

Civil Society Leadership Programme for Ukraine



Fall and Winter 2026
Austria and online

Why should you participate?

Are you a leader of a civil society initiative or non-governmental organisation (NGO) based and active in Ukraine? Are you seeking to further develop your organisation, **enhance your management skills, and network within the civil society sector**? Then consider applying for a scholarship for the Civil Society Leadership Programme for Ukraine (CLPU).

The Civil Society Leadership Programme for Ukraine is a comprehensive capacity-building programme, taking place in Austria and online and designed to support and strengthen civil society and NGO leaders in Ukraine. The programme is offered by **NGO Academy**, a joint initiative of **ERSTE Foundation** and the **Vienna University of Economics and Business** active in 15 European countries.

Operating in a dynamic and strained civil society, Ukrainian civil society leaders face demands from many directions, requiring them to transform, grow and steer their organisations with high pace. Against this background, the CLPU aims to strengthen management and organising capabilities and resilience and expand networks within the Ukrainian civil society sector. By providing the time and **space to learn, build new skills and facilitate dialogue with experts and peers**, it will allow you to build expertise and gain new perspectives on key organisational issues. **Blending theory and practice**, you will be offered insights from management research alongside inspiring practical examples and tested tools and be invited to reflect and apply the gained knowledge to your own organisation.

Expertise-areas covered

- Securing sustainable financial resources
- Leading oneself, teams, organisations and volunteers
- Sustaining the organisation through good governance and organisational development
- Strengthening strategic management skills
- Communicating your work to relevant stakeholders
- Connecting with like-minded professionals and organisations from diverse backgrounds
- Collaborating across organisational boundaries

Schedule and Contents

The physical part of the CLPU will bring you to two locations in Austria: first, to Payerbach, a small and calm Austrian village on the foothills of the mountains and then to Vienna, Austria's capital. By splitting the physical programme in two parts, we hope to offer you two different experiences along this learning journey: a retreat-like atmosphere in the mountains and the possibility to explore urban life in the capital of Austria. Part three and four will take place online, focusing on deepening knowledge and connections.

Part I

Exploring and Reflecting

The **first days of the 10-day physical programme** will take place outside of Vienna in the beautiful eastern edge of the Alps and focus on exploring and reflecting resources.

Travel and Arrival in Austria: 19 September 2026

Duration of Programme: 20 – 24 September 2026

Start of Programme: 21 September 2026, 9.00 am (CEST)

Location: Payerbach, Lower Austria

Topics:

- Fundraising
- Strategy and Impact
- Leadership

Part II

Implementing and Sustaining

The **second part of the 10-day physical programme** will be taking place on the modern campus of the Vienna University of Economics and Business and focus on implementing and sustaining your work and impact.

Transfer to Vienna and free day in Vienna: 25 September 2026

Duration of Programme: 26 – 30 September 2026

Start of Programme in Vienna: 26 September 2026, 9 am (CEST)

End of Programme: 29 September 2026, 10 pm (CEST)

Location: Vienna University of Economics and Business, Vienna

Topics:

- Media/Advocacy
- Organisational Development
- Governance

Departure: 30 September 2026

Part III

Skilling Up

Get expert feedback and advice from respective faculty members in up to two optional **individual coaching sessions**. Dive into further topics in two online webinars storytelling and fundraising.

Time: October – December 2026

Location: Online

Part IV

Collaboration

This final **online wrap-up** is designed to provide space for reflection, collaboration, and forward planning.

Date: 29 January 2027, 9 – 11 am (CET)

Location: Online

Core Faculty

The programme is backed by a diverse team of seasoned experts and coaches, featuring professionals like Lisa Ringhofer from TripleMinds, Journalist Cathrin Kahlweit and Prof. Michael Meyer from Vienna University of Economics and Business. With expertise spanning from management to leadership, social service provision, public policy, funding and consulting they will guide you in applying the programme's content to your specific contexts.



Lisa Ringhofer (TripleMinds)
Development practitioner and consultant in funding, fundraising strategy and grant writing



Rouven Kanitz (WU Vienna)
Head of the Institute of Leadership and Strategic Change at WU Vienna, focusing on helping leaders navigate the human side of change



Michael Meyer (WU Vienna)
Head of the Institute for Nonprofit-Management with a research focus on nonprofit-management and governance, the third sector and civil society.



