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ENTWICKLUNG DES WISSENSCHAFTLICHEN DENKENS

TRANSFORMATION INSTITUTIONELLER UND DIGITALER INSTRUMENTE FÜR EIN NACHHALTIGES KLEINUNTERNEHMENSMANAGEMENT WÄHREND DER WIRTSCHAFTLICHEN ERHOLUNG IN DER UKRAINE

SCIENTIFIC THOUGHT DEVELOPMENT

TRANSFORMATION OF INSTITUTIONAL AND DIGITAL TOOLS FOR SUSTAINABLE SMALL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT DURING ECONOMIC RECOVERY IN UKRAINE

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INTRODUCTION

In the period of prolonged war and economic instability caused by the military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, small entrepreneurship appears not only as the most vulnerable economic sector, but also as a key resource for rapid and sustainable recovery. The current environment combines the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, full-scale hostilities, mobilization of labor resources, forced relocation of enterprises, disruption of supply chains, and partial militarization of the economy. Under such conditions, transforming management practices − especially institutional and digital tools − becomes essential for enabling the sustainable development of small businesses.

Between 2023 and 2025, there has been a growing need to revise the approaches to small business management. According to international organizations, more than 60% of Ukrainian SMEs faced the necessity to rebuild or reorient their business models. At the same time, the state, international donors, and civil society intensified their support programs, which became increasingly focused on digitalization and institutional strengthening in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This monograph is dedicated to the study of transformational processes in the system of sustainable small business management during Ukraine's economic recovery. Special attention is paid to the transformation of institutional approaches and digital tools that enable resilient business operations even in times of crisis. The research is based on adapted system-integrated models that reflect new realities − from the humanitarian impact of war to the digitalization of administrative and business processes.

The study of the transformation of sustainable small enterprises during economic recovery relies on the approaches of Ukrainian and international researchers working in related fields. Among Ukrainian scholars (L.M. Shymanovska-Dianych, 2024) [1], (K.V. Kovtunenko, 2023) [2], (O.Yu. Shevchuk, N.M. Savchenko, 2023) [3], and (O.V. Bondar, 2023) [4] emphasize the adaptation of strategic management and control

systems in enterprises during wartime and post-war periods, the implementation of organizational changes, and adaptive planning in conditions of high uncertainty. Their research highlights the relevance of updating small business management systems through internal process changes and risk management approaches, fully aligning with the imperatives of sustainable development.

Another group of Ukrainian researchers (O.S. Vlasuk, 2024) [5], (O.S. Saukh, 2022) [6], (V.I. Shynkaruk, 2022) [7], (V.M. Heiets, 2021) [8], (O.I. Amosha, L.L. Lisohor, 2021) [9], (S.O. Tulchynska, O.O. Zybareva, I.V. Shevchenko, 2022) [10], (K.S. Zaichenko, 2023) [11] and (O.I. Riabokon, 2023) [12] – focus on the strategic aspects of sustainable development, innovative economic transformation, and regional economy modernization. Their studies provide the foundation for developing the digital economy, socio-ecological modernization of business models, and enhancing the competency potential of entrepreneurs.

Among international researchers, considerable attention is paid to the digital transformation of business and the integration of sustainable development principles into small enterprises. (E. Martínez-Caro, J.G. Cegarra-Navarro, F. Alfonso-Ruiz, 2022) [13], (L.D. Hollebeek, T. Beliaeva, 2023) [14] explore the impact of digital competencies on business model innovation and customer-centric implementation of digital strategies in small businesses. Research by (J. Schmidt, R. Hahn, 2023) [15], and (S.N. Morioka, M.M. de Carvalho, 2022) [16] demonstrates the potential for integrating sustainability indicators into business decision-making, while (J. Bray, 2021) [17], (T. Dyllick, K. Muff, 2022) [18], (M. Haffar, C. Searcy, 2019) [19] classify sustainable business models and examine organizational logic in sustainability-related trade-off decisions.

These Ukrainian and international approaches form two complementary scientific schools: the Ukrainian school of strategic enterprise management during wartime and economic recovery, and the international school of digital and sustainability-focused business model development in the global economy. Together, they create a foundation for developing institutional and digital tools for managing sustainable small enterprises. This integrative vision was further advanced in the author's earlier work,

System-Integrated Management of Business Development According to the Imperatives of Sustainable Development in Information and Innovation Economics (V. Filippov, 2020) [20]. The author developed five key methodological approaches that remain relevant today:

− expanding entrepreneurial activity into new areas aligned with environmental priorities (environmental approach);

− socializing business goals and tasks (social approach);

− creating a competency-based educational and upskilling platform for entrepreneurs (competence approach);

− developing multidisciplinary business infrastructure (infrastructure approach);

− laying an innovative foundation for sustainable business growth (innovation approach).

The scientific and applied provisions formulated in 2020 have become even more relevant in the context of the full-scale war in Ukraine. The proposed system-integrated management mechanism, adapted to current realities, can play a key role in supporting economic adaptation and recovery. Based on collaboration, inclusiveness, mentoring, and preventive and compensatory mechanisms, the conceptual model of entrepreneurship management ensures the balance of the sustainable development triad. Structured through five methodological approaches – environmental, social, competence, infrastructure, and innovation – these ideas remain crucial for strengthening economic resilience and sustainable business recovery in today's challenging conditions.

Recent analytical reports and strategic documents from key international and national organizations highlight the critical role of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Ukraine's economic recovery. The USAID "Competitive Economy of Ukraine" Program [21] emphasizes the deep negative impact of the war on Ukrainian SMEs and the urgent need for targeted support measures. According to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine [22], SME activity has significantly declined, particularly in the eastern and southern regions. The World Bank [23] and the Ministry for Communities, Territories and Infrastructure Development of Ukraine [24] prioritize

SME revitalization in their recovery and infrastructure strategies, recognizing SMEs as drivers of job creation and economic resilience.

The European Business Association's Business Climate Index [25] reflects improved business sentiment due to adaptive support programs, though risks remain high. The OECD [26] highlights the importance of modernizing Ukraine's SME policy, promoting digitalization and sustainability-focused entrepreneurship. UNDP Ukraine [27] proposes strategies for building forward better, emphasizing inclusive growth and sustainable business practices. Together, these organizations provide both strategic frameworks and practical support for SMEs, enabling them to adapt their business models, integrate sustainable development goals, and contribute to the recovery of Ukraine's economy.

The author of this study consistently develops the topic of system-integrated management of sustainable entrepreneurship, as evidenced by his previous publications in Ukrainian and international scientific journals [28-33]. His work reflects an ongoing effort to adapt theoretical approaches and management models to the challenges of economic recovery and war conditions. Given the critical role of small businesses in Ukraine's post-war reconstruction, this research area remains highly relevant and essential for developing effective institutional and digital tools to support sustainable entrepreneurship in times of crisis and transformation.

This work addresses the current challenges in managing sustainable entrepreneurship, such as changing priorities among entrepreneurs, the need to rethink institutional support, and new formats for accessing resources, digital services, and markets. It also explores mechanisms of small business support that promote inclusiveness, adaptability, and innovation as key pillars for Ukraine's economic recovery.

The purpose of this monograph is to develop an updated system of institutional and digital tools for managing sustainable small businesses, enabling their adaptation and scaling in the post-crisis economic context.

To achieve this goal, the following objectives were pursued:

- Identify the transformation features of small business management tools during

wartime and recovery;

− Analyze changes in the institutional environment for supporting sustainable entrepreneurship;

− Study modern digital solutions used in managing sustainable small businesses;

− Justify a system-integrated approach to shaping a new management model for small enterprises;

− Develop practical recommendations for implementing updated tools in enterprises and business support organizations.

The results of the monograph are of practical relevance for policymakers, business support infrastructure representatives, managers of micro and small enterprises, and experts in sustainable development, digital transformation, and socio-economic reconstruction.

KAPITEL 1 / *CHAPTER 1*
TYPOLOGY OF MANAGEMENT TOOLS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT-ORIENTED SMALL BUSINESS IN THE CONTEXT OF INSTITUTIONAL AND DIGITAL CHANGE

System-integrated management of sustainable entrepreneurship is fundamentally about managing a new and emerging socio-economic phenomenon. This form of entrepreneurship is aimed at achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs) through its core business operations, treating these goals not as external obligations, but as essential internal priorities. Sustainable entrepreneurship evolves as a qualitatively new business type, one that cannot be imagined outside the paradigm of sustainability. Its business ideas, expectations, behavioral models, and operational logic differ significantly from those characteristics of traditional industrial or post-industrial entrepreneurship.

To effectively govern such a phenomenon, a new set of management tools must be developed. The framework for transforming and structuring this managerial toolkit involves the following stages:

- Defining the conceptual content and scope of the management instruments;
- Designing a collaborative model for sustainable entrepreneurship supported by a digital innovation-based platform;
- Developing a model for infrastructure-based sustainable entrepreneurship.

The structure and functions of the system-integrated management tools for sustainable small businesses include a detailed description of their composition, purpose, key functions, operational profiles, and competency framework.

A. Composition and Purpose.

The management toolkit is structured into three analytical levels:

- the macro level (national policy level),
- the meso level (regional or sectoral level), and
- the micro level (the level of direct actors – small business entities, governmental institutions, NGOs, business associations, etc.).

Since this study is focused primarily on micro-level practices, macro- and meso-

levels are addressed only in a conceptual and methodological context, with generalized policy recommendations for national institutions such as the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

At the macro level, the choice of sustainable management instruments is closely linked to the country's economic model and its trajectory toward sustainability. For the micro level, these instruments influence indirectly but critically. Government regulation must be reshaped according to sustainability imperatives. This includes:

a) Accounting for the specific nature of entrepreneurship in a country that has declared a sustainable development path. This requires integrating SDG logic into all legislative procedures and explanatory documents produced by parliamentary committees;

b) Institutionalizing the concept of sustainable entrepreneurship through legislative recognition and formal status, along with the creation of a system-integrated management mechanism;

c) Introducing ongoing monitoring of sustainable entrepreneurship dynamics through development indicators, integrated into official statistics under the SDG block of "Multisectoral Statistical Information";

d) Reforming state regulatory tools by, for example:

− increasing ecological tax rates,

− reducing VAT rates for sustainable business activities,

− amending the Tax Code to protect and encourage the development of sustainable entrepreneurship;

e) Aligning legislative initiatives with European standards to modernize Ukraine's industrial base and foster a supportive environment for sustainable business.

At the micro level, the management toolkit incorporates several original solutions developed for this research, including:

− A system of digital management services hosted on a sustainable entrepreneurship platform;

− A model for socially responsible selection of business ideas and project proposals;

− Business models tailored for sustainable enterprises, along with express evaluation methodologies;

− A competency framework for entrepreneurs engaged in sustainable business development;

− An indicator system for rapid assessment of ideas and projects through the lens of sustainability imperatives.

A.1 Digital Tools System.

This subsystem consists of digital services and components of the platform for managing sustainable entrepreneurship. The selection of services is based on a content analysis of their relevance to business development and their applicability in promoting sustainability-oriented business formation.

These tools are designed to correspond to specific goal sets and are structured accordingly. Figure 1 presents a visualization of the sustainable entrepreneurship platform and its management services.

Accordingly, each of the outlined entrepreneurial objectives is supported by a set of digital tools − services provided by the digital management platform for sustainable entrepreneurship − which can be supplemented by offline activities. These tools are particularly beneficial for small businesses, micro-enterprises, and self-employed individuals.

A.2. The model for socially responsible selection of entrepreneurial ideas and projects (further detailed in section 2) serves as a competitive instrument for selecting entrepreneurial initiatives aimed at promoting sustainable development. This model targets specific sustainable development objectives, as declared in references. A representative fragment of the corresponding selection scheme is presented in Tables 1–2, with the complete version provided in Annex A.

As shown in Tables 1–2, entrepreneurial ideas and projects are divided into two groups based on their intended users:

1) Innovative ideas and projects for grants. This set of ideas is targeted at entities managing sustainable entrepreneurship initiatives at the macro-level, primarily grant recipients, including charitable organizations, NGOs, public associations, research and

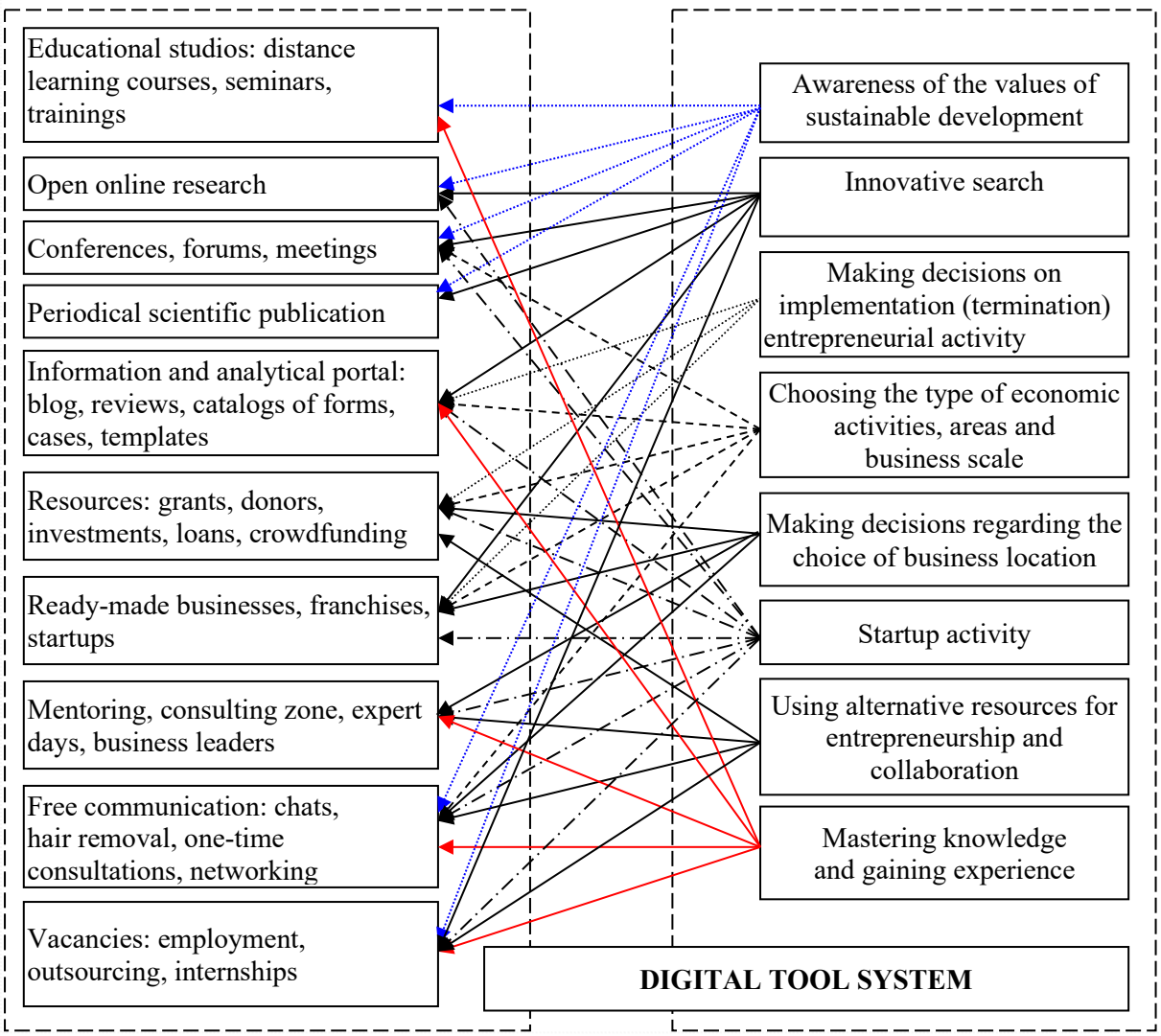


Figure 1 – Digital Platform Services for Managing Sustainable Small Business Development

Source: own development

Table 1 – Sustainable Development Goals: examples of innovative entrepreneurial ideas and projects eligible for grants (fragment)

Name idea/project	Sustainable Development Goals																
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1. Creation of new zones and monitoring of social entrepreneurship	1.2																
2. Recycling coffee shop waste		2.2															

Source: author's elaboration

Table 2 – Sustainable Development Goals: examples of entrepreneurial business ideas and projects for independent implementation and collaborative realization with other program participants (fragment)

Name idea/project	Sustainable Development Goals																
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1. Social tax*	1.2																
2. Employment in one's own business of socially vulnerable segments of the population: ATO veterans, disabled people, internally displaced persons, migrants	1.3																
* *–ideas and projects that will be implemented through collaboration**																	

Source: author's elaboration

educational institutions, as well as individual innovators, depending on specific grant conditions.

2) Business ideas and projects for independent (or collaborative) implementation. This set of ideas is targeted at self-employed individuals and entrepreneurs within the micro, small, and medium-sized business sectors.

A.3. Business models for sustainable entrepreneurship, evaluation areas, and rapid assessment tools depend on several factors reflecting sustainable development values:

- The initial state and potential of the nine business model blocks:
  a) Customers – readiness to adopt new services and products, existence of a developed market segment.
  b) Product Value – ecological aspects of raw materials, presence of operational and packaging waste, complexity of waste disposal.
  c) Interaction Channels (distribution, sales, etc.) – their capability to ensure clean interactions, environmental impact, and resource efficiency.
  d) Customer Relationships – joint efforts in temporary waste storage, waste disposal, and recycling of sold goods (manufactured products).
  e) Revenue Streams – their expansion due to the introduction of sustainable business practices (business area expansion, premium pricing for organic

products, compensation through government programs, etc.).

f) Key Resources – their environmental friendliness, scarcity, and accessibility.

g) Key Processes (activities) – resource-saving potential, environmental impact, capacity for developing sustainable entrepreneurship, collaboration potential in new sustainable business areas.

h) Key Partners – their importance, adherence to sustainable development values across the nine business model blocks.

