



# Social Entrepreneurship in Ukraine: Initiatives, Organizations, and Success Stories

Ukraine has developed a vibrant ecosystem supporting social entrepreneurship through various organizations, events, and international partnerships. These initiatives are fostering innovative solutions to social challenges while creating sustainable business models.

From dedicated accelerators to community-funded projects, Ukrainian social entrepreneurs are making significant impacts across sectors including education, veteran support, environmental sustainability, and inclusion of underrepresented groups.



# Organizations Empowering Social Social Entrepreneurs



## **SILUkraine (Social Impact Lab Ukraine)**

Focuses on helping social entrepreneurs develop sustainable business models through mentorship, training, and networking opportunities.



## **IMPACT BUSINESS ACCELERATOR**

Provides intensive programs for startups with a focus on sustainability, offering resources to scale social impact ventures.



## **Impact Force**

Supports startups in social innovation and fosters international collaboration through partnerships and knowledge exchange.



## **Ukrainian Startup Fund (USF)**

Offers grant funding for early-stage entrepreneurial projects, including social ventures seeking to address community challenges.



# Key Events Fostering Social Innovation



## Civic Tech Hackathons

Collaborative events bringing together innovators to create tech-based solutions for social challenges, supported by international donors like USAID and the EU.



## Impact Days Ukraine

A networking event for social entrepreneurs to connect with potential partners and investors, sharing knowledge and building strategic relationships.



## Social Business Intensives

Workshops and training focused on creating scalable solutions for social issues, helping entrepreneurs refine their business models.



## Social Impact Award Ukraine

A program supporting early-stage social entrepreneurs with mentoring, funding, and exposure to help launch their initiatives.

# Educational Platforms and Youth Engagement

## Startup Grind Ukraine

Part of a global community, these events highlight social entrepreneurship success stories and provide networking opportunities for aspiring entrepreneurs.

The platform connects Ukrainian innovators with global resources and mentorship, creating pathways for international collaboration.

## Ukrainian Hub Workshops

Specialized training sessions focusing on leadership development, effective pitching techniques, and strategies for scaling social business ideas.

These workshops provide practical skills that help entrepreneurs transform their vision into viable business models with measurable impact.

## Young Entrepreneurs Camp

Aimed specifically at youth aspiring to create impactful businesses, these camps nurture the next generation of social entrepreneurs through hands-on learning experiences.

Participants develop business plans addressing real community needs while receiving guidance from established entrepreneurs.

# Successful Social Ventures: Food and Food and Community

## **Veterano Group (Veterano Pizza) Pizza)**

A social enterprise employing war veterans and helping reintegrate them into society through meaningful work opportunities. The business combines commercial success with significant social impact by addressing veteran employment challenges.

## **Urban Space 100**

A community-funded restaurant where profits go toward city development projects. This innovative model has transformed how local communities can collectively invest in their own development while creating a sustainable business.

## **Good Bread from Good People**

A bakery employing individuals with disabilities, providing meaningful employment opportunities while producing quality products. This venture demonstrates how inclusion can be successfully integrated into business models.