Peter Vador (WU Vienna)
Senior researcher and lecturer at the WU Social Entrepreneurship Center and focuses on innovation, impact, and migrant entrepreneurship



Reinhard Millner (WU Vienna)
Senior researcher and teaching associate at the WU Social Entrepreneurship Center and he focuses e.g. on philanthropy and social entrepreneurship



Cathrin Kahlweit (Journalist)
Moderator and Journalist, ex-correspondent at Süddeutsche Zeitung for Central and Eastern Europe and Ukraine



Georg Matuschkowitz (Consultant, Trainer)
Expert in international humanitarian response, consultant in international project related work and systemic coach



Yana Barinova (ERSTE Foundation)
Programme Director European Policies and Ukraine and former director of the Department of Culture of the Kyiv City State Administration



Paul Rameder (WU Vienna)
Scientist and lecturer at the Competence Center for Nonprofit and Social Entrepreneurship



Alina Nosenko (Coach & Consultant)
Philanthropy and impact consultant, systemic business coach, and social innovator with over 15 years of experience in the non-profit sector

Application Process

Application Deadline: 30 April 2026

Who can Apply

We are happy to accept applications for scholarships if you fulfil the following criteria:

- You are a leader of a Ukrainian civil society organisation or NGO on top-level or middle management level and in a position to actively influence and change the internal structures and processes of your organisation.
- You are proficient in English (B2 level).
- You are based in Ukraine.
- Your organisation is based and active in Ukraine.
- Your organisation is officially registered and operates for a minimum of one year.
- Your organisation has a minimum of three staff members (full-time).
- Your organisation is active in a field of societal relevance, e.g. in social service provision, human rights and women's right, advocacy, youth work, education, culture and arts, environmental issues, or other areas.

How to Apply

Fill out the online [application form](#) and attach the required documents in English language to the form, including:

- Letter of motivation explaining challenges in your professional work, their effects on your organisation and expected benefits from the programme (500 - 800 words)
- Link to a short video of yourself, in which you discuss why it is important for you to participate in the programme (1-2 minutes). Feel free to use your phone or laptop camera as we do not expect a professional video. Please use any cloud or video platform of your preference for hosting and providing us with the video (Google Drive, OneDrive, YouTube, Vimeo, etc.)
- CV of applicant
- Legal document stating your organisation's official data (e.g. commercial register extracts, association register extracts, business registration, articles of association) and - if available - translations in English or German

Selection Process

1. Review and assessment of applications and accompanying documents (May 2026)
2. If needed: Individual online interviews with shortlisted applicants from the first screening stage in case of open questions (May/June 2026)
3. Notification of the outcome of the application (June 2026)

Please note that the timeline provided is approximate and subject to change. We appreciate your patience and understanding throughout the selection process.

Selection Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- English language ability
- Societal impact of organisations' work
- Position in the organisation
- Personal motivation
- Composition of the group and fit to the group
- Support needs of the organisation

Conditions and Costs

NGO Academy provides a scholarship covering all costs for participation in the programme:

- Tuition fees and materials
- Single room accommodation (incl. breakfast)
- Full board, except on free afternoons and evenings
- Participation in field trips and side events
- Travel costs
- Up to two online coaching sessions
- Participation in two webinars
- Certificate upon successful completion

Participation Requirements

The Civil Society Leadership Programme for Ukraine is a high-quality programme that covers all necessary costs for participants. In return, we expect you to fulfil the following requirements:

- Full and active participation in the programme
- Interest in sharing knowledge with peers, discussing programme contents in the sessions and within your organisation
- Adherence to deadlines and programme guidelines
- Timely cooperation with the project team for travel arrangements
- Timely communication in cases of changes (e.g. inability to attend)
- Timely application for visa / travel exemption if applicable

If you do not comply with these requirements, we reserve the right to exclude you from the programme and give your spot to another applicant on the waiting list. Furthermore, we reserve the right to exclude you and your organisation from all future NGO Academy programmes and to reclaim costs for travelling incurred.

Travel and logistics

If your application was successful, we will provide you with further details about the programme and help you with organising your travel. In order to ensure a smooth and efficient process we will need you to provide all necessary information for the booking process which will be taking place from July to September.

Contact

For inquiries and more information contact Yvonne Reif and Klara Lentz via info@ngoacademy.net or visit <https://ngoacademy.net/>



Yvonne Reif



Klara Lentz



NGO Academy is a joint initiative by:

ERSTE Foundation
Am Belvedere 1
1100 Vienna

WU Vienna
Vienna University of Economics and Business
Welthandelsplatz 1
1020 Vienna

info@ngoacademy.net
ngoacademy.net