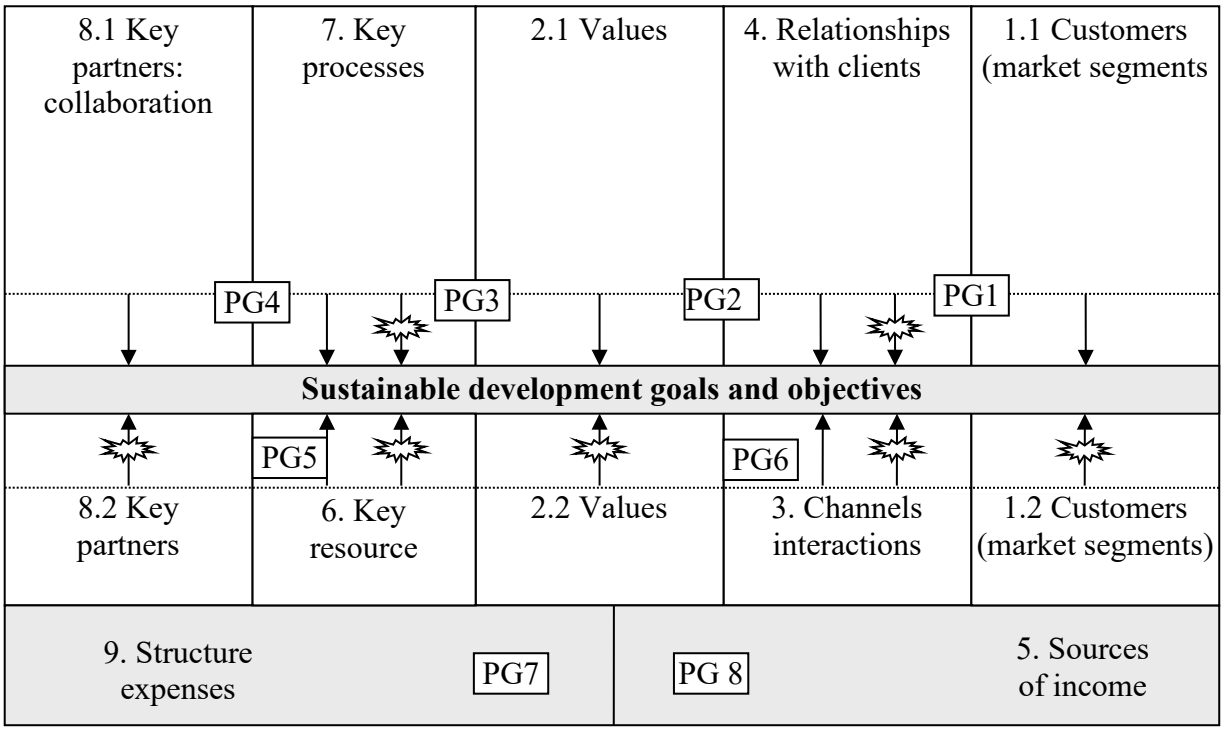
i) Cost Structure – share and dynamics of costs related to environmental protection, acquisition of resource-saving technologies, and innovative development.

− Entrepreneurial vision and objectives – the entrepreneur's goals for the business, their understanding of the role of sustainable development, and future business plans regarding the mentioned business model blocks.

Therefore, the business model for sustainable entrepreneurship should integrate both sets of factors, resulting in an adapted structure (see Figure 2).

As shown in Figure 2, the entrepreneur's areas of social responsibility expand across all nine business model blocks, forming specific growth points (G1–G8). These growth points represent the activation of the relevant blocks' potential. However, some segments, such as 1.2 (certain consumer/client groups) and 8.2 (partners who do not yet support sustainability), do not form growth points. These groups are initially excluded from primary collaboration, as they do not yet share the values of sustainable development at the early stages of business formation. Nonetheless, their inclusion at the macro level remains relevant in terms of awareness-raising and education on sustainability principles.

Additionally, certain channels of interaction (block 3), customer relationship practices (block 4), key resources (block 6), and operational processes (block 7) may partially fall short of sustainability goals. These components should not be eliminated, as they are critical to business functioning. Instead, they should be gradually improved either through reengineering or evolutionary adaptation, depending on available



PG1-PG8 – points of entrepreneurship growth;

↑ *– zones of social responsibility;*

– inconsistency with sustainable development goals.

Figure 2 – Business Model for Sustainable Entrepreneurship: Growth Points and Areas of Social Responsibility*Source: own development*

resources. For instance, businesses that rely on chemical raw materials or low-quality land resources − where sustainable substitutes are not yet available − require cautious transition strategies.

The business model presented in Figure 2 is recommended for use in the following contexts:

− By grant program implementers – as part of educational programs on entrepreneurship, self-employment, microenterprise development, and small business incubation or acceleration. This helps illustrate the practical relationship between sustainability and business structures;

− By entrepreneurs – as a logical and structured tool for designing a business that incorporates sustainability characteristics.

Directions and tools for rapid assessment of this business model are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 – Directions and Tools for Rapid Assessment of the Business Model for Sustainable Entrepreneurship

Direction of Assessment	Recommended Tool
Alignment with sustainable development goals	SDG-matching matrix (simplified cross-reference with business activities)
Relevance of business idea to target groups	Stakeholder analysis using simplified mapping (mini-max approach)
Environmental impact assessment	Content analysis of raw materials, processes, and emissions
Social responsibility profile	Checklist for community engagement and responsible consumption
Economic viability	Quick financial projection: cost-benefit estimate using basic indicators
Resource sustainability	Inventory of key resources with risk flags for scarcity or non-replaceability
Innovation and scalability potential	Simple SWOT analysis with focus on collaboration potential
Regulatory and institutional readiness	Legal feasibility checklist (basic compliance scan, e.g., permits, certifications)

Source: based on [1,3,5]

From the table, it can be concluded that complex evaluation methods are not suitable at the early stages of business formation, as they may discourage potential entrepreneurs. Instead, emphasis should be placed on content analysis, mini-max methods, and user-friendly tools that improve clarity and understanding of the future business concept.

More advanced algorithms may be applied later during business development or reorganization, but they should still remain significantly simpler than those used for large corporations.

At the early stage of business development, it is advisable not to overload entrepreneurs with complex calculations. Therefore, simplified approaches that are easy to visualize and comprehend are recommended.

The effectiveness of the business model is assessed from two key perspectives: economic growth and sustainable development (Table 4).

For instance, the ecological footprint method − an indicator of human demand on the planet's ecosystems − presented on platforms such as “Education for Sustainable Development in Action” [333], can be easily adapted for self-employed individuals

Table 4 – Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Business Model for Sustainable Entrepreneurship (source: author's elaboration)

Perspective of Evaluation	Type of Assessment	Purpose of Assessment	Object of Evaluation
1. Economic Growth	Internal	Maximizing profit (income)	Use of internal potential
	External	Effectiveness of collaboration	External opportunities
	General	Growth in business value	Business value
	Cost-Oriented	Appropriateness of costs	Business expenditures
	Goal-Oriented	Achievement of business goals	Target performance
2. Sustainable Development	Goal-Oriented	Addressing selected Sustainable Development Goals	Target effectiveness
	Resource-Based	Resource sustainability	Resource-saving structure
	Result-Oriented	Socio-ecological-economic outcomes and impacts	Jobs created, environmental footprint, etc.

Source: author's elaboration based on [7,9]

and scaled to fit micro- and small businesses. Test results for the most resource-conscious lifestyle reflect significant structural changes in individual needs and modern consumption patterns.

A.4. Formation and Assessment of Entrepreneurial Competencies for Building Sustainable Entrepreneurship

A competency-based approach is an essential component of sustainable entrepreneurship development. This area is undergoing substantial transformation, with new competencies and dimensions emerging:

− A competence is defined as a domain or function of human activity. It represents a strategic intellectual resource capable of self-enhancement, whose utilization increases business value.

− Competency refers to an individual's ability to effectively perform specific activities within a defined competence. It includes:

a) Qualification – the level of professional readiness for specific tasks,

b) Creativity – the capacity to develop and implement innovative solutions,

c) Flexibility – the ability to adapt to change.

Entrepreneurial activity itself is now recognized as a distinct competence and

process requiring entrepreneurial competency.

The European Entrepreneurship Competence Framework (EntreComp) defines entrepreneurship as a transversal competence and provides:

− a structure of 15 competencies across 3 domains,

− expected learning outcomes,

− levels of proficiency that form a foundation for both current and future initiatives.

EntreComp describes entrepreneurship as a universal competence applicable across all spheres of life − from personal development to civic engagement, integration (or reintegration) into the labor market as an employee or self-employed person, and the establishment of enterprises of any kind (cultural, social, or commercial). While supporting this vision, it is important to recognize that in the context of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), entrepreneurship must be redefined and its scope updated.

Therefore, it is advisable to interpret this as a transversal entrepreneurial competence specific to business actors (not just individuals). This competence:

a) Applies across all socio-ecological and economic domains − from entering the labor market to building a sustainable enterprise of any character (cultural, social, or commercial);

b) Combines entrepreneurial activity with the execution of sustainability-driven business functions.

Entrepreneurial competence should be cultivated through prior formal education, ensuring that both current and future entrepreneurs acquire the general and professional competencies required to fulfill key tasks in sustainable entrepreneurship. In Ukraine, these competencies are outlined in the official educational standards for the first (Bachelor's) and second (Master's) levels in Field 07 “Management and Administration,” Specialty 076 “Entrepreneurship, Trade, and Stock Exchange Activities”, enacted by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine through Orders No. 961 (July 10, 2019) and No. 1243 (November 13, 2018).

At the Bachelor’s level, sustainable development is embedded as a general

competence (GC 9 – commitment to environmental protection) and within GC 11, which emphasizes the values of a democratic society and the necessity for sustainable societal development. Relevant learning outcomes include:

− LO 8: Apply acquired knowledge and skills to initiate and implement environmental protection measures,

− LO 9: Understand the sustainability requirements related to professional activity.

At the Master's level, the standards define GC 5: the ability to initiate and implement innovative projects in entrepreneurship, trade, or exchange activities. However, they do not explicitly mention the integration of sustainability values into managerial decision-making or functional management practices.

Thus, responsibility for developing sustainable entrepreneurship competencies largely falls on non-formal education and lifelong learning, delivered via free or paid platforms and support programs accessible to entrepreneurs.

Accordingly, for individuals with higher education (Bachelor's level), their academic training provides only a baseline for competency development, which must be continuously upgraded throughout their professional life. To facilitate this, educational studios for sustainable entrepreneurship have been introduced.

Based on the results of the 2023–2024 implementation of the Emergency Livelihoods Support to Conflict-Affected Communities in Ukraine project, carried out by the Charitable Foundation Caritas Ukraine in Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Khmelnytskyi, Odesa, and Poltava regions, a comprehensive competency development program for sustainable entrepreneurship was designed. The initiative included one incubation and one acceleration program in each region – totaling five incubation and five acceleration programs. In addition, the project featured a Cash-for-Work scheme that provided temporary employment support to over 550 individuals. More than 140 participants received business grants totaling €560,000. Altogether, the entrepreneurship support programs engaged over 400 participants (Table 5).

Table 5 – Competency Development Program for Sustainable Entrepreneurship

Competency Area	Competence	Description / Purpose	Examples of Implementation / Learning Outcome
1. Entrepreneurial Thinking	Vision and initiative	Ability to define sustainable business goals and take proactive steps	Drafting sustainability-aligned business mission and objectives
	Creativity and innovation	Generating ideas that meet SDG challenges	Proposing new product/service concepts that reduce waste or enhance inclusion
	Risk management	Assessing risks specific to environmental, social, and market uncertainty	Applying mini-max approach for evaluating business model viability
2. Socio-ecological Orientation	Understanding of SDGs	Clear knowledge of global and national SDG priorities	Mapping business actions to SDG targets
	Environmental awareness	Evaluation of ecological footprint and use of eco-friendly processes	Applying simplified footprint calculator during business planning
	Social inclusion	Awareness of the needs of vulnerable populations (IDPs, veterans, etc.)	Including target groups as beneficiaries or employees in business plans
3. Collaboration and Communication	Stakeholder engagement	Building partnerships with NGOs, government, and community stakeholders	Designing collaborative pilot projects
	Ethical and transparent communication	Maintaining dialogue that respects diversity and responsibility	Facilitating customer education on sustainability issues
	Negotiation and adaptability	Managing value-based conflicts in partnerships	Scenario training in decision-making for resource-limited situations
4. Business and Financial Skills	Financial literacy	Planning, budgeting, and evaluating financial sustainability of the business	Preparing basic financial forecast for grant application
	Resource efficiency	Identifying and managing key resources (material, time, human capital) effectively	Evaluating life-cycle cost of production components
	Use of digital tools and platforms	Operating online tools for management, reporting, and collaboration	Using platforms for grant reporting, data visualization, and customer feedback loops
5. Lifelong Learning and Self-growth	Self-evaluation and reflection	Assessing personal progress and gaps in entrepreneurial development	Keeping a competency development journal or personal learning roadmap
	Flexibility and resilience	Adapting to crisis conditions (war, relocation, instability)	Pivoting a business plan in response to force majeure conditions (e.g., blackouts, border closures)
	Learning through non-formal education and mentoring	Participating in support programs (incubation, acceleration, refugee entrepreneurship)	Completion of practical workshops or peer mentoring sessions with business advisors

Source: author's elaboration based on [3,9]

As shown in Table 5, entrepreneurial competence is understood as a system of personal, socio-ethical values, knowledge, business qualities, and skills that collectively form a model of entrepreneurial behavior. The development of this system enables entrepreneurs to successfully address challenges in the field of sustainable entrepreneurship and achieve high performance outcomes. The absence of any individual component in this structure weakens the overall competency base of the entrepreneur.

A unique feature of the author's interpretation lies in the inclusion of personal socio-ethical values that reflect the principles of sustainable development.

A.5. Indicator System for Rapid Assessment of Entrepreneurial Ideas and Projects Based on Sustainability Imperatives

Such a system is essential, as the entrepreneurial idea is the starting point for any business activity or its new phase. Pursuing a business project based on a poorly selected idea results in wasted time and diverts the entrepreneur from more innovative or socially impactful opportunities. Therefore, the evaluation of ideas and the evaluation of projects must be approached differently.

Standard business plan assessment methods, which are widely covered in both academic literature and formal or informal education, can be effectively used to evaluate entrepreneurial projects. These evaluations typically do not pose challenges, requiring mainly the adaptation of analytical tools and methods that align with sustainability goals and objectives.

Evaluating entrepreneurial ideas is more complex, as their consequences are probabilistic and not yet fully visible. For both ideas and projects, rapid assessment and an indicative approach are appropriate. This requires a relevant indicator system constructed around sustainable development imperatives (see section 2). Such a tool will be particularly useful for grant-makers, NGOs, and charitable foundations implementing entrepreneurship support programs, as it helps filter out ideas and projects that do not meet sustainability criteria.

B. Functional Role of the Management Toolkit.

The purpose of the management toolkit is to establish an informational,

competency-based, and collaborative foundation for sustainable entrepreneurship. This enables entrepreneurs to make decisions aligned with the values, goals, and tasks of sustainable development regarding:

a) Starting or discontinuing business activities;

b) Choosing the type of economic activity, sector, and scale of the enterprise;

c) Determining the location of business operations;

d) Engaging in startup activities;

e) Selecting alternative resources and partnership opportunities for entrepreneurial operations.

The functionality of the digital tools system is reflected in the services offered through the digital platform for sustainable entrepreneurship management. These services are grouped according to their intended objectives (Table 6).

Table 6 – Digital Tools System: Services of the Sustainable Entrepreneurship Management Platform

Digital Platform Services /Purpose	Resource / prototype
1	2
1. Awareness of the values of sustainable development	
1.1 Educational studies on the issues of sustainable development entrepreneurship*	
2. Innovative search	
2.1 Open online research.	https://economics.opu.ua
2.2 Periodical.	https://economics.opu.ua/journal; https://economics.opu.ua/journal-print
2.3 Preparing entrepreneurs for participation in international and all-Ukrainian conferences, symposia, and forums.*	https://economics.opu.ua
3. Making decisions on implementation (termination) entrepreneurial activity	
3.1 Catalog of business ideas with convenient templates.	https://business.diia.gov.ua
3.2 Examples of business models.	https://forentrepreneurs.com
3.3 Materials for women entrepreneurs (success stories).	https://www.chic-ceo.com
4. Choosing the type of economic activity, scope and scale of business	
4.1 Interactive* catalog of business ideas with templates for their presentation*.	https://business.diia.gov.ua
4.2 Templates for creating a business plan.	http://blogbusiness.com.ua
4.3 Ready-made business plans and franchises.	https://moneymakerfactory.ru
4.4 Business status examination.	https://big-u.org
5. Making decisions about choosing a business location	
5.1 Ready-made business plans and franchises.	https://moneymakerfactory.ru
5.2 Catalog of tips for starting a business in Ukraine.	https://uspp.ua
5.3 Constantly updated industry news.	https://uspp.ua
5.4 Freelance staff offers*.	https://workcelerator.com
5.5 Internship announcements and programs*.	https://workcelerator.com

6. Startup activity	
6.1 Information about new startups, for new startupers.	https://500hats.com
6.2 Assistance in launching a startup.	https://forentrepreneurs.com
6.3 Preparing entrepreneurs for project presentation.	http://startup.lviv.ua
6.4 Invitations to join teams of certain startups.	https://angel.co
6.5 Investor/entrepreneur office (internal club).	https://onevest.com
6.6 Stories and consultations from like-minded people*.	http://1991.vc
6.7 Open* database of companies, startups, and investors offering partnership*.	https://crunchbase.com
7. Use of alternative resources for entrepreneurial activity *and collaborations*	
7.1 Map of sustainable development entrepreneurship opportunities in Ukraine**.	prototype: http://smedo.brdo.com.ua
7.2 Grant and investment programs.	https://platforma-msb.org http://smedo.brdo.com.ua http://1991.vc
7.3 Search for funding, sponsors, donors.	https://onevest.com https://crunchbase.com
7.4 Mentoring program to support sustainable development entrepreneurship in Ukraine*.	prototypes: http://1991.vc https://big-u.org
7.5 Virtual consulting zone. Expert day*.	https://reddit.com/r/startups https://entrepreneur.com https://big-u.org
7.6 Support for small businesses of IDPs.	https://platforma-msb.org
7.7 Soft loans for startups.	https://kub.pb.ua
7.8 Crowdfunding Platform.	https://angel.co https://onevest.com
7.9 Advisors Club for a novice entrepreneur.	prototype: https://onevest.com
7.10 Project catalog for investors.	https://kub.pb.ua
7.11 Maintaining a YouTube channel (training, podcasts).	http://kunitsky.com
7.12 Involving women in business (gender equality).	https://www.chic-ceo.com
8. Mastering knowledge and gaining experience	
8.1 Educational studies on the issues of sustainable development entrepreneurship (online/offline).*	
8.1.1 Training on the basics of high-tech entrepreneurship.	http://startup.lviv.ua
8.1.2 Online master classes.	http://kunitsky.com
8.1.3 Practical cases of proven entrepreneurs.	https://mixergy.com
8.1.4 School of self-confidence, leadership, rhetoric, self-presentation*	https://marieforleo.com
8.2 Advice and interviews from famous businessmen, founders of large companies regarding startups or doing business.	https://500hats.com https://blog.asmartbear.com http://startupukraine.com https://mixergy.com
8.3 Real business cases and working examples.	https://blog.asmartbear.com
8.4 Stories and consultations from like-minded people*.	https://reddit.com/r/startups
italics – supplemented (*) or first proposed (**) by the author	

Source: author's elaboration based on [2,3,9,11,14]

The digital tools system – a set of services within the sustainable entrepreneurship management platform – presented in Table 6, was developed based on a content analysis of 30 digital prototype platforms and their individual modules. It incorporates best practices and includes original components (**). The system is designed to

combine both free and paid services for a range of users – including aspiring, existing, and experienced entrepreneurs.