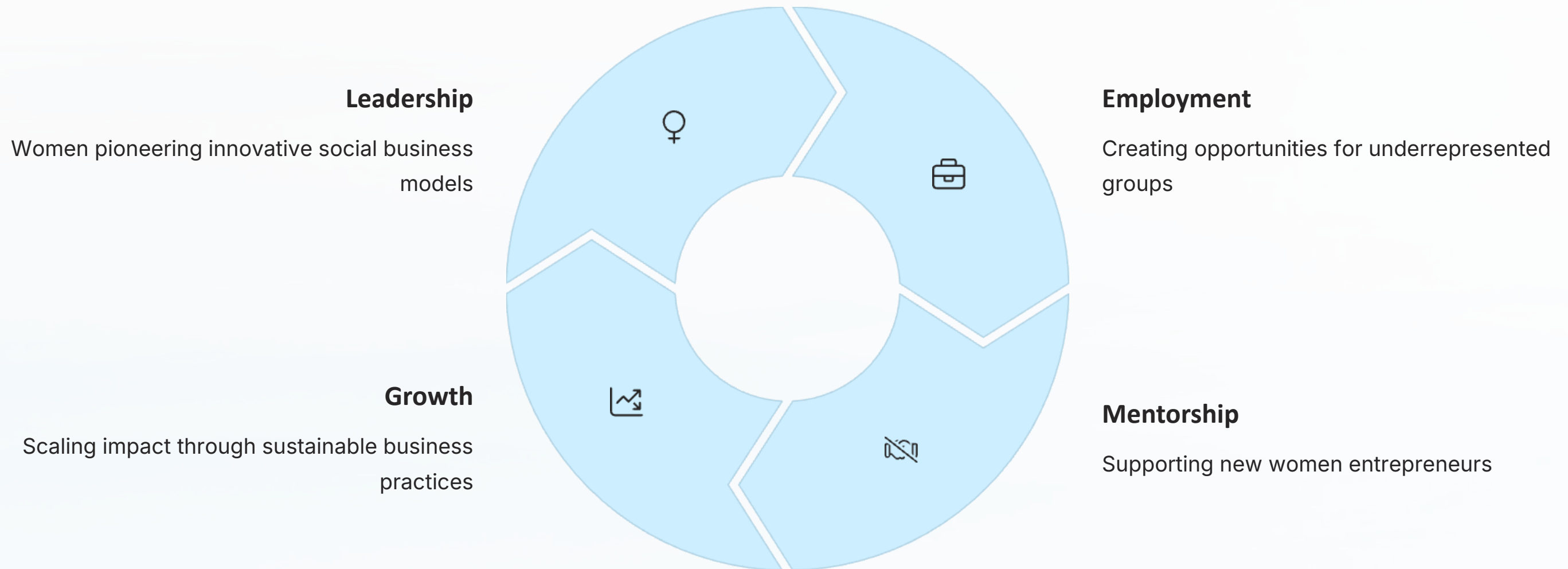
# Environmental and Educational Initiatives



ReThink has pioneered innovative approaches to waste management and recycling, creating both environmental benefits and employment opportunities. Their initiatives have helped transform attitudes toward sustainability across Ukrainian communities.

Meanwhile, Teach for Ukraine works to address educational inequality by placing talented teachers in schools that need them most. This program has improved educational outcomes while creating pathways for systemic change in the education sector.

# Women-Led Social Enterprises



The Ukrainian Women's Guard (Жіноча Сотня) has established a powerful network supporting women-led social businesses across the country. By providing mentorship, resources, and connections, they've helped launch numerous successful ventures addressing various social challenges.

Oh My Look & G.Bar Social Initiatives exemplify how combining profit with social responsibility can create sustainable impact. These businesses employ underrepresented groups while maintaining commercial success, demonstrating the viability of inclusive business models.



# Supporting Elderly Populations

## Identifying Needs

The Zhyttelyub Foundation conducts comprehensive research to understand the specific challenges facing elderly Ukrainians, from social isolation to healthcare access.

## Developing Solutions

Based on identified needs, the foundation creates social enterprise initiatives that address these challenges while providing employment opportunities.

## Creating Community

Programs foster intergenerational connections and build support networks that improve quality of life for elderly participants.

## Measuring Impact

The foundation tracks both social outcomes and business sustainability to ensure their initiatives create lasting positive change.

# International Support and Collaboration



## USAID's Economic Resilience Program Program

Focuses on supporting social enterprises in conflict-affected regions, providing crucial resources for entrepreneurs working in challenging environments. The program combines financial support with technical assistance to build sustainable ventures.



## GIZ Training Programs

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit runs specialized training programs and offers funding for scalable social businesses. Their approach emphasizes knowledge transfer and capacity building.



## EBRD Support Programs

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development provides funding, mentorship, and networking opportunities for social startups, helping them access international markets and expertise.

# Future Directions and Opportunities



## Expanding International Partnerships

Creating more global connections for Ukrainian social entrepreneurs



## Scaling Successful Models

Replicating proven approaches across more communities



## Building Educational Infrastructure

Developing specialized training for social entrepreneurship

The UNDP in Ukraine continues to drive initiatives like impact measurement workshops for social entrepreneurs, helping them quantify and communicate their social value. These skills are crucial for attracting investment and scaling impact.

As Ukraine's social entrepreneurship ecosystem matures, opportunities are emerging to create more specialized support structures, including impact investment funds, industry-specific accelerators, and educational programs dedicated to social innovation.

The combination of grassroots innovation, organizational support, and international collaboration positions Ukraine's social entrepreneurship sector for continued growth and increased impact across multiple social challenges.



# The Role of Youth in Social Entrepreneurship in Ukraine

Since 2016, Ukraine has seen remarkable growth in social entrepreneurship led by youth. Young innovators are creating impactful solutions for community challenges.

