

Volt Malta Manifesto 2022

**New Markets
(Robotics & Vertical
+ Urban Farming)**



**Ivvota Aħjar.
Ivvota Volt.**

Is-Sibt, 26 ta' Marzu

New Markets & Industries (Robotics + Vertical & Urban Farming)

Intending to diversify Malta's economy and research sector, we want to incentivise the growth of 2 industries that have high growth and innovation potential. Furthermore, the incentives into farming are a step towards ensuring greater food security in anticipation of possible disruptions to future supply chains caused by climate change, and unpredictable events (such as a pandemic).

It is crucial to continuously adapt to the environmental changes brought about by climate change and also to further work towards ensuring food security to whatever extent possible. Additionally, every small act which reduces reliance on imported food products is a benefit to both the environment and local growers.

Robotics

- **Invest in research in developing & applying robotics** to increase productivity and quality in existing industries (Financial Services, Financial Technologies, Igaming, Manufacturing, Agriculture).
- **Foster an advanced robotics industry** by creating a strategy in coordination with Malta's industry stakeholders, educational institutions, entrepreneurial community, and international experts.

Vertical Farming

The types of vertical farming (Hydroponic, Aquaponic and Aeroponic) should be incentivised to be adopted in Malta, to ensure food security with ever decreasing arable land.

- **Incentivise Research** in different vertical farming methods and how to maximise production & quality, while minimising water & energy consumption taking into consideration Malta's climate.
 - **Research** should also include anticipating the effects of climate change and preparing mitigation strategies.
- **Support Malta's farmers** in introducing vertical farming in their existing infrastructure.
 - **Create Grants** to facilitate the purchase of equipment to set up a vertical farm, for up to 3,000 farmers a year.
 - **The Grant can be claimed by independent farmers & tenant farmers.**
 - The equipment purchased by the Grant would be the property of the farmers unless the conditions of the Grant are not met.
 - **Make the Grant conditional** to ensuring sustainability in production where possible such as through making use of as much as possible.
 - Recycled & Rainwater.

- Renewable Energy.
- **Foster and also provide expertise** to farmers wishing to adopt vertical farming practices through local and also international sources with experience in similar climates.
- **Foster Start-Ups** aiming to innovate vertical farming.
 - Identify an abandoned building in the public or private sector and establish a hub to be used by start-ups.
 - Modifying the building ensures access to required amenities, and is done sustainably.

Urban & Community Farming/Gardening

By encouraging and fostering urban & community farming/gardening the public will learn valuable skills on tending to various plants and also produce some of their own which they may share with the community or keep for themselves further saving them money.

- **Encourage** the public to make use of urban farming techniques where possible.
- **Incentivise Research** in different urban farming methods for different types of buildings, and how to maximise production & quality, while minimising water & energy consumption taking into consideration Malta's climate.
 - Ensure research for different quantities of sun exposure.
- **Foster Community Cooperatives** who commit to take care of roof gardens in their rented residences, particularly for apartments.
 - **Encourage bookkeeping standards** of produce created from Urban Farming, for statistical analysis and compensation schemes.
 - **Create a verification system** for spot-checks by a committee made up of urban farming experts to help validate the data.
- **Create safeguards** for buildings with urban farms/gardens on roofs (and additionally solar panels) to ensure accessibility to sunlight, or fair compensation at the expense of the developer who would be responsible for the construction of the building taking away access to sunlight.
 - Fair compensation for urban farms/gardens would be;
 - A lump sum is given to the Community Cooperative, or homeowner equivalent to the value of the roof garden, and the market value of produce generated from the space in an average year based on data collected by the bookkeepers.
 - Financing the modification of the urban farm/garden to accommodate for reduced access to sunlight (only if possible, otherwise fall back to lump sum)
 - Fair compensation for solar panels would be;
 - A lump sum of the value of the solar panels will be given to the owner/s, which would be calculated as follows;
 - The remaining lifespan (or up to additional 30 years, depending on which is less) of the solar panels would, as a fraction of the total lifespan of the solar panels, multiplied by the value at which the solar panels were purchased. Then add the monetary

value of expected electricity generated by the solar panel within the remaining expected lifespan of the panel.

- e.g if the solar panel is 11 years old and is expected to be viable for 30 years in total, and the panel was purchased at €2,000 and generates €300 worth of electricity a year on average, then the calculation is as follows
 - $(\frac{19}{30} \times €2,000) + (€300 \times 19) = €6966.67$

➤ **Create Community Gardens.** Utilise existing, and create new public spaces within localities which will include Community Garden sections within them. This would allow members of the community to come together and work towards taking care of the garden and reap the fruit of their labour.

- Ensure the community garden is composed of indigenous plants.
- Ensure there are cameras to ensure the plants are not uprooted & stolen/vandalised
 - Ensure strict enforcement & fines for any criminal acts.
- Provide community learning sessions on tending the plants.
- Place the community gardens under the responsibility of the respective local councils.
 - Ensure the local councils are equipped with the capacity to manage the gardens.