A key insight in designing this system is the emphasis on integrating it with an existing periodical publication and a functioning information-analytical platform. This integration enhances entrepreneurial activity at the early stage of scientific and innovative exploration. One such example is the Economic Science Portal, established in 2011 by the Institute of Business, Economics and Information Technologies at Odesa National Polytechnic University to support the research activities of Ukrainian economists.

At its core is the peer-reviewed journal Economics: Realities of Time (since 2011), supplemented by a network of scientific and practical conferences, seminars, and roundtables. Later, in 2017, open access was extended to a second journal – Economic Journal of Odessa Polytechnic University – and in 2018, regular reviews of markets and economic processes were added to the platform.

The creation of the virtual business incubator Innovatika (established in 2013 with the author's direct involvement and featured in multiple publications, including) demonstrated the need to expand the platform's functionality. This evolution is currently being implemented in collaboration with the PoliTech Consult Advisory and Training Center. The main direction of transformation is the shift from an academic platform to a science-practice-oriented one – involving the launch of a digital platform for sustainable entrepreneurship management and its accompanying system of digital tools and educational studios.

Section B. Profile Formats and Competency Base of System-Integrated Sustainable Entrepreneurship Management

The management approach defines specific profile formats and a corresponding competency base for business models that either support or are oriented toward sustainable development. These are grouped according to five domains: target orientation, organizational-functional structure, resource use, informational flow, and process configuration.

Given their distinct purposes, it is advisable to separate the profile format and the

competency base into two components.

B.1. Profile Format

The profile format is a template used in developing a business model tailored for sustainable entrepreneurship. Its goal is to formalize and describe the key components of the model, including information flows, resource movements, organizational structures, functions, and processes.

Two alternative profile templates are proposed:

− a tabular format, which organizes and presents information in structured textual form;

− a schematic format, which graphically illustrates the composition, logic, and connections in a consolidated structural-logic scheme.

The choice of template depends on the object being formalized.

For instance, informational profiles are best handled in tabular format due to the rapid expansion of data flows in recent years. Graphical representation of such complexity becomes difficult. Moreover, the informational profile of a sustainable business model must be capable of adapting to changes in goals, inputs, resources, and technologies.

Therefore, a tabular format for the informational profile is proposed, structured around functional management areas, such as:

− strategic, operational, and current planning;

− innovation management;

− investment management;

− marketing;

− accounting by type and object, etc.

These formats are increasingly automated and integrated with one another.

The integration of sustainability values into business models also generates new information flows related to stakeholders (partners, employees, owners, donors, etc.), resources, development goals, and activities. However, this area remains underregulated, which is why a visualized structure of the proposed profile is provided (Figure 3).

Business model information profile: form to fill out		
Parameter	Description date	Explanation / Entry Field
Type of Business Model (attributes reflecting digital and institutional transformation)		…enter…
Scope of the Sustainability Characteristics		…enter…
Date of Profile Completion		…enter…
1. Entry Point of Information Flow (source)		Internal / External
2. Target Group and Subgroups (if applicable)		Information Users
3. Role of the Information Flow		
– Which SDG values the information flow supports		…enter…
– Basic or supplementary (duplication)		…enter…
– If supplementary, specify reason and expected duration of duplication		…enter…
4. Source of Financial Support		Own / External / Co-financing
– If not fully internal, specify the share of own funding and rationale for external support		…enter…
5. Area of Responsibility: Collaboration Participant (if any, include details)		…enter…
6. Indicator System for Assessing the Effectiveness of the Information Flow		…enter…
– Adapted SDG indicators for the chosen entrepreneurial activity		…enter…
7. Additional Characteristics (e.g., relevance for war recovery period)		…enter…

Figure 3 – Information Profile Template of a Business Model for Sustainable Development-Oriented Small Entrepreneurship: Description of the Sustainability Block

Source: author's elaboration

When comparing sustainable business models, three types of information profiles can be identified:

− Identical profiles – fully consistent in content. Duplication often results from targeted individual delivery of information. Optimization criteria include: timing, volume, frequency, and partial simultaneity. For example, a leaflet introducing the environmental impact of a business idea on the urban ecosystem.

− Complementary profiles – their contents enhance each other to create synergistic effects. Optimization criteria include: timing, volume, frequency, and mode of integration. For instance, a personal invitation to sample an eco-product combined with an informational leaflet.

– Conflicting profiles – while formally identical, they are divergent in focus. Integrating such streams is inefficient due to fundamental contradictions, excessive coordination efforts, or prolonged alignment timelines. For example, promoting the sustainability of one product while inviting potential customers to a showroom featuring a different, unrelated one. Optimization might involve eliminating one stream or refining each individually.

For components such as resource flows, organizational structure, functionality, and processes, a schematic format is recommended. This allows reflecting logical connections in the business model and accommodates the emergence of new connections in the updated structure of sustainable entrepreneurship.

V.2 The Competence Base of Systemically Integrated Management of Sustainable Entrepreneurship Development consists of two key components:

a) Entrepreneurial competence, already discussed earlier;

b) Managerial competence, essential for effectively steering sustainable entrepreneurship. This competence encompasses a system of personal ethical values, knowledge, business qualities, and skills that enable solving complex problems under uncertainty and shaping entrepreneurial behavior aligned with sustainable outcomes.

It is directed toward achieving a triadic result, linked to the three pillars of entrepreneurship:

– Enterprise – promoting socio-ecological-economic growth;

– Entrepreneur – internalizing sustainability values and generating innovative ideas;

– Entrepreneurial activity – initiating new domains, goals, and technologies.

Such transformation is expected through the behavioral shift of a new generation of entrepreneurs who combine two identities – the entrepreneur and the sustainability-oriented manager. This is why the previously described entrepreneurial competence (see Table 5) inherently contains managerial elements.

Given that sustainable entrepreneurship is still in its formative stage, there is an ongoing search for external resources, partnerships, and emerging areas of activity. Managerial competence, while still evolving as an independent concept, is currently

best considered within the broader framework of entrepreneurial competence.

Moreover, this search by entrepreneurs for partnerships and new resources fuels the demand for hybrid organizational and economic mechanisms that not only meet these needs but also reduce social vulnerability by partially compensating the risks faced by early-stage entrepreneurs. These include mechanisms of collaborative entrepreneurship for sustainability and domains such as infrastructure-oriented entrepreneurship – all of which currently lack established structural and economic foundations. Therefore, systemically integrated management of such developments demands tailored approaches aligned with sustainable imperatives, combining them with digital and innovation-driven tools.

Hence, the following conclusions can be drawn:

− The systemically integrated management of sustainable entrepreneurship as a novel management object requires fundamentally new tools across macro-, meso-, and micro-levels of governance.

− In an information- and innovation-driven economy, the composition of this managerial toolkit must ensure systemic integration, alignment with SDG priorities, anticipatory strategies, and rapid incorporation of emerging ICT and digital capabilities.

− At the micro level, the toolkit comprises:

a) A system of applied digital tools – services within the digital platform for managing sustainable entrepreneurship;

b) A set of methodological instruments and approaches, including: A model for socially responsible selection of business ideas and projects; Business models for sustainable entrepreneurship and a toolkit for their rapid assessment; Tools for competence building and assessment in sustainable entrepreneurship; An indicator-based system for the express evaluation of ideas and projects against sustainable development imperatives.

− The functional purpose of this toolkit is to build an informational, competence-based, and collaboration-oriented foundation for sustainable entrepreneurship.

KAPITEL 2 / *CHAPTER 2*
GRANT SUPPORT AS A STRATEGIC TOOL FOR SHAPING SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS PRACTICES

The instability of the institutional environment, information overload, innovative turbulence, and the limited internal capacity of early-stage entrepreneurs to launch or expand their ventures lead to a growing demand for external resources – financial, technical, informational, and human – as well as for collaboration partners. At the same time, increasing competition across established markets, open access to business idea catalogs, the saturation of the digital space with success stories, and the accelerated evolution of informal support infrastructure for small, youth, and socially-oriented enterprises − alongside the emergence of new entrepreneurial sectors − call for the development of hybrid organizational and economic mechanisms that can meet these needs while reducing exposure to uncertainty-related risks.

One of the most effective instruments that can satisfy these primary needs and partially compensate for the risks faced by early-stage entrepreneurs is the system of grant-based support. It is implemented through targeted and sectoral grant programs and serves a dual purpose: to stimulate sustainable entrepreneurship and to act as a governance mechanism for coordinating its development.

The justification of such programs, as well as proposals for their redesign, follows two strategic directions:

− tailoring grant-based governance tools to the specific logic and dynamics of sustainable entrepreneurship;

− identifying key forms of collaboration and designing a functional model of partnership-based engagement in sustainable enterprise ecosystems.

In 2023–2024, under wartime conditions in Ukraine, grant-based support became a vital foundation for launching and expanding entrepreneurial initiatives. Uncertainty, scarcity of own resources, information chaos, and innovation turbulence led early-stage and displaced entrepreneurs to actively seek external support – financial, technical, informational, and human – as well as reliable partnerships.

At the same time, strong market competition, widespread access to business idea

catalogs, the mass dissemination of entrepreneurial success stories, and the dynamic development of informal support ecosystems for youth, social enterprises, startups, and emerging business fields created the need for new hybrid mechanisms. These mechanisms are expected to meet entrepreneurial needs and offset the risks arising during early stages of entrepreneurial activity.

Grant programs have proven to be an effective multidimensional instrument, capable of addressing these needs and partially compensating risks. The following examples demonstrate their relevance and effectiveness:

1) Caritas Ukraine implemented programs in Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Khmelnytskyi, Odesa, and Poltava regions:
   a) Delivered five incubation and five acceleration programs;
   b) Supported over 400 participants and more than 550 individuals through Cash-for-Work;
   c) Awarded over 140 business grants totaling €560,000;
2) The joint EU–UNDP project "Local Development – Community-Oriented"
   a) Total budget: €26.7 million;
   b) €1.445 million allocated to micro-projects for small businesses;
   c) €0.615 million for initiatives by internally displaced persons;
   d) €2 million for energy efficiency and €1.5 million for comprehensive modernization;
   e) €0.41 million for restoring social infrastructure;
   f) Created new points of entrepreneurial growth through local procurement and demand stimulation.

Additional nationwide data highlights the broader significance of the grant-based approach:

- In 2024, Ukrainian startups raised nearly €287 million in investment rounds;
- Over 2,600 active startups were operating in Ukraine as of 2024;
- A UN-backed livelihoods initiative supported nearly 230,000 people with vocational training, temporary jobs, business grants, and self-employment assistance;
- The World Bank's RISE program allocated \$593 million in 2024 to support

20,000 SMEs, aiming to create or preserve 40,000 jobs;

− By mid-2025, humanitarian and economic support initiatives had reached approximately 2.5 million people through 43 partner organizations.

Thus, grant mechanisms tailored to sustainable entrepreneurship are both collaboration tools and management levers. Their further development should focus on the following directions:

1) Aligning grant structures with institutional and digital dynamics of sustainable entrepreneurship;

2) Designing collaboration models that support the creation of sustainable, partnership-based enterprise ecosystems.

Transformation of the Grant-Based Governance Mechanism to Align with Sustainable Entrepreneurship. The current grant-based governance mechanism for entrepreneurial development requires several adjustments to reflect the specific context of sustainable entrepreneurship. These include:

− development of a methodological approach and a model for socially responsible selection of entrepreneurial ideas and projects;

− establishment of an indicator system and methodology for express evaluation of sustainable entrepreneurship ideas and projects;

− methodological guidance and recommendations for assessing the competencies of entrepreneurs in building sustainable businesses;

− scientific and methodological guidance for forming grant program teams and defining their competency profiles;

− revision of administrative procedures for managing grant programs aimed at developing sustainable entrepreneurship and evaluating their effectiveness.

Methodological Approach and Model for Socially Responsible Selection of Ideas and Projects. The proposed methodological approach for socially responsible selection applies a unified algorithm across any grant program. It is based on an analysis of key global trends in grant funding available to entrepreneurs today, including the thematic areas, volume, and regional and sectoral structures of such programs.

This approach consists of the following elements:

– relevant grant themes supporting the emergence of sustainable entrepreneurship;

– a model for socially responsible selection of entrepreneurial ideas and projects;

– criteria and methodology for applying socially responsible selection.

The outlined components of this approach reflect current global shifts in grant programming available to Ukrainian entrepreneurs, including:

– evolution from segmental and thematic grant topics to system-integrated approaches, where initial emphasis on social and ecological themes transitions toward structured alignment with sustainable development goals;

– increased availability of grants and grant programs tailored to different entrepreneur profiles such as youth, women, migrants, internally displaced persons, and older generations;

– changes in regional and sectoral distribution of funding in response to national development imperatives and decentralization, with a growing role for territorial communities in addressing local sustainability challenges.

In this context, the selection model should prioritize ideas and projects with a socially responsible character (see Figure 4).

In the author's model, the selection criteria are applied through several filtering stages:

1. uses a basic eligibility filter to verify formal compliance of the idea or project with the grant's theme. This step includes verification of formal characteristics such as citizenship, IDP status, student or migrant status, place of residence, age, or business sector. These filters are typically predefined and standardized across programs by the grant-awarding organization to ensure consistency in monitoring and reporting.

2. introduces a competitive selection process with two filters: a sustainability filter and an innovation filter. This approach favors innovative solutions addressing sustainability goals. In cases of multi-channel grant structures (e.g., parallel streams for social and ecological entrepreneurship), it is advisable to apply separate filters for each track. This ensures fair competition within homogeneous idea clusters and avoids misalignment between different sustainability objectives, thus enhancing the chances

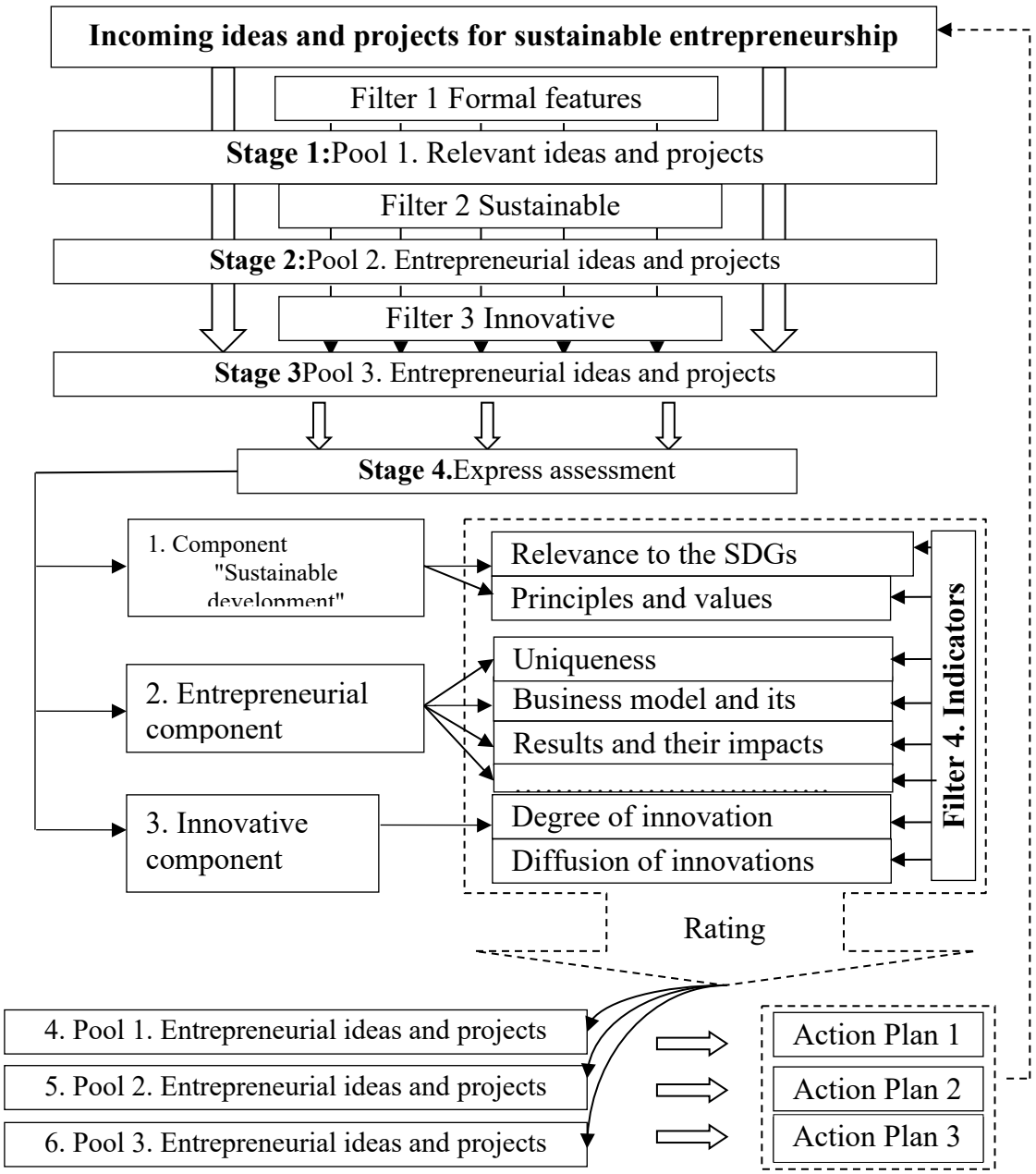


Figure 4 – Model of Socially Responsible Selection of Entrepreneurial Ideas and Projects for Sustainable Enterprise Development

Source: author's elaboration

3. of identifying and supporting the most promising idea or project in each category.

4. selection process involves a final evaluation of entrepreneurial ideas and projects based on the results of their express assessment, resulting in the formation of three tiers of prioritization.

5. filters apply a two-level indicator-based express assessment system built on

sustainable development imperatives. This stage eliminates ideas and projects that, although aligned with sustainability and innovation principles, demonstrate insufficient levels of innovation, underdeveloped business models, or lack a clear understanding of sustainable entrepreneurship practices, processes, results, and impact.

The express evaluation system for sustainable entrepreneurship ideas and projects (Table 7) is intentionally designed to be simple and accessible.

