

## **CRITERIA AND COMMITMENTS FOR BECOMING A MEMBER/PARTNER OF THE ALGARVENSIS GEOPARK**

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### **1. Who Can Become a Member / Partner?**

Any natural or legal person, public or private, may apply, provided they:

- Demonstrate interest in the mission and objectives of the Geopark;
- Accept and subscribe to the Values and Principles of the Algarvensis Geopark;
- Present a project proposal aligned with the territory and mission of the Geopark.

#### **Eligible types of entities:**

- Local authorities and intermunicipal communities;
  - Educational institutions and research centers;
  - Non-governmental organizations;
  - Businesses (tourism, hospitality, food and beverage, crafts, retail, etc.);
  - Cultural, environmental, and local development associations;
  - Artists, artisans, and individual entrepreneurs.
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### **2. Membership Process**

The process for becoming a member/partner includes the following steps:

1. Expression of interest to the Geopark technical team;
2. Introductory meeting for mutual clarification of objectives;
3. Completion of the Membership Form with institutional data and project proposal;
4. Technical review and approval by the Board of the Association;
5. Signing of the Commitment Charter to formalize the partnership;
6. Payment of the annual membership fee, according to the member category;
7. Delivery of identification material (partner plaque) and integration into the official communication platforms of the Geopark.

### **3. Values and Principles to Uphold**

All members must share and implement the following values:

- Territorial, social, and environmental sustainability;
  - Interinstitutional collaboration;
  - Appreciation of local communities;
  - Creativity and humanism;
  - Social responsibility, ethics, and solidarity;
  - Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
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### **4. Obligations and Duties of Partners**

#### **a) Core Requirement: Development of a Geopark Project**

Each partner must submit, develop, and maintain a project aligned with the objectives of the Geopark. This project may include:

- Tourism products or services with local identity;
- Educational or awareness-raising activities;
- Cultural or scientific events;
- Promotion and communication actions related to the territory;
- Contribution to the inventory, monitoring, or enhancement of heritage;
- Production or certification of sustainable local goods.

This project is mandatory, technically monitored, and subject to annual evaluation.

#### **b) Active Participation**

- Engage in forums, meetings, and events promoted by the AGA;
- Contribute to the collective construction of the territory;
- Respond to evaluation surveys and reports requested by the Association.

### c) Commitment to the SDGs

All actions and projects must align with the principles of the UN 2030 Agenda, especially:

- SDG 4 (Quality Education)
- SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth)
- SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities)
- SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production)
- SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals)

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## 5. Membership Fee

The annual fee varies according to the category and type of member:

Type	Annual Fee
Parish Councils	€500
Regional Entities	€350
Tourism/Hotels/Agencies	€250
Local Accommodation	€150
Local Commerce	€80
Artists, Restaurants	€100
Artisans, Local Producers, Individuals	€50
Non-profit Associations	Exempt

Payment can be made annually, semi-annually, or quarterly. Fees may be revised annually.

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## 6. Monitoring and Evaluation

The AGA provides:

- Ongoing technical support for the project;
- Annual performance evaluation, including engagement and impact;
- Collection of simplified annual reports;
- Partner meetings to align and share good practices.

Failure to meet obligations or develop the agreed project may result in review or termination of the partnership.

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## **7. Product Certification (Optional)**

Partners who produce local goods may request Algarvensis Geopark certification, provided they meet criteria such as:

- Local origin and territorial identity;
  - Sustainable production practices;
  - Contribution to local development;
  - Fair labor conditions and low environmental impact.
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## **8. Partner Rights**

- Institutional visibility (website, brochures, events);
  - Use of the Algarvensis Geopark partner seal (under defined rules);
  - Participation in training and capacity-building activities;
  - Access to a collaborative network and communication platforms.
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## **9. Final Notes**

Joining the Algarvensis Geopark Association is not merely symbolic: it is an active and collaborative commitment to the territory, its heritage, and its people. Each partner is jointly responsible for building a living, participatory, and sustainable Geopark.