneering hydrologic-forestal restoration of Sierra Espuña in 1889 and over thirty years of work led by Bill Zeedyk and colleagues in the American Southwest, and aligns with the IUCN Global Standard for Nature-Based Solutions. The technical founder, a geomorphologist and restoration ecologist, is in place. We're looking for the second person.

The Role

You'll build the organization alongside the technical founder. The work is inherently multi-actor and has two halves:

- **Field:** running volunteer weekends, coordinating with landowners and farmers, and building trust with rural communities.
- **Institutional:** public and private stakeholder engagement with municipalities, regional administrations, the Confederaciones Hidrográficas, funders, and partner organizations. The slow, steady work of turning a project into an institution.

You won't be doing hydrology or restoration design. You will be the person who makes a weekend of forty volunteers and a skeptical mayor both actually work.

What We Need From You

Experience in community engagement, regenerative rural development, or landscape-scale restoration work. Comfort moving between rural communities, public institutions, and funders. Clear written English and working Spanish, or the willingness to learn. Willingness to spend significant time in rural Spain. We're currently based in Cádiz, with field sites to be developed across Spain's dryland communities. Experience running projects, coalitions, or teams.

You don't need NGO leadership experience. You do need to have run things.

How We'd Work Together

I'm the technical half, a geomorphologist and restoration ecologist. I'm hiring a cofounder because the organizational and relational work isn't my strength, and I'd rather build with a real partner than try to do both poorly.

The work involves long days outside, a lot of driving between sites, slow conversations with officials who take months to reply, and weekends with volunteers who come back year after year.

Where We Are Today

Pre-funding. The role starts unpaid, with the goal of moving to paid co-leadership once funding is in place. We can't promise a timeline. You'd be a cofounder, shaping structure, governance, and strategic direction.

If you want a stable salary from day one, this isn't it. If you want a remote or purely strategic role, this isn't it either. The work is in the field, with people, over years.

Why Now

More than 75% of Spain faces serious desertification risk. The technical methods to reverse headwater degradation exist and are well-evidenced. The model works. What's missing in Iberia is the community-stewardship layer that makes it work at scale: the territorial ecosystem of farmers, municipalities, and institutions that turns isolated restoration into lasting transformation.

We're building that community-stewardship layer. What we learn here applies across the Mediterranean: Italy, Greece, North Africa. Iberia first.

If something in this feels like you, write to shane@agualiciosa.org. Tell me a few paragraphs about yourself, and one story of a time you held a complex community or logistical situation together.