Table 7 – Indicator-based Express Evaluation System for Sustainable Entrepreneurship Ideas and Projects

<table>
<tr><td>Object assessments</td><td colspan="17">Express assessment indicators</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">1. The component of "sustainable development"</td><td colspan="17">National targets for the 17 Sustainable Development Goals* [95]</td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td></tr>
<tr><td>1.1, 1.2, 1.3.</td><td>2.2, 2.3.</td><td>3.1, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8.</td><td>4.1, 4.2. 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7.</td><td>5.1, 5.3, 5.4, 5.6.</td><td>6.1, 6.2.</td><td>7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4.</td><td>8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.6.</td><td>9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5, 9.6, 9.7, 9.8, 9.9, 9.10, 9.11, 9.12, 9.13.</td><td>10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 10.4.</td><td>11.1, 11.2. 11.4, 11.5, 11.6.</td><td>12.2, 12.3, 12.4.</td><td>13.1.</td><td>14.2, 14.3.</td><td>15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 15.4.</td><td>16.1, 16.2, 16.7 16.8.</td><td>17.1, 17.3.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="18">* - task orientation and ability to solve tasks are assessed</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">2. Entrepreneurial component</td><td>uniqueness of the idea</td><td colspan="2">resource</td><td colspan="2">personnel</td><td colspan="2">business model</td><td colspan="2">entrepreneurial behavior</td><td colspan="2">costs</td><td colspan="2">result</td><td colspan="3">influences</td></tr>
<tr><td>20**</td><td colspan="2">10**</td><td colspan="2">15**</td><td colspan="2">10**</td><td colspan="2">10**</td><td colspan="2">10**</td><td colspan="2">10</td><td colspan="3">15</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="18">** - the maximum number of points for assessment is indicated</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">3. Innovative component</td><td colspan="3">Degree innovation</td><td colspan="4">Diffusion of innovations</td><td colspan="3">Innovation costs</td><td colspan="4">Sales volume of innovative products</td><td colspan="4">Innovative collaboration</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">***</td><td colspan="4">***</td><td colspan="3">***</td><td colspan="4">***</td><td colspan="4">***</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="18">*** - evaluated according to the grading scale in Table 5.8</td></tr>
</table>

Source: author's elaboration

Complexity at this early stage could discourage potential applicants and create unnecessary barriers to the development of sustainable enterprises.

The Sustainable Development component is structured according to the list of

national targets that detail each goal.

These are presented in Annex A, and include identification of targets via panel-based surveys.

Processing of responses through the method of a priori ranking (part of expert assessment methodologies), conducted with the involvement of an expert group assembled into a formal panel.

Validation of expert consensus using the concordance coefficient. This coefficient showed high levels of agreement across all groups (W = 1.0–0.813, or 100.0–81.3%), with an average value of W = 0.876 (87.6%) for the Sustainable Development component, confirming the reliability of the assessment.

The Entrepreneurial component is described through its inherent dimensions − entrepreneurial behavior, business model, resources, personnel, costs, outcomes, and their impacts (on the environment, society, etc.).

The Innovation component is presented similarly to the entrepreneurial one, providing a cost-output profile.

In this context, the volume of implemented output serves as an indicator of whether the enterprise qualifies as an "innovative enterprise" under national legislation (over 70% innovation-based output). Innovation-related expenses are further analyzed to assess the structure of spending.

The developed scoring scale for indicators used in the express evaluation of sustainable entrepreneurship ideas and projects is presented in Table 8.

To differentiate levels of innovation in the scoring scale, we applied a typology of innovation intensity based on the degree of radicality, which identifies the following innovation categories:

1. Minor innovations – 0th to 3rd-order innovations that do not alter the functional properties of an object.

2. Modifying innovations – 4th to 6th-order innovations that partially or fully change functional characteristics.

3. Radical innovations – 7th-order innovations that transform the core operational principles of an object.

Table 8 – Scoring Scale for the Express Evaluation Indicator System for Sustainable Entrepreneurship Ideas and Projects, and Guidelines for Its Application

Object of assessment	Indicator	Scale or value	
1	2	3	
1. The component of "sustainable development"	17 groups of national targets for sustainable development goals (89 targets)	Conformity *(task orientation and the possibility of their solution)*	
	1. 2. …. 17.	there are	no
		100 points per goal	0 points for the purpose
		average score As the sum of all grades (number of matches) divided by 89 (number of tasks)	
2. Entrepreneurial component	Uniqueness of the idea	20	Own assessment expert *(maximum points are inserted for perfectly described blocks; minimum – if there is no description at all)*
	Resource	10	
	Personnel	15	
	Business model	10	
	Entrepreneurial behavior	10	
	Costs	10	
	Results	10	
	Influences	15	
3. Innovative component	Degree of innovation	insignificant	0-5
		modifying	5-14
		cardinal	15-20
	Diffusion of innovations	there are	no
		20	0
	Innovation costs	up to 70%	more than 70%
		from total expenses	
		0-19 (0 – in the absence of innovation costs	20
	Sales volume of innovative products	up to 70%	more than 70%
		of total sales	
	Innovative collaboration	there are	no
		20	0
Together		Amount by components	
Rating		*Sum of components divided by 3 (number of components)*	

Source: author's elaboration

The innovation indicators included in Tables 7 and 8 cover interdependent processes and phenomena, previously detailed in Section 3.3:

- Indicators for processes:
  a) Innovation process – innovation diffusion;
  b) Innovation activity – innovation costs and volume of innovation-based output;
  c) Innovation management – innovation collaboration.
- Indicators for phenomena:
  a) Innovation-driven business structures – innovation collaboration;
  b) Innovations and innovation ideas – degree of innovativeness.

It is important to note that innovation goals that do not support sustainable development are not prioritized − this is addressed by the third screening filter.

Based on the evaluation, each idea or project receives an average score that forms the basis for subsequent ranking. The simplest tools for this are a rating method and a scoring matrix, both integrated into a tabular evaluation form. This form must be simple and universal, suitable for the preliminary selection of ideas and projects (including micro-projects or those for incubation/acceleration) across all grant programs aimed at supporting or accelerating sustainable entrepreneurship.

The key consideration in forming the indicator system is to account for the weight and interpretation of each criterion.

The rating method is used in the fourth filter − final selection of ideas or projects and their distribution into three tiers:

1. First tier – projects meeting or exceeding the threshold score.
2. Second tier – projects scoring more than 75% of the threshold, but not reaching it.
3. Third tier – projects scoring less than 75% of the threshold.

The set of filters and their application algorithm − outlined in the model of socially responsible selection of entrepreneurial ideas and projects (see Figure 4) − constitute the express evaluation methodology based on sustainability imperatives. Its structural-functional layout is presented in Figure 5.

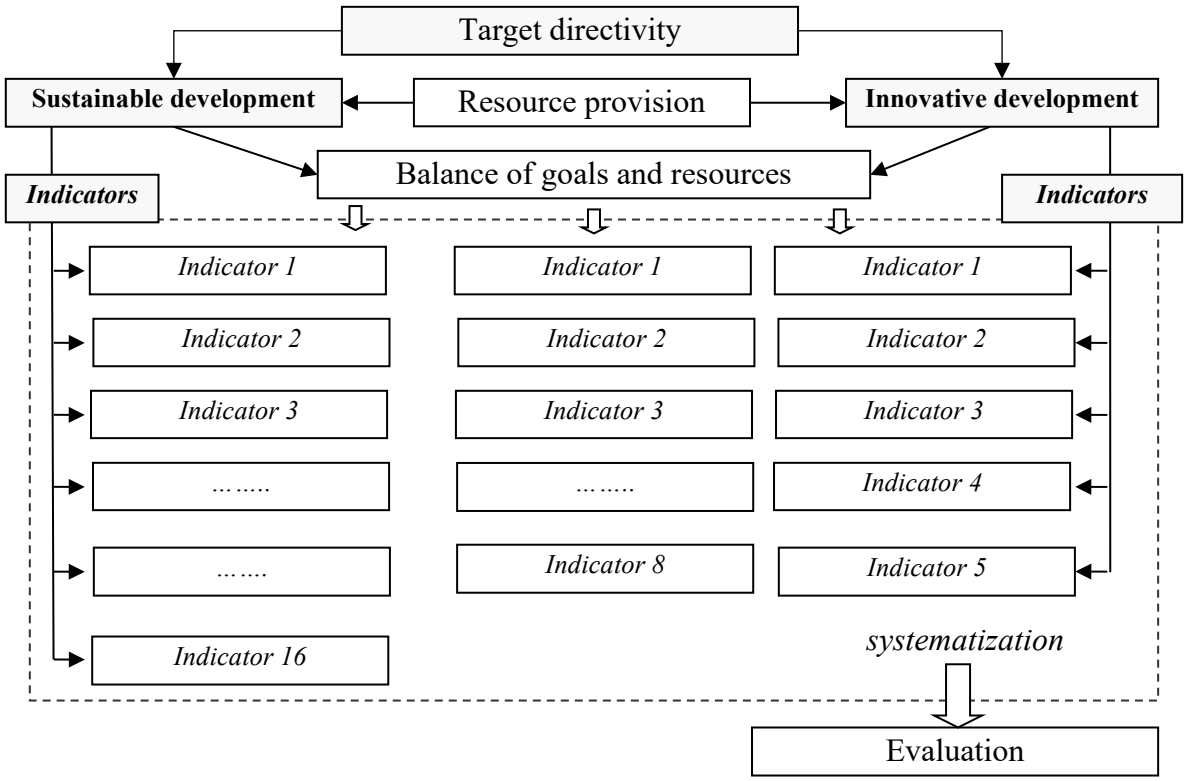


Figure 5 – Structural and functional model for rapid assessment of entrepreneurial ideas and projects aligned with sustainable development imperatives

Source: author's elaboration

The structure of this rapid assessment model for sustainable entrepreneurship ideas and projects is built around a system of indicators and the relationships between them. Its functional dimension includes:

− organizing evaluation information into three main domains – sustainable development, entrepreneurship, and innovation;

− directly assessing the potential of these domains and forecasting their socio-environmental-economic impact.

The methodological approach and recommendations for evaluating the competencies of entrepreneurs engaged in sustainable entrepreneurship require institutionalization as part of the internal framework of integrated project management. Such institutionalization is necessary for the effective implementation of grant-based mechanisms that support sustainable development entrepreneurship under wartime and recovery conditions.

To assess entrepreneurial competencies relevant to sustainable entrepreneurship development, a regulated evaluation timeline is proposed. Due to varying levels of prior experience and knowledge, entrepreneurs should be evaluated before being assigned to grant program groups. This evaluation should be carried out:

- at the end of the educational modules,
- at the final stage of the grant program,
- interactively throughout the training, mentoring, and consultation processes.

The latter is aimed at tracking competency development over time and providing real-time feedback on learning dynamics. Table 9 presents soft evaluation criteria for this interactive monitoring of entrepreneurial competencies.

Table 9 – Criteria for soft interactive evaluation of entrepreneurial competency

No.	Criterion	Explanation	Assessment scale (0–3)
1	Ability to generate non-standard solutions	Proposing novel approaches, alternatives, or non-stereotypical solutions	0 – none; 1 – basic; 2 – partially developed; 3 – fully demonstrated
2	Clarity in defining project goals	Specificity, realism, and attainability of goals	0 – vague; 1 – general; 2 – focused; 3 – clearly defined
3	Argumentation of proposals	Logical coherence, persuasiveness, presence of facts and justifications	0 – absent; 1 – weak; 2 – moderate; 3 – strong
4	Definition of product and its value	Clear presentation, understanding of customer value, product–market fit	0 – unclear; 1 – partial; 2 – adequate; 3 – well-articulated
5	Understanding the target audience	Identification and comprehension of client needs, including vulnerable groups	0 – not considered; 1 – weak; 2 – moderate; 3 – strong
6	Building partnerships	Awareness of partnership needs, ability to form collaborative networks	0 – none; 1 – limited; 2 – outlined; 3 – established
7	Resource mobilization	Readiness to seek and attract external financial, human, and technical resources	0 – none; 1 – limited; 2 – outlined; 3 – established
8	Embracing sustainable development as a value	Awareness of environmental, social, and economic impacts of entrepreneurial activity	0 – not considered; 1 – weak; 2 – moderate; 3 – strong
9	Use of digital tools	Application of online platforms, digital communications, analytics	0 – none; 1 – basic; 2 – competent; 3 – advanced
10	Development orientation	Readiness for change, continuous learning, scaling, and reflective thinking	0 – passive; 1 – low; 2 – developing; 3 – proactive

Source: author's elaboration based on [14,15]

A partial list of functions is presented, but these general and specific functions extend the functional framework of the grant-based governance mechanism for sustainable entrepreneurship and determine the development of a strategic approach to grant program management.

The organizational structure of a grant program includes both permanent and temporary units. The permanent unit typically includes the grant program team, which must be capable of independently executing the full range of functions required. Variable units may include groups of business trainers, motivators, consultants, experts, and mentors, who may be engaged for the entire program, specific stages, or individual tasks such as final presentations, project defenses, idea evaluations, or final meetings.

These new functions and tasks affect the balance of responsibilities and authority within grant teams, necessitating a review of roles among project managers, consultants, trainers, and mentors. Their roles − and accordingly, their competencies − are shifting. Based on the typology and content description of emerging roles in development process management, all six existing professional roles serving various management functions now require the integration of innovation competence, entrepreneurial competence, and sustainability competence.

Accordingly, the professional roles relevant to grant program teams are being redefined to form a desirable competence profile:

1. The role of "theoretical expert" evolves into that of a conscious theorist − someone who facilitates innovation and transfers knowledge to experts and consultants through learning studios.

2. The role of "consultant" becomes a catalyst for creative problem-solving related to sustainability challenges and entrepreneurship's role in addressing them. Since new knowledge and analytical insights quickly become outdated, the consultant must identify limitations of outdated models and generate new knowledge to be shared with theorists, analysts, and experts. This is achieved by:

a) integrating roles of theorist, expert, analyst, and project manager in collaborative discussions;

b) gently promoting new knowledge and experience;

c) ensuring continuous feedback.

3. The role of "expert" focuses on acquiring new insights based on the analysis of real-world cases and providing evidence-based recommendations. This role is shaped by the global nature of sustainability issues, which simultaneously increases access to knowledge and complicates the development of practical solutions.

4. The role of "analyst" involves explaining relationships between processes and phenomena, forecasting impacts, and modeling scenarios using various tools. Key changes include:

a) expanding the scope of monitoring and evaluation;

b) introducing interactive assessment of group competencies, project outcomes, and alignment with sustainability goals.

5. The role of "project operations manager" undergoes fewer changes. Their core function − organizing professional communications and ensuring service coordination among theorists, analysts, experts, and consultants − remains relevant across projects and programs. However, the themes of communication, education, and public outreach campaigns are evolving.

6. The role of "support staff" changes the least, as their primary task remains the operation of technical systems and the technological servicing of the program.

The distribution of roles reflects the growing complexity of new tasks. However, during the early stages of sustainable entrepreneurship development, these roles will inevitably become integrated, as professionals take on cross-cutting responsibilities and gradually develop related competencies.

Based on experience gained from administering 26 grant programs, several complex tasks can be identified that should be addressed in educational studios focused on grant program administration:

− identifying potential entrepreneurs interested in launching sustainable entrepreneurship ventures;

− promoting grant competitions and clarifying their focus on sustainability, since sustainable entrepreneurship remains an unfamiliar concept, often associated by

entrepreneurs with regulatory ambiguity and difficulty in implementation;

− conducting interactive monitoring of the formation and development of entrepreneurial competence aligned with sustainability imperatives;

− monitoring and evaluating entrepreneurial ideas and projects, including the analysis of input data and potential long-term impact on sustainable development;

− preparing written reports on program implementation and presenting them in both the state language and English.

This informal training module on grant program administration is not currently included in the educational studio framework for sustainable, despite its alignment with SDG 4: Quality Education. It covers broader content and targets a different audience − grant program teams. Developing such an educational studio is essential, as grant program managers often lack competencies in the following areas:

− structuring program tasks in accordance with team size and qualifications;

− conducting interactive monitoring of sustainable entrepreneurship competence development;

− preparing competition applications and reporting on grant program implementation related to sustainable entrepreneurship.

To assess the competencies of grant program team members supporting sustainable entrepreneurship, it is recommended to apply content-based and time-based evaluation criteria. These criteria are adapted from the interactive "soft" assessment model used for entrepreneurial competence (see Table 9). This approach allows for:

− determining the staff's understanding of donor challenges;

− evaluating their current and projected team roles;

− planning future competence development trajectories;

− creating a personalized growth plan.

Summarizing the above, it can be concluded that the optimal composition of a grant program team is not defined by the number of hired or contracted staff, but by a system of competences (Table 10). This system can be built through the combination of professional roles of program participants and by leveraging their potential.

Table 10 – Interactive Assessment Map of a Grant Program Team Member's Competencies

No.	Stated fact	Assessment result	Reason	Action plan
1.	Competence is not confirmed at all	Too early to assess	Short working period, incomplete procedures or cycles	Reassessment after cycle completion
2.	Does not solve the majority of assigned tasks	Does not meet expectations	Indicate reasons (first time / repeated)	Training or replacement
3.	Formally achieves goals, solves most tasks in a standard way, low quality	Needs improveme nt	Indicate reasons	Motivation, training
4.	Achieves goals and performs tasks using standard procedures, standard quality	Meets expectations	Indicate reasons	Further training
5.	Exceeds goals, quality higher than other team members	Exceeds expectations	Indicate reasons	Expand functionality – become a consultant or mentor

Source: author's elaboration based on [17,19,20]

The administration of a grant program for sustainable entrepreneurship development is inherently linked with its effectiveness assessment, since the management process is guided by program effectiveness criteria used as indicators. These, in turn, are structured around four governance poles: procedures, relationships, resources, and decision-making mechanisms:

− Relationships include internal coordination (between program and staff: goals – resources, program tasks – zones of responsibility, participants: experts – entrepreneurs, experts – trainers, mentors – entrepreneurs, and so on; the grant program team – trainers and experts, etc.);

− Procedures refer to motivation processes (for staff, for program participants);

− Resources involve planning, access to resources, distribution, accounting, control, analysis, and adjustment;

− Mechanisms include managerial decision-making (program launch and closure, program administration, participant recruitment, etc.).

