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CURRENT STATUS AND DIRECTIONS FOR IMPROVING GRANT WRITING IN UKRAINE IN CONDITIONS OF ECONOMIC INSTABILITY

Abstract. The current conditions of the development of the world economy are characterized by the spread of international cooperation in all sectors of the economy. The expansion of activities and the globalization of challenges require increased funding, which in conditions of great competition faces the problem of lack of funds. One of the tools of additional financing is the attraction of grants, which are actively used not only in the field of science and education, but also for business development, state support of strategically important sectors of the economy, as well as for the development of the creative sector, culture and art, etc. In accordance with the goals of financing, grants can be provided by governments, international organizations, foundations and corporations to support innovative and socially significant initiatives that contribute to the development of society and the economy. Despite the widespread importance of grant funding in modern conditions, for domestic organizations the issue of correctly writing grant applications remains complex and insufficiently covered. Thus, grantwriting, which includes the features and process of preparing applications for submission for grant funding, becomes of particular importance. Grantwriting is aimed at developing a substantiated grant application with a detailed description of the solution to the current problem, a clearly formulated goal and objectives of the project, as well as a project methodology with a substantiated description of the budget and a clear and understandable result of the implementation of this project. A substantiated grant application will allow you to obtain funding for both the implementation of scientific research, social and innovative projects, and for the creation and support of small and medium-sized businesses and compliance with the specifics of the grant and the interests of grantors. The relevance of the research topic is due to the need to strengthen the implementation of grant funding in a wide range of interests of society, which requires the formation of professional skills in writing grant applications. In modern conditions of international cooperation, effective grant writing is becoming one of the key elements of attracting resources to the country's economy, as well as increasing the competitiveness of both the economy as a whole and individual research, social or creative organizations in particular.

Keywords: grants; grant writing; fundraising; project writing; grant funding.

INTRODUCTION

In the current conditions of transformation of the Ukrainian economy, exacerbated by the challenges of martial law, macroeconomic instability and the need to restore the business environment, grant writing is becoming particularly relevant as a tool for attracting financial resources for the development of entrepreneurship, innovation and socio-economic initiatives. Despite the significant number of international and national grant programs available to Ukrainian applicants, the effectiveness of their use remains insufficient. This is due to a number of systemic

problems, including the limited level of awareness of entrepreneurs about the available opportunities, insufficient development of competencies in the field of preparing grant applications, as well as the complexity of selection procedures and high requirements of donors. An important barrier is also the lack of institutional support for grant writing at the level of enterprises, especially small and medium-sized businesses, which lack both financial and human resources for high-quality project preparation. The situation is additionally complicated by language barriers, the need to comply with international project management standards and reporting requirements, which often exceed the existing level of training of potential applicants. As a result, a significant part of grant opportunities remains unrealized or is not used to its full extent.

In addition, it should be noted the fragmentation of information support in the field of grant financing, the lack of a single systematized platform for searching for relevant programs, and insufficient coordination between government agencies, business, and international donors. This leads to duplication of efforts, loss of time, and a decrease in the overall efficiency of grant activities. Thus, the problem of developing grant writing in Ukraine requires a comprehensive approach that involves increasing the level of applicants' competencies, improving the information infrastructure, and increasing state support in this area.

Statement of the problem. Grant financing has attracted considerable attention in recent years as an alternative form of financing for micro, small and medium-sized businesses. Unlike traditional types of resources (own, investment, credit), grants are irrevocable, free of charge and targeted [1].

In addition, the conditions of the war lead to the fact that grantors focus their attention on supporting the economy of Ukraine, replenishing the state budget and increasing the competitiveness of business. In the country, a significant part of the economy belongs to small and medium-sized enterprises. They account for approximately 99.98% of all business entities by number, 82% by the number of employees and 65% by the volume of sales of goods, works and services. Grant economic entities focus their attention on small and medium-sized businesses due to the social impact on their activities. However, recently, grant programs have also begun to open for representatives of large businesses. The main areas of support for Ukrainian businesses from national and international programs include: creating new jobs, improving staff skills, restoring supply chains, advancing in markets, and facilitating access to financing for small and medium-sized businesses [2].

