

NGO LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP KOŠICE

A Transformative
Leadership Workshop
for Ukrainian NGOs

JUNE
17 — 21
2024

FINAL REPORT



NGO LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP KOŠICE

JUNE 17 — 21, 2024

In June 2024, 24 NGO leaders from Ukraine participated in an interactive management training workshop tailored to meet their needs and empower Ukrainian civil society during the ongoing war.

This was the 12th NGO Leadership Workshop, the seventh held in Slovakia and the first in Košice, the second-largest city situated in the eastern part of the country only 60 miles (97 km) from the border with Ukraine.

The participants traveled from across Ukraine, including from areas heavily impacted by the ongoing war such as Dnipro, Odesa, and Zaporizhzhia. The workshop organizers chartered a bus to bring all participants from the Ukrainian border city Uzhhorod to the workshop venue. NGOs represented at the workshop address critical needs in Ukraine, such as human rights advocacy, humanitarian aid, demining, civic engagement, healthcare, social inclusion, gender equality, child welfare, and environmental protection.

Throughout the week, the resilience and determination of the participants shone brightly. They came together for a unique blend of learning and networking, enhancing their skills and building their connections to provide crucial services in Ukraine.

The week began with a beautiful outdoor reception in Old Town Košice, during which participants quickly bonded. Training sessions during the week covered motivation, teamwork, resilience, burnout prevention, digital marketing, and AI. On Thursday, training was held offsite at the 12th-century Spiš Castle and neighboring historical village of Spišská Kapitula, where the group rejoiced at a festive closing dinner full of toasts and musical performance by one of the workshop organizers and local artist, Tímea Gregová.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

The NGO Leadership Workshops are sponsored by the University of Michigan's Weiser Center for Europe and Eurasia (WCEE), in partnership with the William Davidson Institute (WDI) at the University of Michigan. The June 2024 workshop was organized in partnership with the Slovak-based NGO Hekima which supports civil society change-makers and activists, and solves gender-specific issues through entrepreneurship and education.



ABOUT OUR PARTICIPANTS

The participants were selected through an invitation process and attended at no charge. They represented the following organizations:

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- **ADRA**
 - **Barrier Free**
 - **Caritas**
 - **Centre for Democracy and Rule of Law**
 - **Crimea SOS**
 - **Eastern-Ukrainian Centre for Civil Initiatives**
 - **East-SOS**
 - **Institute of Health Psychology**
 - **Martin Club**
 - **NGO Resource Center**
 - **Open Policy Foundation**
 - **People in Peril**
 - **Posmishka**
 - **Responsible Citizens**
 - **Right for Protection**
 - **Save Ukraine**
 - **Side by Side**
 - **Slavic Heart**
 - **Tabletochki**
 - **Ukrainian Deminers Association**
 - **Voices of Children**
 - **We Are Together**
 - **Zaporuka Foundation**
 - **Zmina**
-

CONTENT

DAY

1

Instructor: **JULIE FELKER**

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

Leadership is crucial for the success and sustainability of NGOs, and it is not solely an innate talent but a set of skills that can be developed. This session explored how effective leaders set organizational culture, build strong stakeholder relationships, and maximize impact by fostering meaningful connections and inspiring others. Participants gained practical, human-centric leadership tools to drive engagement and satisfaction within their teams. The workshop emphasized the importance of leadership training in promoting continuous improvement and expanding NGO capacity to fulfill their missions, respond to challenges, and seize opportunities. This session offered a valuable opportunity for NGO leaders to learn, reflect, and share experiences.



DAY

2

Instructor: LINDA GASSER

MOTIVATION

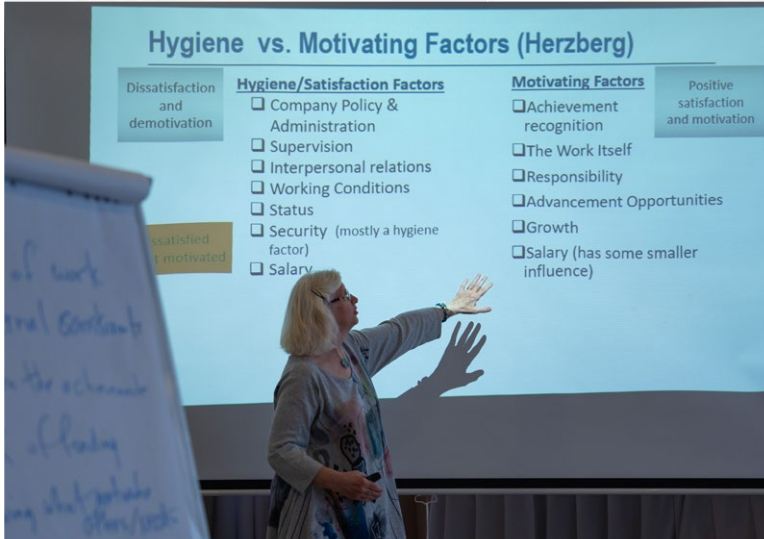
In this session, participants explored essential strategies for fostering a positive and productive work environment, including the importance of acknowledging contributions, providing constructive feedback, and offering growth opportunities to enhance team engagement and performance. Dr. Gasser emphasized how personal motivation contributes to resilience and perseverance, enabling individuals to overcome challenges and achieve personal and professional goals. Participants worked on planning effective strategies to motivate both themselves and their teams, aiming to cultivate a supportive and inspiring workplace.