These four poles define the architectural framework of grant program administration for sustainable entrepreneurship development (see Figure 6), illustrating

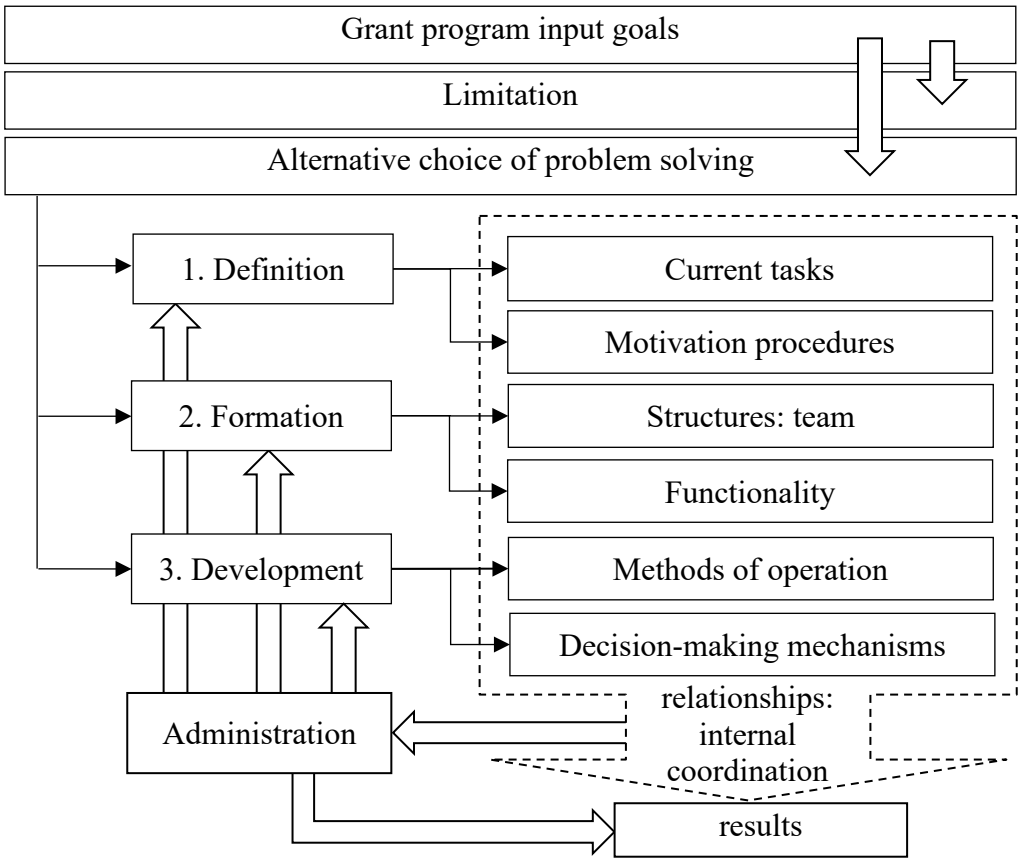


Figure 6 – Architecture of Grant Program Administration for Sustainable Entrepreneurship Development

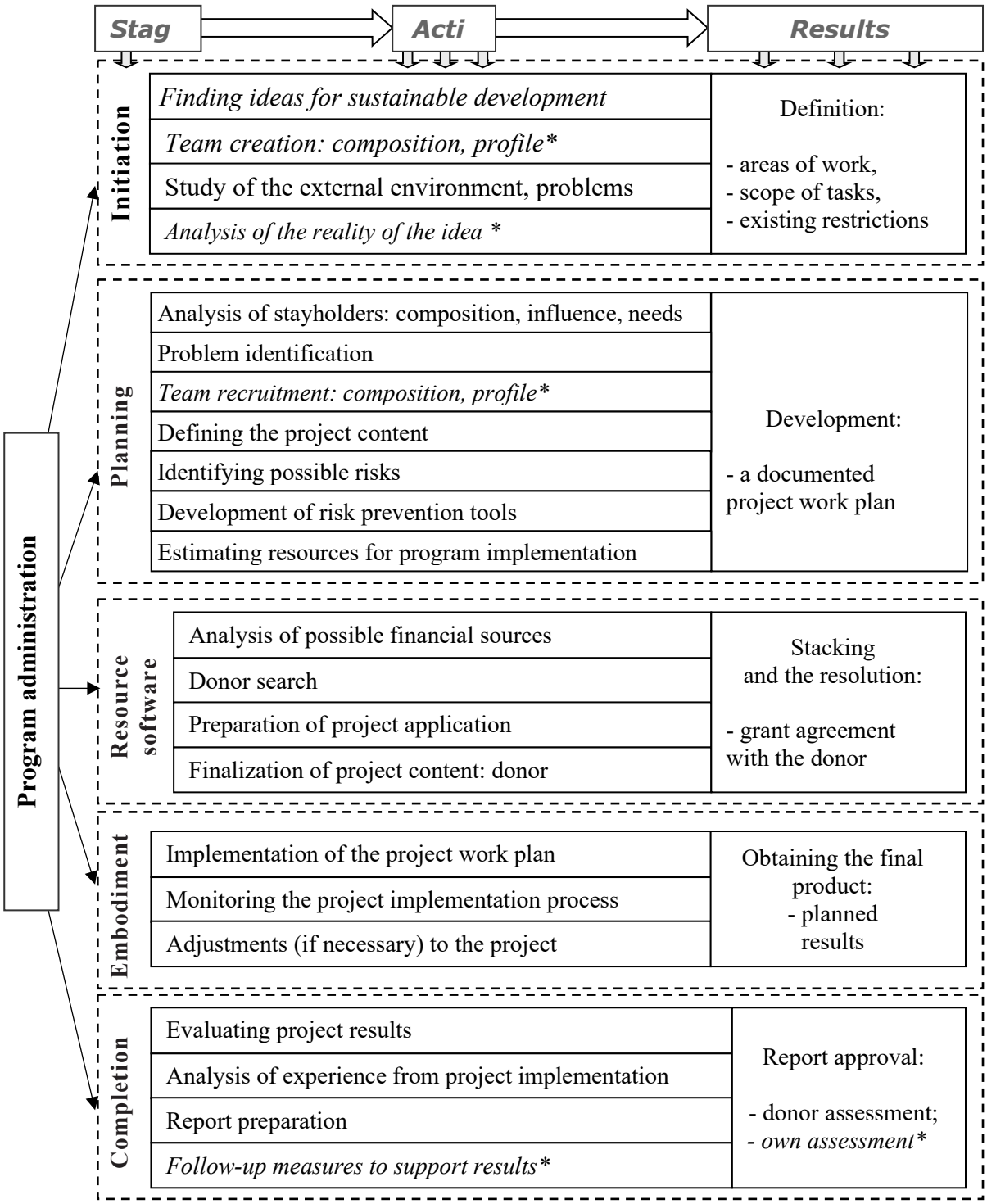
Source: author's elaboration based on [18, 20,29]

the interdependence and interconnectedness of the program's components as an integrated phenomenon.

As shown in Figure 6, grant program administration involves the dynamic resolution of all issues related to both the formative (Block 1: Identification) and reproductive (Blocks 2: Formation, 3: Development) segments, at the stage when they have evolved into active processes. Accordingly, grant program administration must be implemented throughout its life cycle (see Figure 7).

As illustrated in Figure 7, the concept of a grant program is broader than that of a grant project.

First, during the initiation phase, it includes the search for an innovative idea to support or accelerate the development of sustainable entrepreneurship, as well as an assessment of the idea's feasibility − both of which become objects of administrative management.



** – added or modified by the author*

Figure 7 – Grant Program Administration for Sustainable Entrepreneurship Development Across Its Lifecycle Stages

Source: author's elaboration based on [21,23]

Second, the very idea of system-integrated management of sustainable entrepreneurship implies the integration of multiple interlinked projects that support each other and expand the capacity of the overall program.

At different stages, project analysis, monitoring, and evaluation are applied within the grant program. Each serves a distinct purpose:

− monitoring ensures ongoing tracking of project implementation and objectives;

− evaluation provides insights into the results achieved and the grant team's performance against goals;

− analysis identifies causes of deviations, comparing outcomes with established goals across relevant program domains.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of a grant program for sustainable entrepreneurship development should focus on three key areas:

Meeting the needs of the target audience represented by donors. In this context, this refers to addressing national sustainable development objectives, confirmed by appropriate indicators that meet or exceed donor expectations.

Satisfying the needs of the grant implementer. This includes fulfilling their mission to support a new type of entrepreneurship, solving global, national, and regional challenges, improving reputation, increasing collaboration, and expanding operational domains.

Addressing the needs of the grant program team: acquiring new knowledge, experience, and communication skills; internalizing sustainable development values; and transforming their own socio-ecological-economic behavior as consumers and citizens. It is also essential to ensure material motivation through adequate compensation.

When optimizing payroll expenses to improve team performance, a specific personnel administration model can be constructed for each situation. If the salary:

− significantly exceeds the market rate – this should be clearly communicated to staff. Tools include increasing targets, doubling oversight, fixing the salary level, and adjusting the benefits package;

− is slightly above market – emphasize this as a sign of care for the team;

− matches market level – inform staff and highlight advantages (e.g., better benefits, lighter workload, convenient location);

− is slightly below market – avoid discussion. Motivation should focus on

respect, leadership charisma, long-term low-interest loans, or education funded by the organization with a work-back agreement;

− is well below market and the team is aware – administration should maximize standard procedures, shorten probation periods, automate communication with digital services, and anticipate staff turnover due to the temporary nature of grant programs by minimizing recruitment costs and preparing replacements in advance.

Thus, adapting the grant-based mechanism of entrepreneurship development management to the specifics of sustainable entrepreneurship involves revising its operational principles, goals, tools, and outcomes, as well as the value- and competence-oriented focus of grant program teams. One of the key transformations includes building mechanisms for collaboration between grant programs and among entrepreneurs engaged in sustainable development.

Justification of directions and development of a collaboration model for sustainable entrepreneurship. Contemporary changes in the structure of entrepreneurship − including socio-demographic, generational, and educational shifts − have impacted entrepreneurial priorities and motivation. According to the 2024 CxO Sustainability Report by Deloitte, next-generation business leaders are increasingly committed to sustainability principles. In particular, 85% of surveyed executives reported increasing sustainability investments compared to the previous year, and 70% expect climate change to significantly impact their company's strategy within the next three years. This marks a shift toward higher social and environmental awareness among entrepreneurs and creates a strong foundation for effective collaboration in the field of sustainable entrepreneurship.

Equally important is the emergence of mutual expectations for sustainability-driven behavior from other market players, which paves the way for new forms of cooperation but also introduces coordination challenges.

The following directions can be considered as promising areas of collaboration for sustainable entrepreneurship:

1. New types of entrepreneurial activity that have emerged in response to sustainable development challenges − such as ecological, eco-oriented, green, and

social entrepreneurship. These models are applicable to businesses of all sizes and are based on voluntary collaboration.

2. Infrastructure-based entrepreneurship, a new model of doing business that relies on mandatory collaboration between the private sector, civil society, and the state.

3. Other types of entrepreneurial activity that address national sustainable development goals at the micro level.

Innovation collaboration, which includes the integration of external knowledge, data, experience, and technologies; startup processes including validation and expert evaluation of innovative solutions; intellectual property protection; and the presentation, promotion, and development of startup projects.

In these areas, both resource/potential collaboration and brand collaboration are feasible. Brand collaboration is particularly relevant in the retail sector, where international practices and domestic conditions − such as well-developed networks and brand infrastructure − support such models.

Initial collaboration between prospective and active sustainable entrepreneurs will occur within grant programs, utilizing the resources of an information and innovation platform for sustainable entrepreneurship, as well as through offline activities. Mentorship support will play a crucial role in this process by expanding the entrepreneurial development funnel, enhancing knowledge and practical experience, and helping avoid common startup mistakes (Figure 8).

Unfortunately, mentorship during the initial year of entrepreneurial activity remains constrained by several factors:

− the critical mass of participants;

− the mentor's available time;

− overestimated expectations from beginner entrepreneurs who often shift responsibility for their own mistakes to the mentor instead of engaging in joint analysis and developing preventive measures.

The collaboration landscape can be visualized through a structural and logical business model. Collaboration is understood as "a special form of joint creative activity

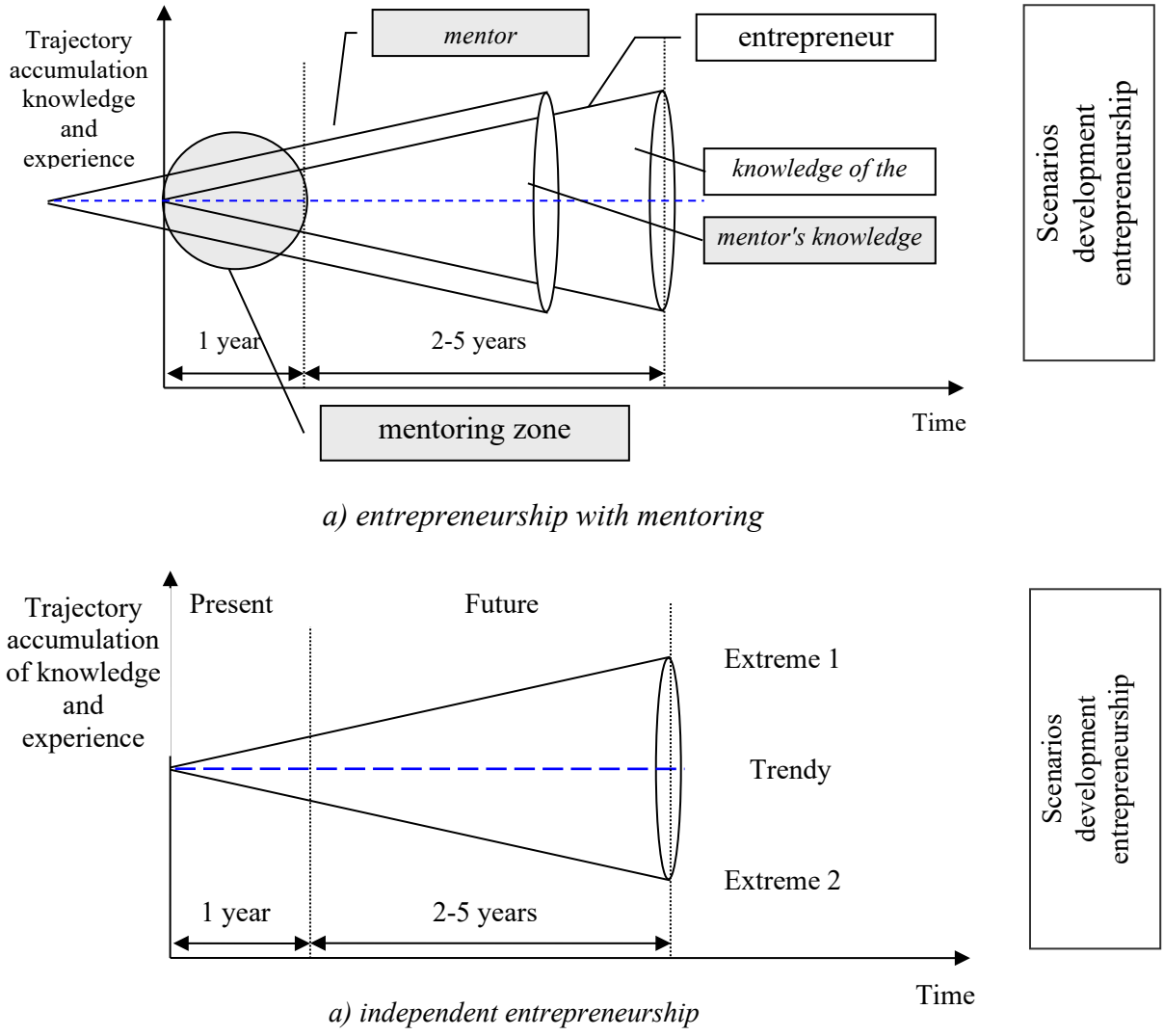


Figure 8 – Model of primary collaboration in sustainable entrepreneurship: mentorship

Source: author's elaboration

of a project-based nature in a global environment, grounded in the combination of interdisciplinary competencies of the participants and based on specific norms of interaction that differ from market-based and hierarchical forms".

Slightly adapting this approach for the context of grant programs, collaboration in sustainable entrepreneurship can be defined as the joint creative activity of business entities and self-employed individuals − among themselves and in partnership with educational, scientific, and other institutions and organizations, as well as public authorities − aimed at addressing sustainable development challenges through entrepreneurial activity. This collaboration is grounded in the integration of

interdisciplinary competencies and in special norms of hierarchical interaction, which differ from traditional market-based mechanisms.

Thus, collaboration represents both a powerful mechanism and a favorable application landscape that extends well beyond the entrepreneurial domain. This conclusion is supported by findings from research conducted across 26 grant programs (see Table 11).

Table 11 – Structural Indicators of Collaboration in Ukrainian Sustainable Entrepreneurship (2023–2025)

Source: author's elaboration based on [29,30]

Indicator	Value (Ukraine)	Note
Global Innovation Index (Ukraine's rank)	55th (2023) → 60th (2024)	Slight decline, yet the position remains globally competitive
SMEs' share in business employment and value added	81.6% and 70.2%	SMEs represent 99.9% of enterprises and remain vital to economic development
Grants under the eRobota program	6,000 grants (2023) worth UAH 336 million; 20,000 jobs created; UAH 4 billion total since launch	Significant employment support via grant-based collaboration programs
OECD support for SME digitalisation	National digitalisation strategy for SMEs adopted in 2023 and extended to 2027	Enhances readiness for collaborative and tech-enabled development
Blended finance initiative (USVF + The Possible)	5 companies supported with €33,000 each; 75% grant / 25% repayable loan	Private-public financial collaboration pilot
UNIDO Green Industrial Recovery Program	USD 250 million (2024–2028)	Large-scale investment for sustainable industrial partnerships

The table 11 illustrates the current structural foundations for collaboration in Ukrainian sustainable entrepreneurship between 2023 and 2025. Despite a slight drop in Ukraine's position in the Global Innovation Index (from 55th to 60th place), the country remains within a globally competitive range. This indicates both the resilience of its innovation ecosystem and the need for reinforced strategic alliances through collaboration to prevent further decline.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) continue to form the backbone of the Ukrainian economy, accounting for 99.9% of all enterprises, 81.6% of employment, and 70.2% of value added. This structural dominance of SMEs provides a vast

collaborative potential, particularly in programs related to sustainable and digital transformation.

The eRobota program exemplifies effective grant-based collaboration. In 2023 alone, over 6,000 grants were issued, leading to the creation of 20,000 jobs. Since its inception, the program has mobilized UAH 4 billion. This shows that grant mechanisms not only support entrepreneurial activation but also stimulate economic recovery and inclusion through networked action.

Digitalisation of SMEs, guided by OECD recommendations and formalised in a national strategy until 2027, serves as an enabling factor for technological collaboration, platform-based entrepreneurship, and integration into the European innovation space.

A notable pilot initiative is the blended finance program by USVF and The Possible. It combines non-repayable grants (75%) and repayable loans (25%), offering a flexible model of public-private partnership suitable for replicating in other regions and sectors of sustainable entrepreneurship.

Finally, the UNIDO Green Industrial Recovery Program introduces USD 250 million for the industrial greening of Ukraine's economy between 2024 and 2028. This investment underlines the importance of transnational collaboration in achieving structural sustainability, while also opening new directions for innovation clusters and cooperative manufacturing.

Collectively, these indicators and initiatives point to a growing environment of multi-level collaboration in Ukraine − between entrepreneurs, institutions, donors, and policy actors − thus shaping a dynamic landscape for sustainable entrepreneurship.

As shown, the most commonly utilized forms of collaboration were geographically based partnerships – localization of business (53.6%) and the use of local resources (53%). Additionally, there was a full uptake of mentoring opportunities (100% of those available), underscoring the high relevance of shared challenges as a driver of collaboration. At the same time, there remains a significant gap in the development of networks and brand collaboration: only 2.07% were already engaged in joint brand activity compared to 17% who expressed willingness to do so.

In summary, grant programs serve both as a convenient method for facilitating collaboration among entrepreneurs and as an effective mechanism for managing the development of sustainable entrepreneurship. They allow for the benefits of joint activity to be realized from the very beginning of the entrepreneurial journey.

Analytical validation confirms the hypothesis that this mechanism can accelerate the establishment of domestic sustainable entrepreneurship. Therefore, it is advisable to apply this model to business incubation and acceleration programs that aim to follow the path of sustainable entrepreneurship.