Their ventures are reshaping both society and the economy through sustainable business models with purpose.



# Youth-Led Startups: Building Social Impact



## School of ME

24 social school enterprises launching between 2023-2025, teaching entrepreneurial skills to students.



## EU4Youth Initiative

Comprehensive internship programs and business training for university students.



## Youth Platform

Innovative projects in eco-printing and interactive scientific exhibits gaining traction.

# Innovative Youth Entrepreneurship Projects

## JA Ukraine Support

Over 15 business ideas receive mentorship, seed funding, and guidance annually.

Projects focus on addressing critical societal needs through sustainable business models.

## Breakthrough Solutions

Young entrepreneurs developing adaptive clothing for people with disabilities.

Bionic prostheses and accessibility-focused mobile applications gaining recognition.



Success story: Good Bread from Good People creates employment for individuals with mental disabilities.

# Accelerating Social Entrepreneurship in Ukraine

Ukraine's social entrepreneurship ecosystem is rapidly evolving, creating powerful opportunities for innovators who aim to solve pressing social challenges while building sustainable businesses. From dedicated workspaces to investment funds, the support infrastructure is expanding to nurture these change-makers.

Organizations like Impact Hub Odessa, Ukrainian Social Venture Fund, and School of ME provide crucial resources for early-stage social enterprises. Meanwhile, events such as Startup Grind Kyiv and SEED Forum Ukraine connect Ukrainian social entrepreneurs to global networks and potential investors.

This growing ecosystem is empowering a new generation of entrepreneurs to drive meaningful social impact across Ukraine while building financially sustainable ventures.



# Impact Hub Odessa: Fostering Collaboration

## Community Focus

As part of the global Impact Hub network, Odessa's branch creates a vibrant ecosystem where social entrepreneurs can collaborate, share resources, and scale their impact. The hub operates on principles of community-building and knowledge exchange.

Their acceleration programs specifically target ventures aligned with sustainable development goals, providing structured guidance through the challenging early stages of social enterprise development.

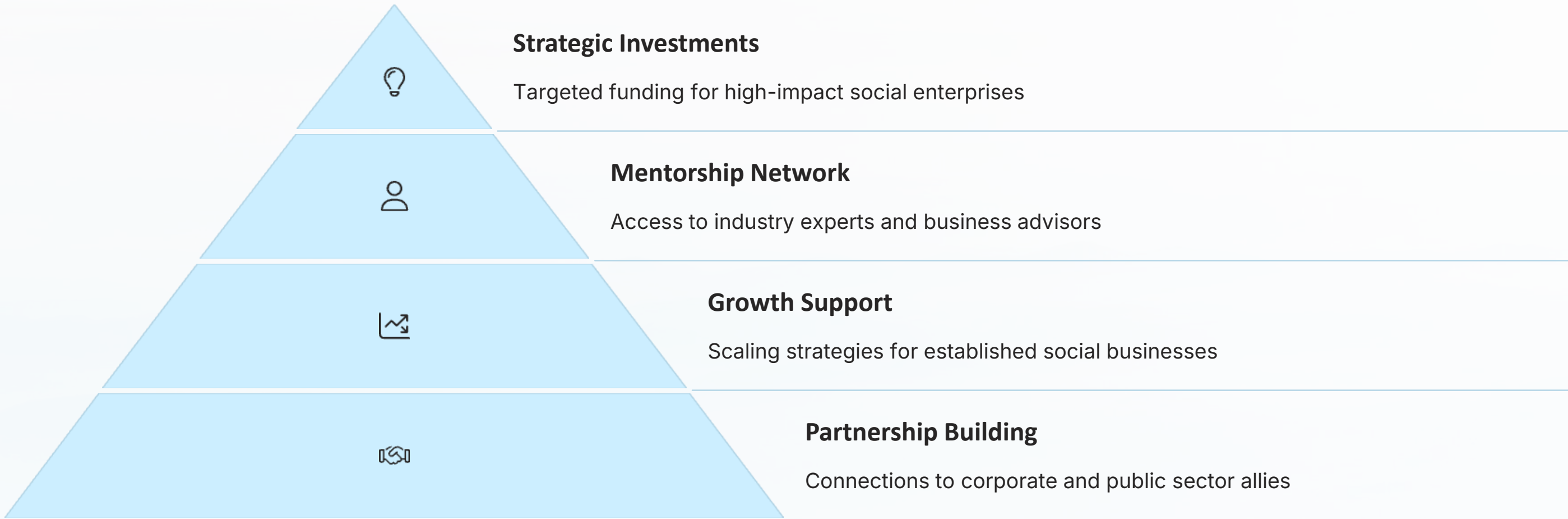
## Success Stories

Since 2015, Impact Hub Odessa has supported over 100 social startups, many of which have gone on to secure additional funding and expand their reach. Their focus on practical mentorship and community support has created a nurturing environment for innovation.

