

The Guardian Journey

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The Portuguese version of this document is the binding version.

From first calling to long term Guardianship

Caring for land beyond ownership, held through learning, collective responsibility and continuity

The Guardian Journey is a clear, paced pathway for people who feel called to care for land over the long term.

It begins with conversation and learning, and may, when maturity and alignment are present, lead to formal Guardian responsibility held collectively and safeguarded by Terra Agora Foundation.

Anyone may begin individually. A Guardian Entity forms later, only when maturity, training and shared responsibility are in place.

The journey described here is settled. The practice that supports it, namely the Learning Pathway, the certification regime and the periodic monitoring of commitments, is being built in stages and reaches full operation during the course of 2027. No guardianship agreement has yet been signed.

1. What the Guardian Journey Is

Responsibility grown into, not a title claimed

Becoming a Guardian is not about ownership, speed or control.

It is a structured journey into responsibility, shaped by time, by learning and by relationship with land and people.

The Journey exists to protect land by slowing decisions, ensuring readiness and making sure no one carries Guardianship alone.

2. Step One: Initial Connection

A conversation, not a commitment

The Journey begins with dialogue. Together, we explore:

- What is calling you toward Guardianship
- Your relationship to land, to care and to responsibility
- Whether this pathway feels right, for you and for the places involved

There are no contracts at this stage. Only listening, orientation and mutual clarity.

3. Step Two: Learning as an Individual

You can begin alone, with or without land

Anyone may start the Guardian Journey individually.

Through learning, reflection and practice, participants build the ecological understanding, social maturity and long term perspective required for Guardianship.

Forming a Guardian Entity comes later, when commitment deepens and shared responsibility becomes possible around a specific land or landscape.

Learning will be supported through the Foundation's Learning Pathway, which is in development and whose opening date is not yet fixed. The Learning Pathway carries a fee; the amount is not yet fixed and will be published once confirmed. Enrolment is not open.

4. Step Three: Forming a Guardian Entity, or continuing individually

Guardianship is held collectively

Before entering any Contrato Guardiã with the Foundation for the care of land held by the Foundation, a Guardian Entity must form.

A Guardian Entity:

- Consists of a minimum of three people
- Brings complementary skills and shared governance
- Is capable of holding responsibility across decades
- Is constituted as a legal person

Collective structure ensures resilience beyond any one individual life or circumstance.

5. Step Four: Training and Certification

Capability before authority

Training and certification are planned. Once the Learning Pathway is published, individuals and members of a Guardian Entity will complete training and demonstrate readiness through it.

Training will integrate:

- Ecological care and systems thinking
- Governance and collective decision making
- Conflict navigation and relational maturity
- Regenerative livelihoods and long term planning

Certification does not yet exist. When it does, it will signal demonstrated readiness, not speed or participation alone.

6. Step Five: The Seven Generation Vision, for Guardian Entities only

Orienting care beyond contracts and lifetimes

Each Guardian Entity develops a seven generation vision and a mid term plan for the property or landscape it will care for, guiding care across ecological, social and economic horizons.

This vision applies regardless of legal form, whether Guardians hold:

- Long term use rights
- Tenancy agreements

- Loan for use arrangements

The vision ensures continuity of purpose even as people, roles or legal instruments change.

7. Step Six: Guardianship Agreement

When and if readiness aligns

Not every journey leads to a formal agreement, and that is by design.

Some people who train with Terra Agora Foundation never enter a guardianship agreement. They carry Guardianship skills into their own land, their organisations or their communities.

When a Guardian Entity is ready, the applicable instrument may be signed: a Contrato Guardiã or a Contrato de Direito de Superfície, depending on the nature of the Projecto Guardiã. The instrument grants a perpetual Direito de Superfície, or another long term right, over a specific property, while always prioritising care over ownership.

8. Step Seven: Care of the Land, Monitoring and Continuity

Guardianship is a living practice

Under a signed agreement, Guardians will care for the land day to day through regenerative activities and viable livelihoods, and Terra Agora Foundation will monitor the agreed ecological, social and economic commitments, support learning and adaptation over time, and intervene if commitments are not met. No agreement has yet been signed.

Guardians may change. The land's protection and purpose do not.

A Closing Invitation

Care beyond ownership begins with a first step

You can begin simply, with curiosity, conversation and learning.

Whether you are sensing a calling, seeking training or preparing to form a Guardian Entity, the Guardian Journey offers a held and responsible way to care for land beyond your own lifetime.

Terra Agora Foundation