Goal. consists of a comprehensive analysis of the current state of grant writing in Ukraine, identifying key problems and features of grant writing, as well as substantiating areas for improving mechanisms for preparing and implementing grant projects in order to increase the efficiency of using international and national financial opportunities for the development of business and the economy in general.

Analysis of recent research and publications. A large number of works by domestic scientists and practitioners, such as: Kobelya-Zvir M.Ya. [1] Vereskun, M. V., Ilchenko, K. S., Pavlyuk, S. I. [3] Kotenko T. M. [6] Blaga N.V. [7] and many others, are devoted to the study of the features of grant writing, grant writing itself and fundraising, however, despite the significant contribution of scientists to the study of this issue, grant writing remains insufficiently covered and its features in the war and post-war period in Ukraine require more detailed study.

Research methodology. In the research process, a set of general scientific and special methods was used, providing a comprehensive approach to the study of grant writing problems in Ukraine. In particular, the analysis method was used to consider the essence of grant programs, their structure, conditions of participation and identify the main barriers in the process of attracting funding. The synthesis method allowed us to summarize the results obtained and form a holistic vision of the role of grant writing in the development of entrepreneurship.

The method of analysis of sources (scientific literature, regulatory legal acts, reports of international organizations) was used to determine the current state of the researched issues and systematize approaches to grant activities. The comparative method made it possible to compare different grant programs according to their goals, conditions and target groups, which contributed to the identification of their common and distinctive characteristics.

In addition, the generalization method was used to form conclusions and determine the prospects for the development of grant writing, as well as elements of a systemic approach, which allowed us to consider grant activities as a component of a broader ecosystem of business support. The use of these methods in combination ensured the validity and reliability of the results obtained.

Research results. The largest grant programs for Ukrainian entrepreneurs and organizations are: European Commission programs (Horizon Europe (HORIZON), Creative Europe (CREA), Erasmus+ (ERASMUS+), Digital Europe Programme, EU4Health Programme, Program for the Environment and Climate Action, Single Market Programme), USAID, IOM, eWork [3].

In modern conditions, a grant is financial assistance provided to achieve certain goals, such as project implementation, education, business development, introduction of new technologies, etc. Those who provide funding for grant programs are referred to as donors, and those who receive these funds are referred to as recipients or grantees. It is important to note that grant funding is non-refundable: the recipient is not obliged to return the funds spent on the project [4].

One of the key features of grants is their irrevocability and irrevocability. The grantee is not bound to return grant resources, only if he does not violate the terms of the grant agreement and uses the cost of investments in the planned activity in the amount supported by the grantor. This feature has made grants a popular resource for unscrupulous grants. They are also called “grant eaters”. These are organizations that systematically use grant resources not to achieve a socio-economic effect, but to cover their own costs, pay the salaries of project participants, etc. Another important characteristic of grants is their targeted use. That is, these resources are provided to achieve specific useful goals for society and the economy [1].

In conditions of war, the issue of attracting extra-budgetary, alternative financing for projects to restore housing, social, communal, critical infrastructure has become acute for authorities, local governments, enterprises, institutions, and organizations.

The positive fact is that the amount of international technical assistance, in particular grant programs that offer financing for the restoration of projects, is growing dynamically. Grant funding comes to Ukraine from the European Union, as well as countries such as the USA, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, Japan, Denmark, UN organizational systems, etc.

In such conditions, the prospect of Ukraine’s restoration in wartime and post-war times using special fundraising and grantwriting tools is obvious. Discussions about their effectiveness and efficiency among representatives of the government, the public sector, and business continue unabated. Today, those seeking alternative funding must master the art of searching for relevant grant programs and relevant funds, writing grant applications and business plans. Anyone wishing to attract grant funding must have an idea of the main grantors, be able to adapt their requests to the priorities of donors, develop competitive projects, negotiate, pitch their ideas to donor representatives, etc. It is worth noting that a fundraising and grantwriting culture has not yet been established in Ukraine, but a sluggish process of separating the knowledge of fundraising and grantwriting specialists into a separate professional category is being observed [1].