The hub's coworking spaces serve as more than just offices—they're incubators for collaborative problem-solving and cross-pollination of ideas between diverse entrepreneurs working on complementary social challenges.



# Ukrainian Social Venture Fund (USVF): Investing in Impact



The Ukrainian Social Venture Fund focuses on three critical sectors: education, healthcare, and environmental sustainability. Their portfolio companies have collectively reached over 500,000 beneficiaries, demonstrating the fund's commitment to meaningful social impact alongside financial returns.

USVF's comprehensive approach combines capital with intensive mentoring, helping social entrepreneurs refine their business models while maximizing their positive impact on Ukrainian communities.

# School of ME: Education for Social Change

## Foundational Knowledge

Core understanding of social enterprise principles and impact measurement.

90% of graduates successfully launch or scale social ventures within two years.

Graduate created an educational technology platform providing resources to over 5,000 students in rural Ukrainian communities.

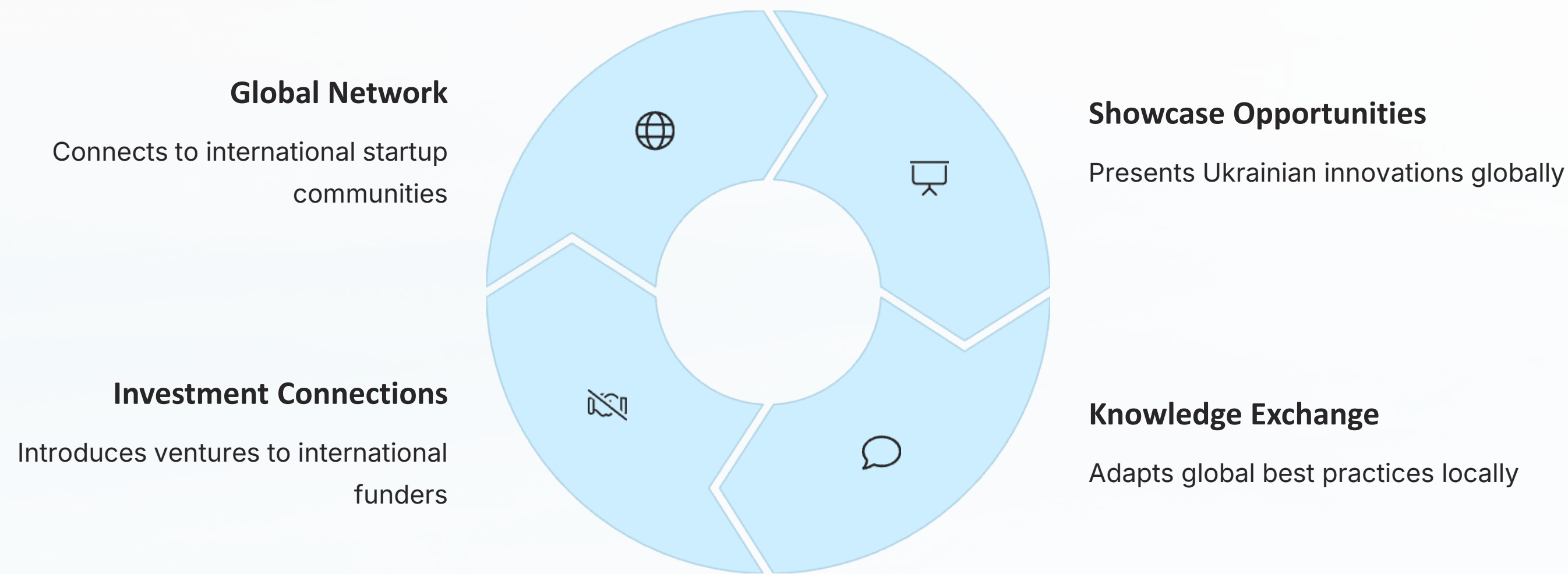
## Practical Application

Develop business plans and financial models through hands-on coaching.

## Launch Preparation

Pitch development, investor readiness training, and network building for implementation.