Conclusion of the Chapter is the conducted analysis has demonstrated that adapting grant-based management mechanisms to the specific needs of sustainable entrepreneurship requires the rethinking of its operational principles, objectives, instruments, and outcome-focused components. A central role is played by the competency and value orientations of the grant program teams.

Grant programs act not only as financial instruments but also as platforms for collaboration, knowledge exchange, and integration of interdisciplinary competencies. Their structure supports the creation of synergistic value through mentoring, digital tools, and brand alliances.

Given the positive results from recent Ukrainian programs (2023–2025) and the observable gaps in collaboration potential, further investment in collaborative models − particularly in incubation and acceleration frameworks − will be crucial. These findings contribute to building the theoretical and methodological foundation for scaling sustainable development entrepreneurship during Ukraine's economic recovery.

KAPITEL 3 / *CHAPTER 3*
INCUBATION AND ACCELERATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE CONTEXT OF ECONOMIC RECOVERY

The process of establishing sustainable entrepreneurship can be significantly accelerated by the sequential and parallel use of two infrastructural mechanisms: incubation and acceleration. These differ in objectives, tasks, and the mechanics of their respective grant programs. However, priorities regarding needs, capabilities, gender distribution, and entrepreneurs' perspectives on support have notably shifted − see Figures 5.10–5.13 − and this will affect both incubation and acceleration mechanisms.

Current trends (Figure 9–12) show near parity in priority settings:

- Location: 48 % prefer rural, 52 % urban
- Product vs. service: 46 % vs. 54 %
- Work type: 43 % self-employment, 57 % hired staff

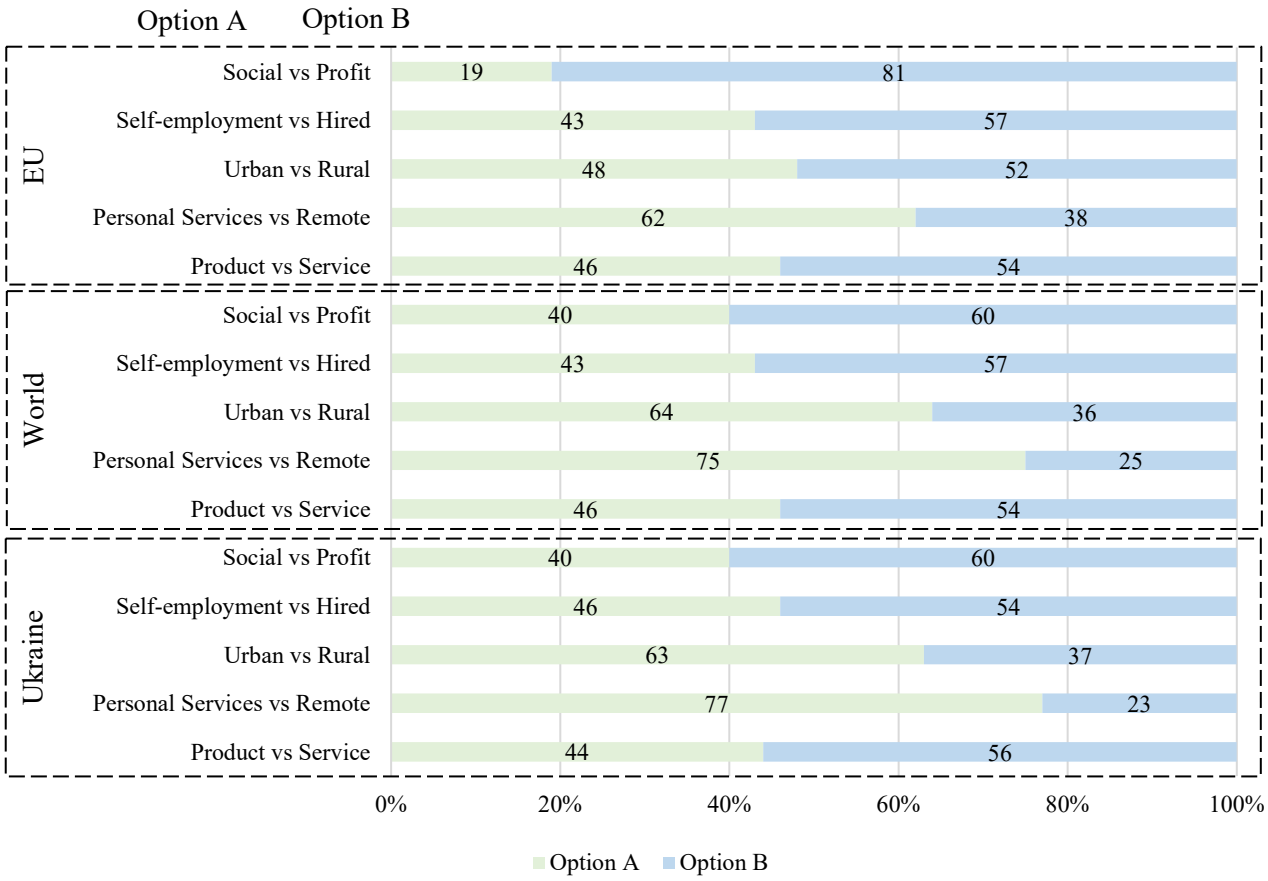


Figure 9 – Entrepreneurs' Priorities: Vision of Ideal Entrepreneurship

Source: author's elaboration based on [31]

To update this with internet data: A 2024 Civitta–PUSH startup survey found that 73 % of Ukrainian startups recognize opportunities in reconstruction, including job creation and local economy support. Meanwhile, the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) confirms that Ukraine maintains robust entrepreneurial infrastructure despite conflict.

Regarding gender distribution, UN Women and national surveys show a rise in female-led startups, especially in tech − women currently hold nearly 40 % of leadership roles in Ukraine, exceeding EU and global averages. However, female entrepreneurs are still mainly urban-based, with under 10 % operating from rural areas.

Key Adaptation Implications:

1. Rural vs. Urban: Incubation programs must be accessible in both locations.

2. Product–Service Mix: Acceleration services must cater to both product and service startups.

3. Labour Mode: Support must balance guidance for both self-employed and small teams.

4. Gender Inclusion: Incubation and acceleration platforms must be tailored to empower female entrepreneurs, particularly in underrepresented rural zones.

Ukrainian entrepreneurs demonstrate significantly lower self-confidence in their intellectual, financial, and other capacities compared to global and EU averages (see Figure 10). The gap is especially striking in three key areas: idea generation, willingness to devote time, and risk tolerance. Specifically, only 10% of Ukrainian respondents reported the ability to generate business ideas, compared to 52% globally and 47% in the EU. A similar pattern is seen in the willingness to dedicate time (10% in Ukraine vs. 57% globally and 53% in the EU), and risk readiness (7% in Ukraine vs. 47% globally and 41% in the EU).

Additionally, Ukrainian entrepreneurs report much lower access to personal startup capital − only 5%, compared to 38% globally and 31% in the EU − indicating a 6 to 7 times greater financial vulnerability. Social support also lags behind significantly, with only 14% of Ukrainians receiving encouragement from their close circles, compared to 64% globally and 62% in the EU, reflecting a gap of 4 to 4.5 times.

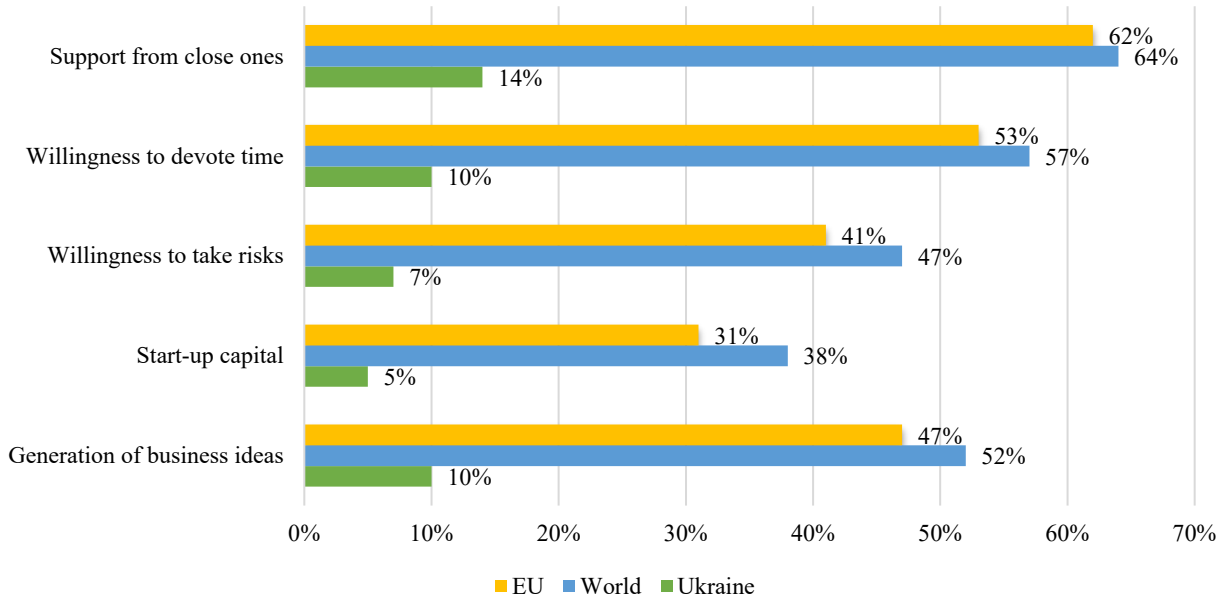


Figure 10 – Entrepreneurs' Self-Assessment of Capabilities

Source: author's elaboration based on [31]

Moreover, gender-specific challenges (see Figure 11) further emphasize the vulnerability of women in entrepreneurship.

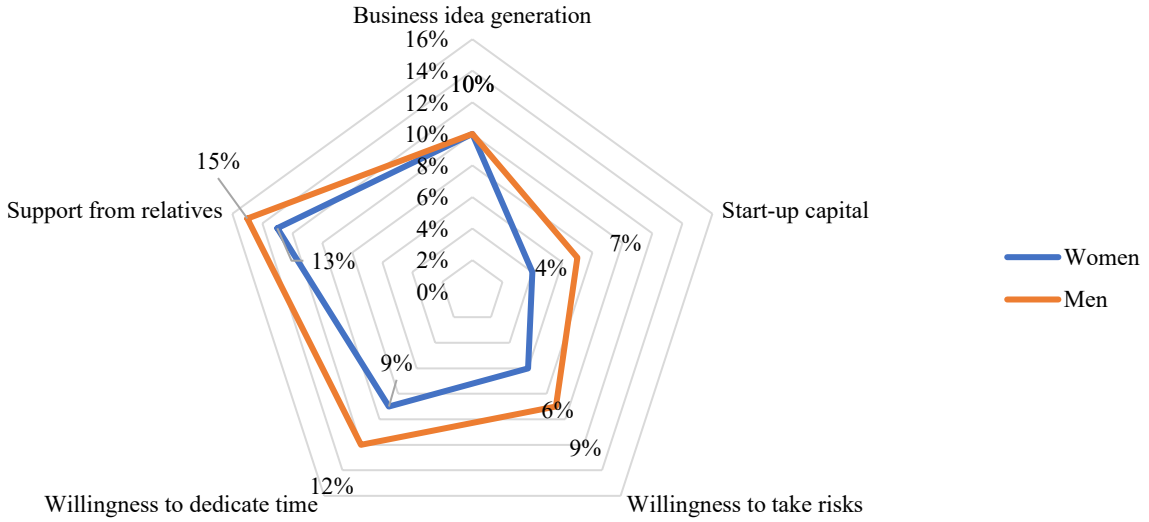


Figure 11 – Entrepreneurial capabilities: gender aspect

Source: author's elaboration based on [31]

While both men and women exhibit equal creativity in generating business ideas (10% each), women experience greater difficulties in all other areas.

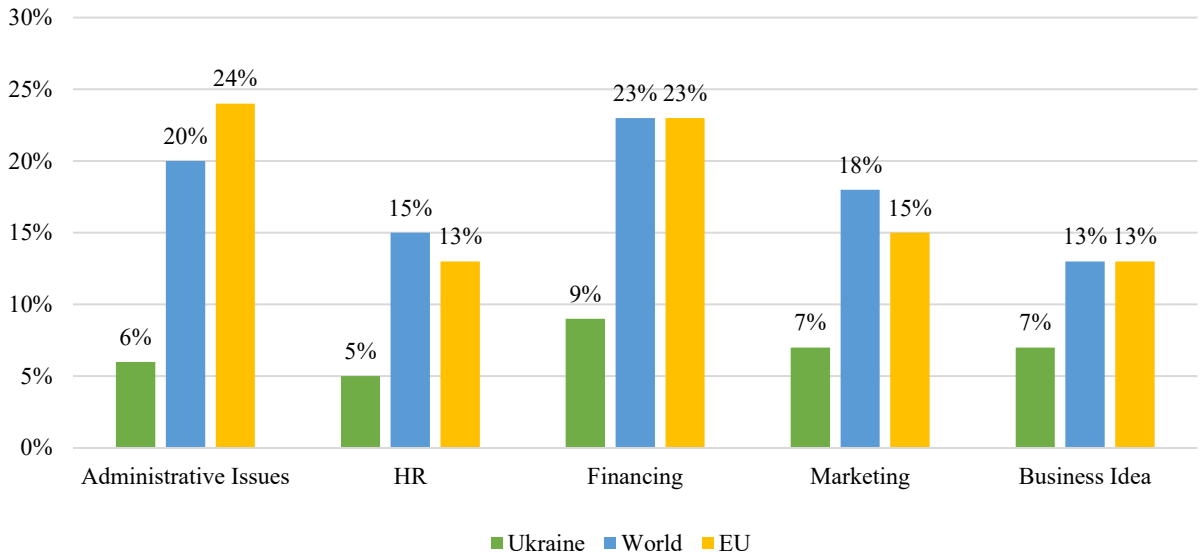


Figure 12 – Entrepreneurial needs: perception of ideal support areas for its establishment and development

Source: author's elaboration based on [31]

Their access to resources is 1.75 times lower (4% vs. 7%), their readiness to take risks is 1.5 times lower (6% vs. 9%), and their ability to dedicate time is also more limited (9% vs. 12%). Although the difference in family support is smaller, women still receive slightly less encouragement (13% compared to 15%).

It should be noted that to ensure systemic support for the establishment of a new type of entrepreneurship, both global and national trends must be considered. However, the vision of such support infrastructure among Ukrainian entrepreneurs remains rather narrow and structurally differs significantly from global experience (see Fig. 5.13). While external financing interests 23% of entrepreneurs globally and in the EU, only 9% of Ukrainian entrepreneurs express such interest. Similar discrepancies are seen in business administration: globally – 20%, EU – 24%, while in Ukraine – only 6%. The generation of business ideas interests 13% of entrepreneurs in the world and EU, but only 7% in Ukraine.

Considering the above shifts in entrepreneurship, new approaches are proposed to the content and application of both infrastructure-based support mechanisms – incubation and acceleration – which consist in:

– redirecting these mechanisms toward fostering the development of sustainable

entrepreneurship, rather than general small business growth;

− forming a new value system for entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial competence based on that system;

− encouraging the broadest and fastest possible collaboration within sustainable entrepreneurship, especially in the field of innovative collaboration related to startups.

The goal of sustainable entrepreneurship incubation is to provide grant support for the process from the birth of a business idea to its implementation as a business activity, by creating enabling conditions (for manufacturing businesses – from idea to prototype creation and first sales).

The goal of sustainable entrepreneurship acceleration is to grant-support its intensive development through qualitative transformations in business activities or their components: business domains, new technology implementation, product and technological innovation.

As infrastructure-based grant mechanisms, both incubation and acceleration differ from other tools due to their short-term nature (2–6 months) and their organizational-economic character.

Each of these mechanisms will be described using a unified framework consisting of the following descriptive blocks:

− Common blocks:
  a) structural and logical scheme of incubation and acceleration programs;
  b) general conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the mechanisms and the structuring of incubation and acceleration processes;
− Blocks specific to incubation and acceleration mechanisms:
  a) general goals and objectives of the program;
  b) recommendations on the program's duration;
  c) priorities and impact areas;
  d) infrastructural entrepreneurship;
  e) methodology of the corresponding training program;
  f) assessment of the program's effectiveness.

The structural and logical framework of incubation and acceleration programs is

built on a matrix-targeted approach, as it considers the interconnections between individual components. The structuring matrix of the corresponding program vividly illustrates its essence, content, and connections.

The provided structuring matrix (see Tab. 14) consists of two fields – internal (the first four blocks) and external (the fifth block), which is not a component of the program and is not subject to program administration procedures, but creates initial conditions and constraints for the program.

The presented matrix reveals the multi-layered structure of incubation and acceleration programs that aim to support the establishment and scaling of sustainable development entrepreneurship in Ukraine. Particularly relevant during the wartime period and ongoing recovery efforts, this matrix aligns organizational, financial, educational, and evaluation dimensions to ensure strategic impact.

Block 1 outlines the overarching goal – to facilitate the formation of businesses that implement sustainable development principles. From 2024 to 2025, there was a marked increase in the number of grant applications for projects in the fields of green energy (particularly solar micro-grids for displaced communities), social inclusion (employment for veterans and IDPs), and circular economy (recycling and upcycling). For example, over 70% of startup ideas submitted to regional incubators in Odesa and Lviv in 2024 focused on at least one SDG.

Block 2 highlights the required resources. The availability of skilled human capital, combined with targeted grant financing and access to digital infrastructure (e.g., the national e-platform for sustainable entrepreneurship launched in 2025), became critical enablers. Co-financing increased by 24% compared to 2023, demonstrating growing private interest in SDG-driven startups.

Block 3 focuses on training and support. Between 2024 and 2025, mentorship became a decisive factor in the survival of early-stage SDG businesses. According to monitoring from 18 regional grant programs, teams that received more than 10 hours of mentorship during the incubation stage were 3.4 times more likely to transition to acceleration. Furthermore, in 2025, joint networking events with EU-based sustainable enterprises doubled in frequency, boosting cross-border collaboration.