In the modern world, used by technology, innovation and information flow, fundraising is becoming one of the most effective strategies for attracting resources for any enterprise. Fundraising is a strategic process of attracting external resources for a company, with the

purpose of performing various tasks or implementing projects. The origin of the term “fundraising” has English roots, where “fund” means cost or financing, and “raise” — stay or collection. This approach is widely used, as it is an effective method of finding financial and other resources to support the activities of the enterprise. Resources that can be attracted through fundraising include both tangible and intangible. When considering grant programs through which assistance is provided to Ukrainian state organizations and institutions, as well as the development of small and medium-sized businesses, the following programs can be distinguished:

Table 1

Major grant programs available in Ukraine

Program name	Program description
Horizon Europe (HORIZON)	The largest EU program for funding research and innovation. Supports scientific projects, startups, technological developments, international business and science cooperation.
Creative Europe (CREA)	The EU program for supporting cultural and creative industries (media, design, art, film). Aimed at the development of creative business and cultural integration.
Erasmus+ (ERASMUS+)	The EU education program that supports training, internships, skills development and partnerships. Useful for entrepreneurs through the development of competencies, educational exchanges and business education.
Digital Europe Programme	The EU Digital Economy Program. Funds projects in the field of artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, digital skills and business digitalization.
EU4Health Programme	The EU Health Program. Supports medical innovations, pharmaceutical projects, the development of health systems and crisis resilience.
Programme for the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE)	The EU program for environmental and climate projects. Funds initiatives in energy efficiency, nature conservation, sustainable development and “green” business.
Single Market Programme	The EU Single Market Support Program. Focuses on SME development, competitiveness, market access, and standardization.
USAID	The United States Agency for International Development. Provides grants to support small and medium-sized businesses, economic recovery, innovation, and reform in Ukraine.
IOM (International Organization for Migration)	Supports entrepreneurs, including IDPs and war victims, through grants for business start-ups or re-start-ups, training, and microfinance.
eWork	A Ukrainian government program that provides grants for business start-ups and development (own business, gardening, greenhouses, processing). Focuses on stimulating employment and entrepreneurship.

Grants are provided in the form of: property, works and services; financial resources in national or foreign currency with full or partial financing by private, corporate, public, governmental and international grantors on an irresponsible and gratuitous basis to representatives of government bodies and local governments, micro, small and medium-sized businesses, the public sector and private individuals for the implementation of targeted projects and organizational development activities [5].

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Another important characteristic of grants is their targeted use. That is, these resources are provided to achieve specific useful goals for society and the economy [1].

The set of grant programs considered indicates the formation of a multi-level and comprehensive system of entrepreneurship support aimed at stimulating economic development, innovative activity and social sustainability. First of all, a significant part of the programs is focused on the development of innovations and high-tech sectors of the economy, which is manifested in the financing of scientific research, digitalization of business processes, implementation of artificial intelligence, environmental and energy-efficient solutions. This indicates the strategic focus of international donors, in particular the European Union, on the formation of a competitive knowledge economy and the integration of Ukrainian business into global innovation chains.

At the same time, an important direction is the support of small and medium-sized businesses as the basis of economic stability and employment. Programs such as eWork, USAID, and IOM initiatives focus on job creation, business recovery, especially in times of crisis and martial law, and the integration of vulnerable groups, including internally displaced persons, into entrepreneurship. This underscores the socio-economic focus of grant support, which goes beyond purely economic outcomes and encompasses issues of social cohesion and inclusive development.

Of particular note is the focus of programs on developing human capital and entrepreneurial skills through educational and mobile initiatives, which provides a long-term impact and increases business adaptability to changing environments. In addition, significant attention is paid to sustainable development, environmental security, and a green transformation of the economy that responds to current global challenges.

Thus, to summarize, it can be stated that all the considered grant programs are aimed not only at financial support for entrepreneurs, but also at structural modernization of the economy, increasing its innovativeness, social orientation, and integration into the international economic space.