# Startup Grind Kyiv: Connecting Entrepreneurs Globally



Startup Grind Kyiv connects Ukrainian social entrepreneurs to the global startup ecosystem through networking, mentorship, and showcases.

A Ukrainian clean energy startup secured €500,000 in funding after a Startup Grind Kyiv event and now provides affordable renewable energy.

# Social Impact Award Ukraine: Empowering Youth



## 2000+ Applications

Young innovators have submitted many ideas.



## €5K Seed Funding

Average initial investment in youth-led projects.



## 80% Success Rate

Award winners still operating after two years.



## 24 Finalists Annually

Projects receive intensive mentorship and support.

The Social Impact Award Ukraine provides a platform for early-stage social innovation, comprehensive mentorship, workshops, and seed funding.

One standout example is a project addressing accessibility issues for people with disabilities in Ukrainian cities, which has improved accessibility in public locations and influenced municipal policy changes.

# SEED Forum Ukraine: Catalyzing Investment



## Investment Readiness Readiness Training

Preparing social enterprises  
for investor scrutiny



## Pitch Development

Crafting compelling  
investment proposals



## Investor Matching

Connecting with aligned  
funding sources



## Post-Investment Support

Guidance for effective  
deployment of capital

SEED Forum Ukraine connects social enterprises with impact investors, enabling them to scale their operations and create sustainable systems for long-term impact. Over \$2 million has been invested in participating ventures since 2018.



# Hackathons for Social Entrepreneurs: Entrepreneurs: Innovation Sprints



## Team Formation

Diverse skills unite around social challenges



## Ideation

Rapid concept development and refinement



## Prototyping

Building minimal viable solutions



## Pitch Competition

Presenting solutions to expert judges

Social entrepreneurship hackathons provide intensive environments where business ideas can rapidly evolve from concepts to prototypes. These events bring together entrepreneurs, designers, developers, and subject matter experts for collaborative problem-solving sessions focused on specific social challenges.

One successful example emerged from a hackathon focused on accessibility issues. The winning team developed a mobile application that maps wheelchair-accessible routes in Ukrainian cities. After the event, they secured additional funding, launched their service in three major cities, and now serve over 5,000 users with mobility challenges.

# Creative Enterprise UA: Nurturing Creative Businesses



# Cultural Heritage Preservation

Digitizing and promoting Ukrainian cultural heritage and crafts.



## Accessible Arts Education

Democratizing access to arts education for underserved communities.



# Creative Technology Solutions Solutions

Fostering businesses at the  
intersection of technology and  
creativity.

# Successful Social Enterprises: Empowering Communities



## Vbrani

Empowers older women through entrepreneurship. Participants create handmade products, earning income while preserving cultural traditions.



## Made in Ukraine

Promotes local producers through marketplaces and digital platforms. Helps small businesses access larger markets.



## Holodni Budni (Hungry Weekdays)

Fights food waste by collecting surplus from restaurants. Distributes meals to those in need across Ukrainian cities.

# More Successful Social Enterprises in Ukraine



## SenSe Ukraine

Creates sensory rooms for rehabilitation of children with special needs and war trauma victims.



## Urban Bees

Maintains bee colonies in cities while educating about ecosystem preservation. Employs people from vulnerable groups.



## Laska Store

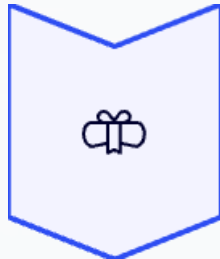
Charity shop chain selling second-hand items. Funds support community development programs throughout Ukraine.



## Good Bread

Bakery employing people with disabilities, providing job training and integration into the workforce.

# International Partnerships: Key to Growth



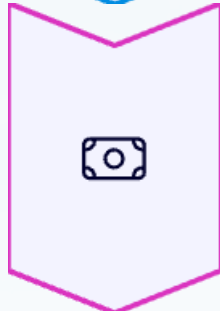
## EU Programs

Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe provide funding and knowledge exchange.



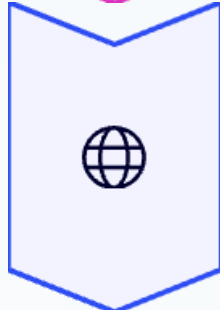
## NGO Support

USAID and UNDP Ukraine offer technical assistance and grants.



## Impact Investment

Western NIS Enterprise Fund pioneers impact investing in Ukrainian social startups.



## Global Networks

Ashoka and Schwab Foundation connect Ukrainian entrepreneurs with worldwide resources.