TEAM BUILDING

In this session, participants explored how fostering a culture of collaboration, mutual support, and accountability can create a cohesive and resilient workforce dedicated to their organization's mission. They discovered effective leadership techniques to build or enhance their team's effectiveness, amplify their organization's impact, and strengthen their capacity to address community needs. The session delved into the critical factors of team building and teamwork, revealing the potential for better camaraderie, joint efforts, job satisfaction, and employee retention.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships enable nonprofits to access additional funding sources, broaden their service reach, extend capacity, become more innovative, create more influence, and promote greater collective action towards common goals. In this session, the group discussed the value of nonprofits building partnerships and explored how to do this well. Participants used their own situations as fieldwork examples for seeing intersections and opportunities, identifying stakeholders, and developing potent strategies and interventions to expand their organization's partnership options, networks, and impact.



DAY
3

Instructor: JULIE FELKER

RESILIENCE AND BURNOUT PREVENTION

In the dynamic world of NGOs, where passion often drives the work, leaders are particularly susceptible to burnout. This workshop session helped participants navigate the unique challenges of the NGO sector. Participants explored the specific stressors inherent in NGO work, learned to recognize the early warning signs of burnout, and developed resilience-building strategies to safeguard their well-being. To stress the importance of burnout prevention, the session was conducted offsite in the serene village of Spišská Kapitula, followed by a tour of Spiš Castle.



DAY
4

Instructor: PETER ŠEBO

DIGITAL MARKETING

This session focused on the rapid evolution of digital marketing as a powerful tool for NGOs. Digital marketing expert Peter Šebo discussed effective digital strategies tailored for nonprofits, emphasizing the use of social media, online storytelling, and targeted advertising to amplify messages, support causes, and secure funding. Participants explored real-world examples showcasing how these digital tools can attract broader support and create meaningful impact. Whether new to digital marketing or seeking fresh ideas, attendees gained valuable insights and inspiration on leveraging digital platforms to advance the missions of NGOs.

AI IN MARKETING

This session explored the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on marketing, delving into its practical applications and capabilities in real-world marketing campaigns. Discussions highlighted AI's role in automating tasks, enhancing personalization, and supporting marketing efforts across various sectors, including NGOs. The session also addressed the current limitations of AI, offering a balanced perspective on its capabilities. Participants gained insights into AI's current role in marketing and its potential future developments, aiming to demystify AI and make its complexities accessible to all. Participants worked in teams to create their own AI-assisted social media posts, putting their new skills into action right away!



ONLINE LEARNING

Online learning modules dedicated to the following topics were offered on ExtendEd, the program's online learning management system. Participants will continue to have access to this e-learning content for one year:

**Conflict
Resolution in
Leadership**

**Social Media
Marketing**

**Marketing
Strategy**

Communication

Leadership



INSTRUCTORS



JULIE FELKER is a Faculty Affiliate at the William Davidson Institute at the University of Michigan. She develops and delivers management education and provides organizational development capacity-building expertise in transition and emerging economies to strengthen educational and economic infrastructures and promote positive social change. She has worked on a variety of projects around the world, including in Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, the Philippines, Algeria, and Bahrain. Dr. Felker also serves as the Academic Director of the Master in Management Program at the Luxembourg School of Business where she is responsible for strategic and administrative leadership in developing and maintaining educational programs of exceptional quality. She recently received coaching certification from the Weatherhead School of Management at Case Western Reserve University.