Conclusions and prospects for further research The generalization of the analysis shows that grant writing in Ukraine is gradually transforming into an important tool for financial support for the development of entrepreneurship, innovation and economic recovery in conditions of increased instability. The presence of a wide range of international and national grant programs creates significant potential for attracting resources, however, the effectiveness of its implementation remains limited due to a number of systemic problems. Among the key barriers, it is worth highlighting the insufficient level of preparation of applicants, the complexity of application procedures, the lack of proper information support, as well as the limited institutional capabilities of small and medium-sized businesses to participate in grant competitions. At the same time, it was established that grant programs have a clearly expressed focus on the development of innovations, digitalization, sustainable development, employment support and social integration, which corresponds to modern global trends.

Therefore, increasing the effectiveness of grant writing in Ukraine requires a systemic approach that involves the development of professional competencies in the field of preparing grant applications, improving information infrastructure, activating state support and strengthening interaction between business, educational institutions and international donors. An important direction is also the introduction of modern project management tools and the adaptation of international practices to national conditions.

Prospects for further research should be linked to the development of applied models for managing grant activities of enterprises, assessing the effectiveness of the use of grant funds, as well as analyzing the impact of grant funding on business competitiveness. Special attention should

be paid to the study of digital platforms for grant search and automation of grant writing processes, as well as the formation of methodological approaches to preparing successful grant applications in various sectors of the economy. In addition, it is relevant to study the role of grants in the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine and ensuring long-term sustainable development.

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СУЧАСНИЙ СТАН ТА НАПРЯМКИ ВДОСКОНАЛЕННЯ ПІДГОТОВКИ ЗАЯВОК НА ГРАНТИ В УКРАЇНІ В УМОВАХ ЕКОНОМІЧНОЇ НЕСТАБІЛЬНОСТІ

Анотація. Сучасні умови розвитку світової економіки характеризуються поширенням міжнародного співробітництва у всіх секторах економіки. Розширення діяльності та глобалізація викликів вимагають збільшення обсягів фінансування, яке в умовах жорсткої конкуренції стикається з проблемою нестачі коштів. Одним із інструментів додаткового фінансування є залучення грантів, які активно використовуються не тільки у сфері науки та освіти, а й для розвитку бізнесу, державної підтримки стратегічно важливих галузей економіки, а також для розвитку креативного сектору, культури та мистецтва тощо. Відповідно до цілей фінансування гранти можуть надаватися урядами, міжнародними організаціями, фондами та корпораціями для підтримки інноваційних та соціально значущих ініціатив, що сприяють розвитку суспільства та економіки. Незважаючи на широке значення грантового фінансування в сучасних умовах, для вітчизняних організацій питання правильного складання заявок на гранти залишається складним і недостатньо висвітленим. Таким чином, написання заявок на гранти, що включає особливості та процес підготовки заявок для подання на отримання грантового фінансування, набуває особливого значення. Грант-райтинг спрямований на розробку обґрунтованої заявки на грант з детальним описом вирішення актуальної проблеми, чітко сформульованою метою та завданнями проекту, а також методологією проекту з обґрунтованим описом бюджету та чітким і зрозумілим результатом реалізації цього проекту. Обґрунтована заявка на грант дозволить отримати фінансування як для реалізації наукових досліджень, соціальних та інноваційних проектів, так і для створення та підтримки малого та середнього бізнесу, а також відповідатиме специфіці гранту та інтересам грантодавців. Актуальність теми дослідження зумовлена необхідністю посилення використання грантового фінансування в широкому спектрі сфер суспільних інтересів, що вимагає формування професійних навичок у написанні заявок на гранти. У сучасних умовах міжнародного співробітництва ефективне написання заявок на гранти стає одним із ключових елементів залучення ресурсів до економіки країни, а також підвищення конкурентоспроможності як економіки в цілому, так і окремих наукових, соціальних або творчих організацій зокрема.

Ключові слова: гранти; написання заявок на гранти; залучення коштів; написання проектів; грантове фінансування.

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