Table 14 – Structuring Matrix of the Incubation and Acceleration Program for Sustainable Development Entrepreneurship

Block	Component	Description	Examples	Responsible Entity
1. Goal Setting	Strategic Objective	Supporting the formation and development of sustainable development entrepreneurship during wartime	Establishing businesses implementing SDGs (green energy, inclusion, circular economy)	Program leader, strategic team
	Operational Tasks	Facilitating idea generation, team formation, and prototype creation	Hackathons, startup weekends, idea contests	Grant program coordinator
2. Resource Provision	Human Resources	Team, trainers, mentors, consultants	Involving experts in innovation and sustainability	HR manager, project team
	Financial Resources	Grant budget, co-financing, participant contributions	Stage-based budgeting: idea, prototype, piloting	Financial manager
	Infrastructure	Facilities, digital platforms, laboratories	Free access to coworking spaces, educational platforms	Infrastructure coordinator
3. Educational and Support Block	Training Program	Building competencies in sustainable entrepreneurship	Courses in SDG business planning, impact evaluation	Education coordinator
	Mentorship	Individual support for entrepreneurial teams	Matching a mentor to each team	Mentorship coordinator
	Networking and Partnerships	Events, ecosystem integration, promotion	Forums, joint projects with local authorities, NGOs, foundations	Partnership manager
4. Monitoring and Evaluation	Progress Monitoring	Tracking team and idea development dynamics	Monthly reports, self-assessment cards	M&E specialist
	Final Evaluation	Expert assessment of sustainability and innovation potential	Team presentations, external expert reviews	Evaluation committee
	Post-Program Support	Scaling assistance, investor outreach	Investor pitching, fundraising	Acceleration team
5. External Conditions*	Regulatory and Legal Base	Taxation, enterprise status, permits	Benefits for social enterprises, simplified registration	Non-program area, considered during planning
	Macroeconomics and Risks	Energy instability, mobilization, inflation	Implementation complications, need for adaptive planning	Non-program area

** Block 5 is not a direct program component but influences its architecture and implementation logic.*

Source: author's elaboration based on [32]

Block 4 emphasizes performance tracking. In 2024–2025, more rigorous monitoring procedures were introduced, including sustainability impact self-assessment tools and real-time progress dashboards. Pilot testing in Poltava and Dnipro showed that continuous feedback loops reduced project drop-out rates by 38%.

Block 5, although external to the program's internal management, significantly influenced implementation outcomes. The instability caused by ongoing military risks, regulatory ambiguity in social enterprise classification, and inflation pressures necessitated adaptive approaches. By mid-2025, the Ministry for Economy had introduced draft legislation aimed at formally recognizing socially responsible enterprises within the national classification system, partially reducing this barrier.

Together, these components illustrate that incubation and acceleration programs must operate within a responsive, multi-component framework that acknowledges both internal capabilities and external conditions. Such programs not only foster entrepreneurial growth but also embed sustainability and resilience into Ukraine's recovery model.

To proceed with the detailed explanation of the structuring matrix for incubation and acceleration programs, it is essential to interpret how its design logic is operationalized. The matrix is not only a visual tool but also a strategic guide that aligns goals, actions, and outcomes with sustainable development imperatives, especially relevant during the economic recovery of Ukraine under wartime conditions. The next section describes the step-by-step structuring methodology, essential for designing responsive, measurable, and donor-aligned grant programs focused on sustainable entrepreneurship.

The sequence for structuring the program includes the following steps:

The first step in structuring involves vertical alignment of the components and the logic of intervention (represented by the blue arrows in Figure 5.14). The underlying rule is that each lower level of the matrix supports the one above it:

- Component logic follows a process-based chain:
  a) Activity (4) →
  b) Outputs and Results (3) →

c) Specific Objective (2) →

d) General Objective (1)

The general objective is set by the donor, while the specific objective is defined by the grant recipient. These relate as a whole and its part − general and specific.

− Intervention logic is donor-centric, forming a backward mapping path:

a) General Objective (1) →

b) Specific Objective (2) →

c) Outputs and Results (3) →

d) Activity (4)

This ensures program alignment with the donors' interests and priorities. In this case, the priority is achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through a series of actions designed to advance those targets.

For example, the general donor objective (cell 1) may relate to SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth, specifically target 8.3: Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, with an emphasis on creating equal opportunities for vulnerable groups such as migrants.

The specific objective (cell 2) in this case could aim to change employer attitudes towards migrants and reduce unemployment among this group.

Outputs and results (cell 3) should clearly reflect the program's measurable contribution − e.g., webinars held for migrants and employers, with results like number of successful job placements attributed to the webinars.

Activity (cell 4) then refers to the actual implementation process of the program − its stages and operations (see also Figure 7 for lifecycle alignment).

The second step in structuring refers to the horizontal detailing of the program (represented by green arrows in Table 14).

The structuring rule here is that the right-hand column of the matrix expands upon the left-hand blocks. This step does not apply to the fifth block, as it lies outside the direct administrative scope of the program. However, its influence must be considered.

− The logical progression in this horizontal detailing follows this sequence:

a) Specific Objective →

b) Implementation Schedule (with verification sources) →

c) Objectively Verifiable Indicators →

d) Resources and Means of Verification →

e) Assumptions and Risks that may interfere with the outcome.

Objectively verifiable indicators operate continuously across three stages: the planning phase, process monitoring, and post-program evaluation. Their structure and scope are defined by the type, orientation, and scale of the grant program. Quantitative activity indicators (cell 6), embodied in the results or outputs (cell 9), are easily measurable − such as the number and demographic structure (age, gender, residence, etc.) of beneficiaries engaged in activities. This includes participants of educational sessions, expert days, and entrepreneurship idea fairs.

Indicators linked to the specific objective of the program (cell 12) describe the extent of change achieved as a result of the intervention. At the level of the general objective (cell 15), these indicators become generalized and are often expressed as qualitative measures.

Sources of verification (cells 10, 13, and 16) can include both universal and specific records such as attendance sheets and program reports. However, for the specific objective (cell 13), long-term sources like forecasts and annual statistics are more appropriate, while the general objective (cell 16) should be confirmed through analytical summaries from employment centers, the State Statistics Service, national and independent studies similar to. Even more generalized justifications for the general objective.

Assumptions and risks (cells 5, 8, 11, and 14) are integral to the matrix. The preconditions (cell 5) determine the feasibility of initiating and managing the program − for example, donor funding is considered a precondition. At the activity level (cell 8), assumptions concern resource contribution and usage. These must be included as a control point (cell 6), feeding into the execution logic and forming the implementation schedule (cell 7). At the output/result level (cell 11), assumptions reflect success factors like team competence and motivation strategies. For the specific objective, assumptions concern the sustainability of the program's positive outcomes.

The third structuring step involves diagonal or zigzag alignment across five readiness levels. This process facilitates inter-level transitions by confirming the fulfillment of assumptions and mitigation of risks. It starts with compliance with program preconditions (cell 5), continues through the logical progression of activity, indicators, and resources (cells 4, 6, 7, 8), and proceeds through output and outcome logic (cells 3, 9, 10, 11), reaching all the way to impact-level outcomes.

These three structuring steps constitute a triple-check mechanism for causal linkages in the program matrix. The logic-content modeling of goals and tasks ensures alignment between goal-setting, resource deployment, processes, and results, while interfacing effectively with external environments through assumptions, constraints, and resource transfers.

Incubation of sustainable entrepreneurship has demonstrated high global effectiveness as a business support mechanism. However, it requires adaptation to serve the incubation of sustainable development-oriented business ideas. Studies such as show that entrepreneurial motivation in Ukraine remains low, which calls for tailored approaches. The following table illustrates these trends on table 15.

Table 15 – Dynamics of Entrepreneurial Motivation in the World and Ukraine

Indicator	2019, Global	2022, Global	Δ Global	2019, Ukraine	2022, Ukraine	Δ Ukraine	Difference in Decline (Ukraine/Global)
Business as desirable career choice	72%	68%	–4%	61%	33%	–28%	7 times greater decline
High status of successful entrepreneurs	76%	70%	–6%	66%	41%	–25%	4.2 times greater decline
Media attention to entrepreneurship	69%	65%	–4%	57%	31%	–26%	6.5 times greater decline

Source: author's elaboration based on [33,34,36]

Compared to global trends, the motivational climate for entrepreneurship in Ukraine remains significantly weaker. According to the updated data (see Table 15), the status of entrepreneurship as a desirable career choice and the social perception of

successful entrepreneurs have dropped 4–7 times more sharply in Ukraine than in the EU or globally. This indicates a serious limitation on the spontaneous, evolutionary development of sustainable entrepreneurship and demonstrates the need for external organizational mechanisms that can stimulate entrepreneurial motivation and foster business emergence aligned with sustainable development goals.

General Goals and Tasks of Sustainable Entrepreneurship Incubation. Incubation of sustainable entrepreneurship serves as a driver for the emergence of new businesses and acts as a catalyst for the formation of entrepreneurial structures (registration and launch of activity via sole proprietorship or business entity). The main objectives are:

− Familiarizing participants with the future perspectives of entrepreneurship and its role in shaping the socio-economic foundation for sustainable development;

− Forming entrepreneurial motivation as a core personal and civic value aligned with sustainable principles;

− Enhancing and restructuring entrepreneurial competence toward solving real-world sustainable development challenges in the emerging entrepreneurial landscape.

Recommended Duration of Incubation Programs. Sustainable entrepreneurship incubation is a variable-duration mechanism. Recommended timelines:

− For innovative manufacturing projects – 3 to 6 months (depending on production cycle length);

− For innovative non-manufacturing projects – 3 to 4 months;

− For other non-manufacturing projects – 2 to 3 months.

Based on implementation experience, it is advisable to introduce flexible sub-deadlines within the overall duration:

− Up to 1 month – educational studios and preparation of commercialization business plans;

− Up to 1 month – business registration (potentially via the national digital platform “Diia.Business”);

− Up to 1 month – acquisition of necessary equipment;

− Up to 1 month – grant reporting.

Total program duration should range between 2 and 4 months, depending on group

readiness and preconditions.

Priorities and Impact Areas of Sustainable Entrepreneurship Incubation. It is advisable to design priorities and areas of influence via the information-innovation digital platform for sustainable entrepreneurship, particularly leveraging tools of the digital management platform (see Figure 1). These tools facilitate integration of knowledge bases, experience sharing, and the achievement of scale and synergy effects. Key infrastructure mechanisms include:

- Virtual and local consulting zones,
- Educational studios,
- Entrepreneurial clubs,
- Mentorship and peer learning initiatives.

Support mechanisms should directly align with grant program indicators, such as:

- Emergence of new business types in regional contexts;
- Job creation statistic;
- Upgrading microbusinesses into medium-sized enterprises;
- Acquisition of new entrepreneurial competencies.

Trajectories of Grant Program Impact (see Figure 13). To accelerate the emergence of sustainable entrepreneurship, the following interconnected impact trajectories are proposed:

- Awareness-building: cultivating sustainable values in every entrepreneur and grant team member;
- Education and Training: implemented through structured educational studios aimed at developing and refining entrepreneurial competence within the sustainable development framework;
- Entrepreneurial Collaboration: including both commercial and innovation-based collaboration, sharing of resources, potentials, and brands, and interlinkage between entrepreneurs and grant programs (tools, mechanisms, resources, and program teams).

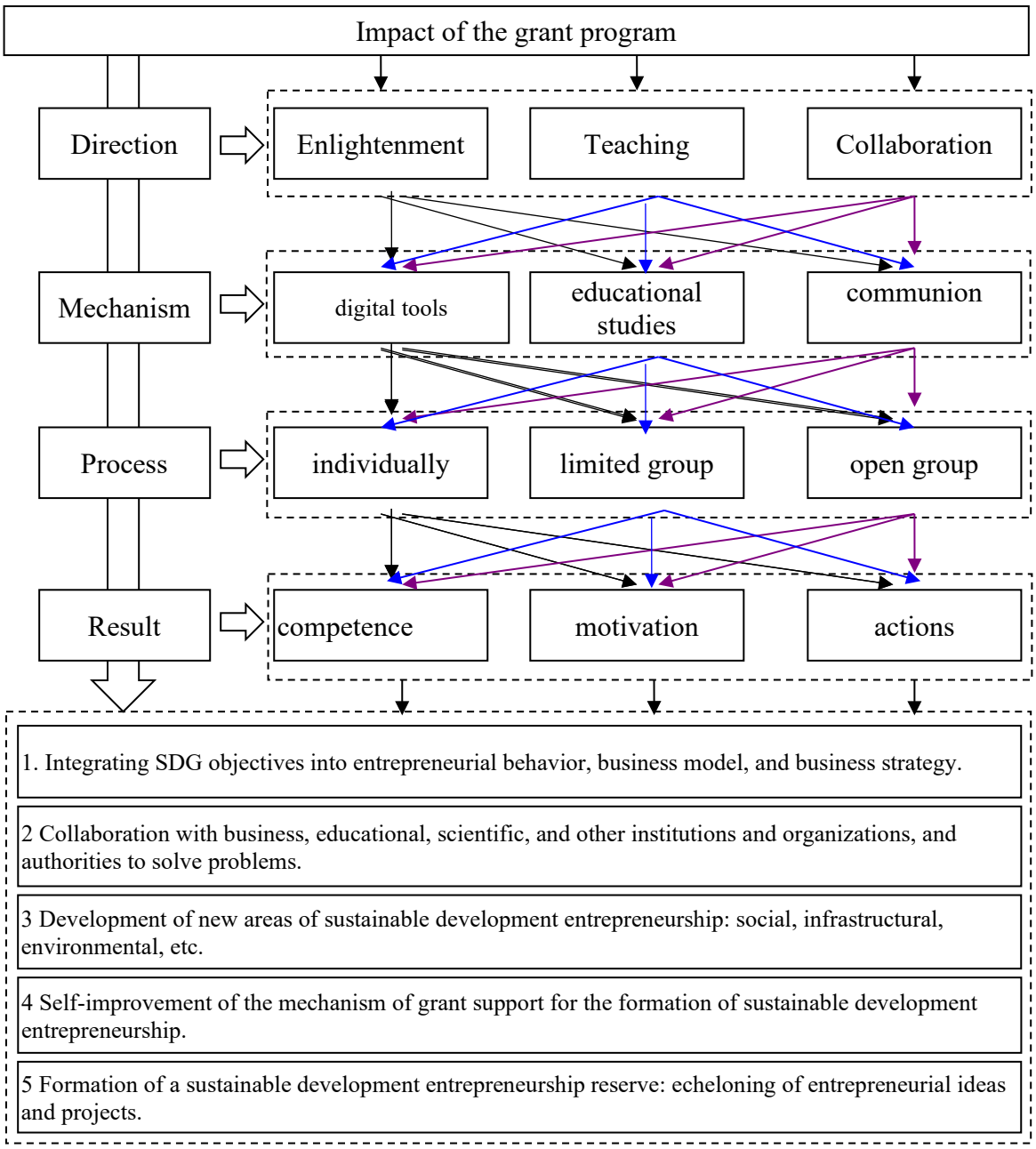


Figure 13 – The impact of the grant incubation program on accelerating the formation of sustainable entrepreneurship

Source: author's elaboration based on [18,34]

These trajectories will intersect continuously throughout the program lifecycle and merge at the result stage, creating synergetic effects. For example, to achieve Result 1: "Integration of SDG-oriented goals into entrepreneurial behavior, business models, and strategies," the program must:

a) Convince entrepreneurs of the necessity and economic rationale of launching businesses, particularly sustainable enterprises;

b) Create accessible opportunities for learning and training.

The expert rating of entrepreneurial ideas and projects at the final stage of the grant program selection process results in three tiers of ideas and projects:

The first tier includes those that surpass the threshold score and receive allocated resources provided by the grant program, such as financial support, equipment, access to information resources free of charge, internship opportunities, and more.

The second tier consists of those scoring over 75% of the threshold but not reaching it. These are regarded as a reserve pool for sustainable entrepreneurship and are assisted in locating new grant programs, as well as offered voluntary mentoring support. Their mistakes are analyzed and deconstructed.

The third tier includes those that score below 75% of the threshold. They are not left without attention either – their errors are also reviewed and analyzed, and they are offered access to additional services of a digital platform for sustainable entrepreneurship on a freemium basis.

This structure forms a strategic reserve of sustainable entrepreneurs who are psychologically prepared for further development, having undergone most of the iterations. This was confirmed by a survey of graduates from 26 grant programs.

Due to its complexity and high requirements for entrepreneurs and support structures, infrastructure entrepreneurship is not recommended as a primary domain for sustainable entrepreneurship incubation.

The methodology of the incubation training program includes a structured description of its components:

- the goals of the incubation training program;
- competency acquisition clusters: business planning; mastering the presentation of sustainable business ideas as project proposals and business plans; marketing and customer engagement (marketing tools and advertising); human resource management; corporate social responsibility of entrepreneurship;
- expected outcomes of each educational cluster in the program.

This framework was illustrated with program elements specifically designed for the Odesa region as demonstrative cases.

The primary goal of the incubation training program is to provide beginner entrepreneurs with practical skills for launching and managing their own business aligned with sustainable development principles.

To achieve this goal, the program introduces participants to the fundamentals of entrepreneurial activity, the objectives and opportunities of sustainable entrepreneurship, and facilitates the acquisition of relevant competencies within the following integrated training clusters:

- Entrepreneurial motivation, which includes two components:
  a) expectations, personal motives, comfort zones, and examples of successful startup cases from prior participants of incubation programs in high-potential sectors for sustainable development in the Odesa region. Current national trends confirm the priority of such sectors as IT entrepreneurship, online commerce, socially-oriented business, agriculture, and sustainable tourism (eco-, agro-, and cultural tourism);
  b) promising business ideas for small and sustainable enterprises: the updated Top 100 Business Ideas for Beginners (2025 Edition) includes green business concepts, eco-conscious models, and circular economy initiatives as featured in recent EU-supported lists.
- Business planning, which includes:
  a) business strategies, including Red and Blue Ocean strategies, strategic canvases, and basic planning principles;
  b) the Business Model Canvas and its interactive design;
  c) accessible financial resources: beginner entrepreneurs explore bank loans and crowdfunding tools, including grant options (types, donors, conditions, typical requirements, and restrictions). These cover both general small business support and targeted grants for sustainable entrepreneurship and social enterprise initiatives;
  d) opportunities for resource, potential, and brand collaboration;
  e) legal and financial foundations: taxation, accounting, and registration;
  f) business plan development: the program incorporates business plan writing

as a training tool. Participants use it to apply knowledge gained from the course by developing full project documentation (including marketing and financial sections), both individually and via peer-based networking exercises.

- Presentation techniques for business plans and proposals:
  a) target audience analysis, presentation preparation, live pitching, and crash-testing typical participant projects in simulated public settings.
- Marketing and client engagement tools:

overview of marketing theory and strategy, promotion tools for online commerce and social business, digital marketing innovations for boosting sales, and strategies from social marketing and place branding for local business ecosystems.

- Human resource management:
  a) legal and accounting procedures for hiring staff, plus team formation and motivation techniques (team building, inclusive hiring models, volunteer engagement in early-stage business).
- Social responsibility in business:
  a) principles of environmentally friendly and socially responsible operations, community and societal impact, local collaboration practices, and intra-community cooperation for regional economic recovery.

Key outcomes of the training clusters within the incubation training program are as follows:

- Entrepreneurial motivation:
  a) clarifying a business idea for the entrepreneurial project;
  b) testing its feasibility and viability;
  c) building confidence in the success of the future business and its contribution to addressing sustainable development challenges at the level of small businesses. According to the GEM 2024 Global Report, entrepreneurial intention in Ukraine among adults remains at 18%, compared to 46% in the EU and 52% globally, confirming the critical role of motivation-building components in incubation programs.

- Business planning:
  a) selecting a business strategy;
  b) developing a business model (canvas);
  c) identifying sources of funding (including grants, crowdfunding, and bank loans);
  d) determining the applicable tax regime and required reporting;
  e) preparing a financial plan;
  f) integrating practical work on business plan components during the training. As of 2025, the availability of EU-funded micro-grants and digital support tools has improved accessibility to financial planning tools for young entrepreneurs in Ukraine.