LINDA GASSER is a Faculty Affiliate at the William Davidson Institute and teaches in the School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University, where she serves as an advisor to Fellows and coordinator for friendship partners for the international Humphrey Fellowship Program scholars. She has participated in the NGO Leadership Workshop since 2015. She has extensive experience in executive education, career development, and coaching and providing seminars, workshops, and courses in nonprofit and for-profit organizations on many topics including leadership, management, organizational development, career development, organizational behavior, human resource management, project management, change management, diversity and cross-cultural awareness, emotions in the workplace, coaching, interpersonal dynamics, international work, and strategic planning.



PETER ŠEBO is a founder and Chief Digital Officer of PS:Digital, which quickly became one of the best digital agencies in Slovakia after opening in 2014. Known for creativity and efficiency, the agency has been behind numerous successful digital PR campaigns. Šebo started as a marketing manager for several nonprofit organizations and worked as an editor for digital marketing topics at Ecompress. He is also a founder of the largest conference on digital marketing in the region, Digital RULEZZ. He often lectures at conferences and universities.

WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

In line with the goals of the workshop, the participants:

- ✓ Mastered human-centric leadership to inspire, connect, and navigate NGO challenges.
- ✓ Explored the keys to motivation for peak engagement and resilience.
- ✓ Learned new ways to lead their organizations in times of crisis.
- ✓ Leveraged cutting-edge digital marketing and AI to revolutionize their NGO's visibility and funding.
- ✓ Forged new partnerships to amplify their mission effectively.

WHAT PARTICIPANTS SAID

"NGOs in Ukraine are growing fast. They need qualified managers and strong leaders. That's what makes this workshop so important."

"I met incredible people, which is rare nowadays. It's amazing how one event brought together strong leaders with beautiful hearts and created the feeling of a big family."

"This workshop provided me with valuable practical knowledge, which I intend to apply to my work. Networking and the discussions were the most valuable parts."

"I made new friends at this workshop. I believe I have become more open-minded because of the people I met."

"It was one of the best organized events I have ever been to ... It was a week of valuable chances to relax, think, and reflect."

"This workshop is a great opportunity to re-think everyday things, to look at work and motivation from a different angle."

"I received insights that will help me build better and stronger relationships with my team. I also formed new, strong friendships."



WHAT THE INSTRUCTORS SAID

“The NGO Leadership Workshop is always a tremendous source of energy, inspiration, and knowledge for both participants and instructors. I thoroughly enjoyed sharing my expertise with the dedicated NGO participants and receiving their positive feedback and eagerness to implement change within their organizations. I hope my contribution will help them effectively enhance their marketing and communication goals.”

—Peter Šebo



“I had the honor of working with 24 dedicated Ukrainian NGO leaders who are at the forefront of providing humanitarian aid amidst the ongoing war. The resilience and commitment of these individuals is truly inspiring, as they navigate the many unprecedented challenges to support their communities.

One of the most significant outcomes of the workshop was the strong bonds formed among the participants. The environment facilitated deep connections and mutual understanding, quickly creating a strong sense of solidarity and shared purpose that will extend far beyond the workshop.

The courage and unwavering dedication of the participants to their communities served as powerful reminders of the importance of supporting those who work tirelessly to provide humanitarian aid in Ukraine.

The workshop was just amazing!”

—Julie Felker

“I really loved participating in this workshop. Those attending are knowledgeable, active, and highly engaged with both the content and each other, making for stimulating conversations and great networking. The program was also very effectively managed from start to finish with careful thought to all details. As a faculty trainer I could not ask for more than this: working with skilled professionals in service to a critical need that both touches my heart and provides value to all those involved. This NGO Leadership Workshop for Ukrainian participants is truly a special experience.”

—Linda Gasser



NETWORKING

Participants from the Košice workshop are now members of the NGO Leadership Workshop alumni Facebook group, where they can network with over 250 past participants from the region. They have also formed a WhatsApp group to share resources and time-sensitive information, and continue their learning via the instructional modules on the ExtendEd portal.



“The Weiser Center for Europe and Eurasia is committed to supporting Ukrainian civil society. We are inspired by the daily courage and dedication shown by these NGO leaders to serve their communities in the face of war. We and our amazing partners at the William Davidson Institute and Hekima look forward to hearing about the vital work carried out by our participants as a result of lessons learned and new relationships formed at the workshop.”

— Geneviève Zubrzycki, WCEE Director

FUTURE PLANS

We will continue offering NGO Leadership Workshops for Ukrainian participants — a Fall 2024 workshop in Warsaw, Poland and another in 2025.

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED?



AS A PARTICIPANT

Contact:
Ivana Ulicna
ivana.ulicna@hekima.sk



AS A SPONSOR

Contact:
Amy Gillett
gilletta@umich.edu

