

INTERNATIONAL GRANT FUNDING IN ENSURING AND STRENGTHENING THE INSTITUTIONAL SUSTAINABILITY OF THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY



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Introduction

Introduction. The full-scale war in Ukraine has posed unprecedented challenges to the higher education system, critically affecting its ability to ensure the continuity of the educational process, preserve scientific potential, and support the development of the academic community. Under such conditions, it is particularly important to find alternative sources of funding that can compensate for the loss of resources, contribute to the restoration of educational infrastructure, and increase the institutional resilience of universities. International grant funding, particularly within the Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, and other EU initiatives, plays a significant role in strengthening the capacity of higher education institutions to adapt to crisis situations, maintain academic mobility, and develop innovative educational practices. It is thanks to the involvement of grant resources that an environment of academic solidarity and cooperation is being formed, which contributes to the long-term sustainability, modernization, and integration of the Ukrainian academic community into the European educational space.

The aim of the research is to substantiate the role and significance of international grant funding in ensuring and strengthening the institutional sustainability of the academic community using the example of the Erasmus+ project “Academies4Ukraine – Strengthen Higher Education Resilience in Ukraine and the European Union”.

The object of the study is the processes of ensuring and strengthening the institutional stability of the academic community in the context of crisis challenges through the implementation of international projects and the attraction of grant funding.

The subject is the mechanisms of international support and grant funding as an important factor in ensuring and strengthening the institutional stability of higher education institutions in Ukraine in the context of war.

The methods of the research. The study used dialectical and abstract-logical methods (for theoretical generalizations), methods of a systematic approach (to consider institutional stability as a holistic system), as well as general scientific methods of analysis and synthesis (to study the results of project implementation) and induction and deduction (to formulate conclusions).

Theoretical background

A successful case of grant funding is the Erasmus+ project “Academies4Ukraine – Strengthen Higher Education Resilience in Ukraine and the European Union.” The European Union has allocated €400,000 for its implementation during 2023–2026. The project was initiated by the social enterprise i-strategies (Italy) and developed in partnership with the University of Helsinki (Finland), Riga Technical University (Latvia), Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University (Ukraine), Kherson State University (Ukraine), and Odesa National University of Technology (Ukraine).

Cooperation, mutual assistance, and exchange of experience within the project are aimed at creating a powerful platform for the implementation of socially important initiatives. The results of the project contribute to maintaining the competitiveness of Ukrainian universities and their integration into the European educational space.

Academies4Ukraine

Strengthening Academic Resilience in Ukraine and EU



Main findings

DOCUMENTARY FILM “ACADEMIC RESILIENCE STORIES FROM UKRAINE”

- draws the attention of the international community to the challenges faced by Ukrainian higher education institutions in the context of war

HANDBOOK “SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: A BEST PRACTICE FROM HELSINKI UNIVERSITY”

- based on the experience of the University of Helsinki. It contains effective practices of psychosocial support aimed at improving the mental well-being of the student community.

DIGITAL HANDBOOK “MANUAL FOR IMPLEMENTING A UNIVERSITY PSYCHOLOGICAL HELP SERVICE FOR STUDENTS”

- a tool for psychological support, adaptation, and social integration of students who are in a state of chronic stress due to military action

COMPARED TO OTHER PROJECTS, THE SPECIFIC FEATURES OF THIS PROJECT ARE DEFINED BY:

Narrative approach – instead of the traditional academic method of disseminating content, examining academic sustainability in Ukraine through a documentary film, a kind of “video essay”

Updating the concept of academic solidarity. The aim of the project is to interpret academic solidarity not only as a means of unilateral support for Ukraine (from Europe to Ukraine), but also as a way to enable Ukrainian partners to share their experiences and knowledge gained during the war as relevant knowledge useful for strengthening and supporting other universities and students involved in military operations around the world

Preparing Ukraine for post-war reconstruction and introducing innovations into the higher education system with the participation of public and private entities in accordance with a concept that views EU funds not as an end goal, but as a lever for the country's sustainable and autonomous socio-economic development

MAIN RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

International grant funding plays a strategic role in ensuring the institutional resilience of the academic community in times of crisis, compensating for resource losses and supporting critically important educational and scientific processes. The Academies4Ukraine project establishes an innovative narrative approach to academic solidarity. Using documentary film as its primary means of content dissemination, the project goes beyond traditional academic forms and reaches a wider audience. Moreover, it renews the concept of solidarity, interpreting it as a two-way exchange where universities share unique experiences and knowledge gained during the war, which is valuable for strengthening other universities in crisis regions around the world. The project demonstrates that EU grants should be seen not as an end goal, but as a strategic lever for the country's continuous and autonomous socio-economic development, including ensuring the long-term institutional sustainability and recovery of the Ukrainian academic community. Within the Academies4Ukraine project, this is achieved by focusing on preparing Ukraine for post-war reconstruction and introducing innovations into the higher education system with the active participation of both public and private actors.

References

- Academies4Ukraine. URL: <https://www.academies4ukraine.eu/home>
- Academies4Ukraine. URL: <https://www.youtube.com/@Academies4Ukraine-st5hs>