- Pitching and business proposal presentation: preparing business plan documents and effectively defending the project publicly. Increased participation in pitch events has been recorded among female-led projects in Odesa region, with over 43% of incubator graduates successfully completing a public presentation round.

- Marketing and customer engagement: applying modern marketing strategies and tools, including green and territorial marketing. Special attention is paid to social enterprises and e-commerce businesses, with practical outputs including a marketing section of the business plan.

- Human resource management: building business teams (team building); understanding labor regulations and payroll accounting; designing employee motivation systems. These topics have become increasingly relevant in post-pandemic and wartime Ukraine, especially in regions like Odesa, where small teams must adapt to hybrid work models.

- Corporate social responsibility (CSR): activities promoting environmentally friendly and ethical business practices; community-level collaboration and local impact strategies.

Each cluster is integrated into a detailed training timeline that must be strictly followed. Evaluation of incubation training effectiveness is carried out through expert assessment of key outcomes:

– Acquisition of initial entrepreneurial competencies and soft skills relevant to sustainable business development.

– Completed and presented business plan of an entrepreneurial project aligned with the goals of sustainable development.

– Increased awareness of SDG-related entrepreneurial opportunities and collaboration benefits.

– Improved networking, pitching, and cooperation skills (soft skills), essential for engaging in grant programs.

According to results from incubator programs in the Odesa region (based on monitoring reports from 2024–2025), over 60% of participants demonstrated sustained entrepreneurial activity 6 months after completion, and 78% submitted at least one application to follow-up grant programs. Indicators used include:

– Satisfaction of the target audience and donors (meeting or exceeding their expectations);

– Capacity of the grant team to act as agents of change and knowledge multipliers;

– Strengthening of shared values within the team and local entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Alignment with national SDG priorities is confirmed through program-level indicators such as the number of jobs created, business profitability, involvement in social initiatives, and demographic sensitivity (age, gender, income). Updated data models (to be presented in Figures 1 and 2) confirm strong correlations between these outcomes and training program design.

Mathematical Models for Impact Assessment of Entrepreneurial Activity:

$$Y_1 = 0.01267728 \cdot X_1 + 3.988 \cdot 10^{-6} \cdot X_2 + 0.77926825 \quad (1)$$

$$Y_2 = 14.68 \cdot X_1 + 0.0042 \cdot X_2 + 5253.3 \quad (2)$$

where: Y_1 – number of new jobs created (units);

Y_2 – amount of annual charitable contributions (UAH);

X_1 – age of the entrepreneur (years);

X_2 – annual business income (UAH)

The regression model (1) shows that, on average, every UAH 250,000 of an entrepreneur's income results in the creation of one new job. This suggests a strong linkage between income and employment generation, reflecting the scalability potential of economic sustainability. Meanwhile, model (2) demonstrates that age and income have minimal to no statistically significant influence on the amount of charitable giving, highlighting the importance of value-based motivation over financial capacity.

These findings support the necessity of a systemic and integrative approach, emphasizing economic growth as a dominant driver while advocating for proactive awareness-building around the values of sustainable development. This underscores the need for educational and motivational components in incubation programs.

Further research into the gender factor in entrepreneurship development revealed that women-led entrepreneurship represents a strong reserve for sustainable business. Female entrepreneurs tend to exhibit greater social activity, both in job creation and charitable engagement (see table 16).

Table 16 – Gender structure of participants in incubation programs (2017–2025), Odesa Oblast

Year	Total Participants	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female Share in Job Creation (%)	Female Share in Donations (%)
2017	124	61.3	38.7	64.2	70.5
2018	138	60.9	39.1	65.0	72.1
2019	142	63.4	36.6	66.3	74.2
2020	135	65.2	34.8	68.5	76.8
2021	147	66.0	34.0	70.2	77.9
2022	158	67.8	32.2	71.5	79.0
2023	163	69.1	30.9	72.3	80.4
2024	169	70.6	29.4	74.0	81.2
2025*	175	71.4	28.6	75.8	82.7

**Forecast based on current trends and regional pilot studies (2024 Q1–Q2)*

Source: author's elaboration based on [32,34]

Each group of 7 women entrepreneurs generates 6 new jobs, while every 6 male

entrepreneurs create only 4 jobs.

Efforts to address global, national, and regional challenges, improve public image, enhance collaboration, and expand business domains are reflected in the following results of the incubation program, as measured by specific indicators (see Annex A):

− Group 1 – General results contributing to entrepreneurial economic growth. *Result 1*: Internally displaced persons (IDPs) and local residents in the Odesa region gained equitable access to employment opportunities and entrepreneurial skills for achieving sustainable income and improving community cohesion.

Key indicators:

a) 60% of 2,040 unemployed jobseekers receive job placement offers.
b) 525 entrepreneurs (50% women, 50% men) improve their professional skills.
c) 40% of beneficiaries achieve stable income.
d) Beneficiaries include 60% socially vulnerable IDPs and 40% socially vulnerable locals.
e) 40% increase in positive attitudes between displaced and host communities.
f) 20% of businesses launched are formed through partnerships between local and displaced entrepreneurs within the region.

− Group 2 – Entrepreneurial results related to capacity-building of new and existing entrepreneurs. *Result 1*: Local and displaced populations gain access to relevant labor market information and services from public, private, and non-governmental sectors.

Key indicators:

a) Completion of all program activities.
b) Published report on regional employment trends and opportunities.
c) Development of a user-friendly web portal.
d) 500 monthly users obtain employment-related insights.
e) At least 50 new job listings published monthly.
f) At least 35% of employers respond to job applications via the platform.

Result 2: Personalized business advisory services are provided to unemployed

residents and IDPs across the target areas.

Key indicators:

a) High effectiveness and satisfaction among beneficiaries.
b) Business advisors cooperate with local authorities and private sector actors to provide services and resources.
c) 2,040 unemployed jobseekers (50% men, 50% women) receive individual counseling over three years.
d) 35% of targeted jobseekers are placed into employment through business advisory services.
e) 85% of beneficiaries report satisfaction with support received.

Result 3: Ten business incubation and seven acceleration programs are conducted to enhance entrepreneurial skills in the Odesa region.

Key indicators:

a) Two business support centers for incubation and acceleration are established in the region, in partnership with local authorities.
b) Selection guidelines published for each incubation and acceleration program.
c) 420 participants selected for incubation across three years (50% women, 50% men).
d) 105 participants selected for acceleration programs.
e) 35% of program alumni establish successful and self-sustaining businesses providing livelihoods.

Result 4: A grant scheme is implemented to support business creation among graduates of incubation and acceleration programs.

Key indicators:

a) Three local selection committees are established (including representatives from the public and private sectors, economic, agricultural, and technical universities of Odesa region).
b) 63 grants (~€1,000 each) awarded to new businesses (50% women, 50% men).

c) 25 grants (~€3,000 each) awarded to existing businesses (50% women, 50% men).

d) 100% of financial recipients use their grant funds in accordance with contractual terms.

Some of these indicators also capture the evolution of entrepreneurs' socio-ecological-economic behavior as responsible consumers and citizens, contributing to broader sustainable development goals.

Acceleration of sustainable entrepreneurship is a widely known and applied mechanism of entrepreneurial support that has been adapted to the goals of sustainable development by modifying its value orientation, focus, and technological foundation. This is achieved through the proposed methodology of tailored training programs and the capacities of the digital platform. The relevance of external support for acceleration through grant-based programs is confirmed by updated sustainability statistics: only 28% of Ukrainian businesses remain operational beyond three years, compared to 48% globally and 50% in EU countries.

Unlike incubation, acceleration targets legally registered businesses run by entrepreneurs who already demonstrate consistent entrepreneurial behavior, possess a network of partners, have a credit history, and accumulated experience. Therefore, the key objectives of acceleration are as follows:

1. Familiarization with development perspectives of entrepreneurship and its role in forming the socio-economic foundation of sustainable development. This block mirrors that of incubation programs, as expanding entrepreneurs' perspectives and promoting sustainable development awareness remains vital, but is further enriched by content on collaboration potential, directions, and resources.

2. Strengthening entrepreneurial motivation as the foundational drive of sustainable entrepreneurship, with a focus on revising the entrepreneur's personal values and civic responsibility to align with sustainability priorities.

3. Improving entrepreneurial competence and reconfiguring it to solve practical challenges of sustainable development within the operational context of next-generation entrepreneurs. This block overlaps with the incubation program in terms of

updating technological and managerial toolkits, which is a continuous process.

Recommended duration: The acceleration program is designed as a time-bound mechanism:

− Up to 1 month for educational sessions and expansion-focused business planning;

− Up to 1 month for adding new types of economic activity in accordance with national classifiers (possible via the full-functionality state platform "Business.Diia");

− Up to 1 month for acquiring necessary equipment;

− Up to 1 month for reporting to the grant provider.

Thus, the total recommended duration is 2–4 months, adjusted for the group's readiness timeline.

Priorities and expected impacts of sustainable entrepreneurship acceleration align with anticipated outcomes of the grant-based support program. While the structural logic is based on the incubation impact scheme, the acceleration approach emphasizes changes at the outcome level. The core elements remain but are recontextualized:

1. Integration of sustainable development goals into entrepreneurial behavior, business models, and strategies. This includes self-assessment or structured audits of current business conduct, resource allocation, and strategic frameworks in terms of their alignment with SDG-related objectives, facilitated by expert trainers or consultants.

2. Enhanced collaboration with businesses, educational institutions, research entities, civil society organizations, and governmental bodies to address sustainable development challenges. While incubation introduces basic forms of collaboration, acceleration enables more complex and scalable collaborations (e.g., industrial, innovative, brand/resource/potential-based partnerships, or infrastructure entrepreneurship). It is also advisable to synchronize acceleration programs with incubation initiatives (including their mechanisms, tools, resources, and teams), as well as with other programs targeting sustainability, small business support, or social problem-solving. Such alignment fosters systemic impact, consolidates results, and optimizes the use of available resources.

3. Development of new areas within sustainable entrepreneurship, including social, infrastructure-related, and environmental domains. While incubation programs introduce beginners to these markets − requiring time for capacity building through skills, experience, and resources − acceleration aims to engage existing entrepreneurs who already possess experience, resources, and the motivation to scale or diversify their business. However, many delay such transitions due to uncertainty or lack of exposure. Acceleration addresses this gap by training them in technologies and activities essential to sustainable development and demonstrating their feasibility and profitability.

4. Continuous improvement of the grant-based support mechanism for forming a reserve pool of sustainable entrepreneurship through the tiered ranking of business ideas and projects remains unchanged, though the composition of these tiers may be revised.

Additionally, the following element is introduced:

1. Enhancing the quality of entrepreneurial activity by promoting higher social standards and improving employee motivation. Priority is given to leveraging salaries as a tool to attract, retain, and motivate staff in competitive conditions. The social component is understood to encompass phenomena tied to population sustainability, formation of communities, interpersonal relationships, and public health and living conditions. For entrepreneurs, this concerns their staff; for grantors, their project teams.

2. Infrastructure entrepreneurship represents a promising avenue for sustainable development in the context of a digital and innovation-driven economy. The Concept for the Development of Ukraine's Digital Economy and Society (2018–2020) outlines the establishment of key infrastructures such as digital identity and trust systems, open data, interoperability frameworks, blockchain, e-payment and e-transaction systems, e-commerce, digital public services, essential services (e.g., healthcare, education, public safety, transportation), geoinformation services, and industrial digital infrastructure. While current approaches primarily focus on involving large enterprises in strategic infrastructure projects, micro-, small-, and medium-sized businesses can also play a role.

To demonstrate the feasibility of infrastructure entrepreneurship, two diverse sectors are highlighted: a) transportation and b) sports.

A. Transportation Infrastructure

Sustainable entrepreneurship in public transportation infrastructure (trams, metro, municipal rail, funiculars, taxis, minibuses) is of growing relevance in the region. Despite regulatory shortcomings, several promising areas exist for collaboration between small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and local authorities:

− Modernization of rolling stock based on domestic production: this includes refurbishment of rail and electric transport systems (trams, trolleybuses, metros, etc.), requiring supply chains, component production, maintenance, and auxiliary services;

− Development and digitalization of transport infrastructure, including the construction of modern passenger platforms and bus stops, maintenance of infrastructure related to passenger services, and implementation of electronic ticketing and fare-control systems;

− Research and innovation studies exploring advanced technologies, economic models, and incentive mechanisms for developing and upgrading public transport systems;

− Improvement of transport development governance, such as uniting transport providers into a single association to collaboratively create development plans, protect collective interests, and offer consulting and informational services.

These directions can be advanced if small businesses become more involved in regulatory processes, including public consultations and legislative advocacy:

− Public-private partnerships (PPP) should encourage SME participation in subcontracted works and services for urban transport infrastructure projects;

− Legislation should simplify procedures for SMEs to participate in road and rail modernization projects and allow them to lease land for transport infrastructure purposes.

Entrepreneurs will be informed about such opportunities through educational modules on sustainable entrepreneurship.

Case Study: Urban Transport Infrastructure in Odesa Region

The potential for infrastructure entrepreneurship in the transportation sector has been studied through public transport models in Odesa region, with various innovation strategies proposed (see Fig. 14). These strategies are based on a synthesis of academic research, international best practices, and the specific challenges of public transport in Ukraine's cities.

For example, Strategy No. 5 – Enhancing public safety in urban transport – involved the installation of surveillance cameras with emergency response capabilities on public transport vehicles maintained by the municipal operator. The system allows instant contact with the National Police's rapid response units in Odesa Oblast. This initiative led to the creation of the "Safe Public Transport" social project, with an estimated budget and implementation plan aimed at improving passenger security throughout the region.

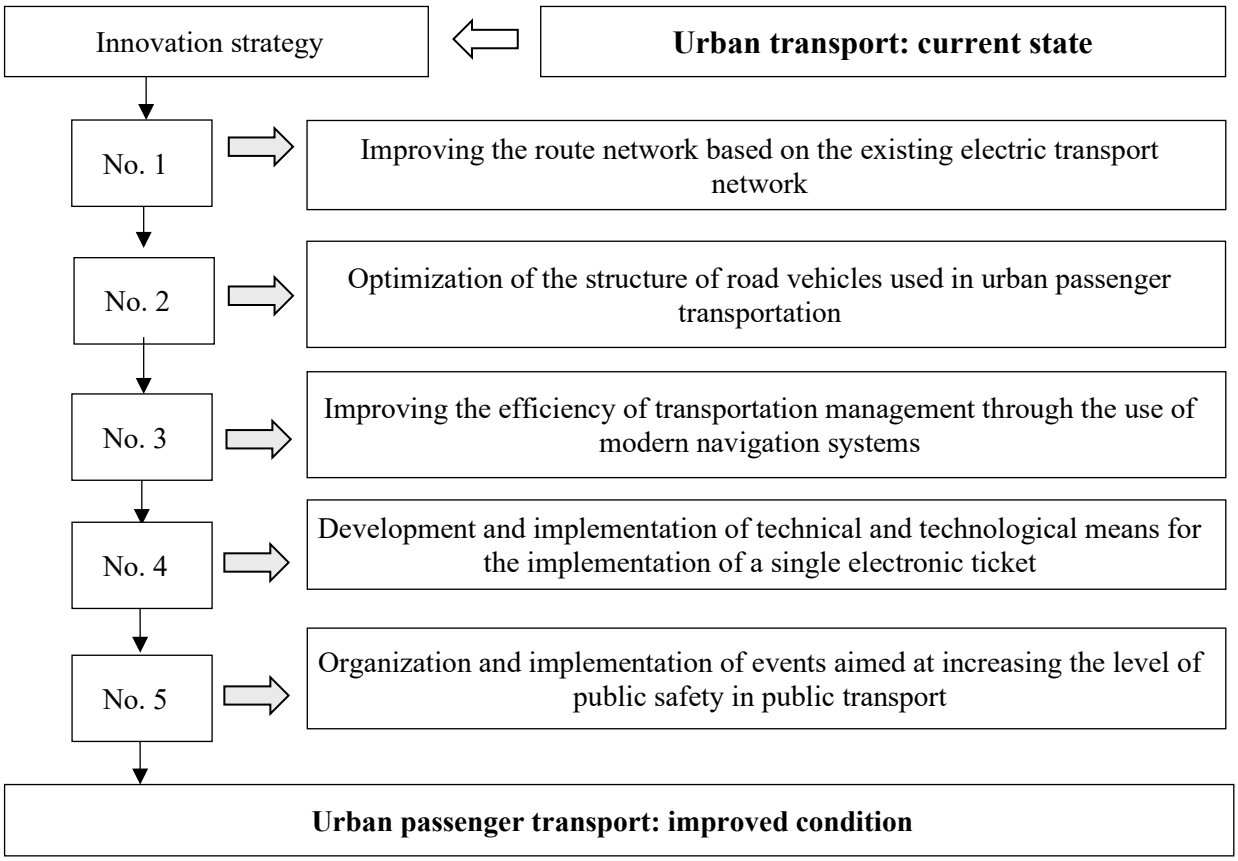


Figure 14 – Innovative Strategies for the Development of Urban Public Transport in Odesa Region (source: author's elaboration)

Source: author's elaboration based on [32,34]

This infrastructure project involved collaboration between two small enterprises, local authorities, civil society, and media outlets. While the project cannot be strictly classified as socio-infrastructural due to its commercial service orientation, its broader objectives align with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 9.3, which emphasizes the safety and development of infrastructure, specifically: "Ensure access to transport infrastructure based on innovative technologies, including increased state participation in various infrastructure projects".

B. The second domain, which may appear less obvious for launching infrastructure entrepreneurship, is the sports and wellness sector. Nevertheless, infrastructure entrepreneurship in sports is entirely feasible.

The model of infrastructure entrepreneurship (Figure 15) reflects the broad variability of infrastructure partnership.

The proposed model of infrastructure entrepreneurship reflects the wide diversity of partnership formats within the infrastructure domain. This diversity is represented by a set of potential business models (1…N), each regulated by a corresponding legal and regulatory framework. The structure of the model includes:

- Block 1: State regulation of entrepreneurship, and
- Block 2: State regulation of partnerships, including public-private partnerships (PPPs).

Accordingly, the business model of sustainable infrastructure entrepreneurship is shaped by two interrelated dimensions:

External constraints and opportunities established by regulatory levers, instruments, and institutional mechanisms, which set the formal parameters within which infrastructure-related businesses must operate.

Negotiated arrangements among entrepreneurs and their partners. These arrangements are built within the limits of the aforementioned external environment and rely heavily on self-organization and self-regulation. The scope and format of collaboration may include resource sharing, capacity pooling, or brand co-development.

The color scheme in Figure 15 (e.g., red, green, blue) visually represents variations

in partnership configurations. These variations indicate the extent to which entrepreneurs retain independence in decision-making, operational execution, and accountability for outcomes within the collaboration.

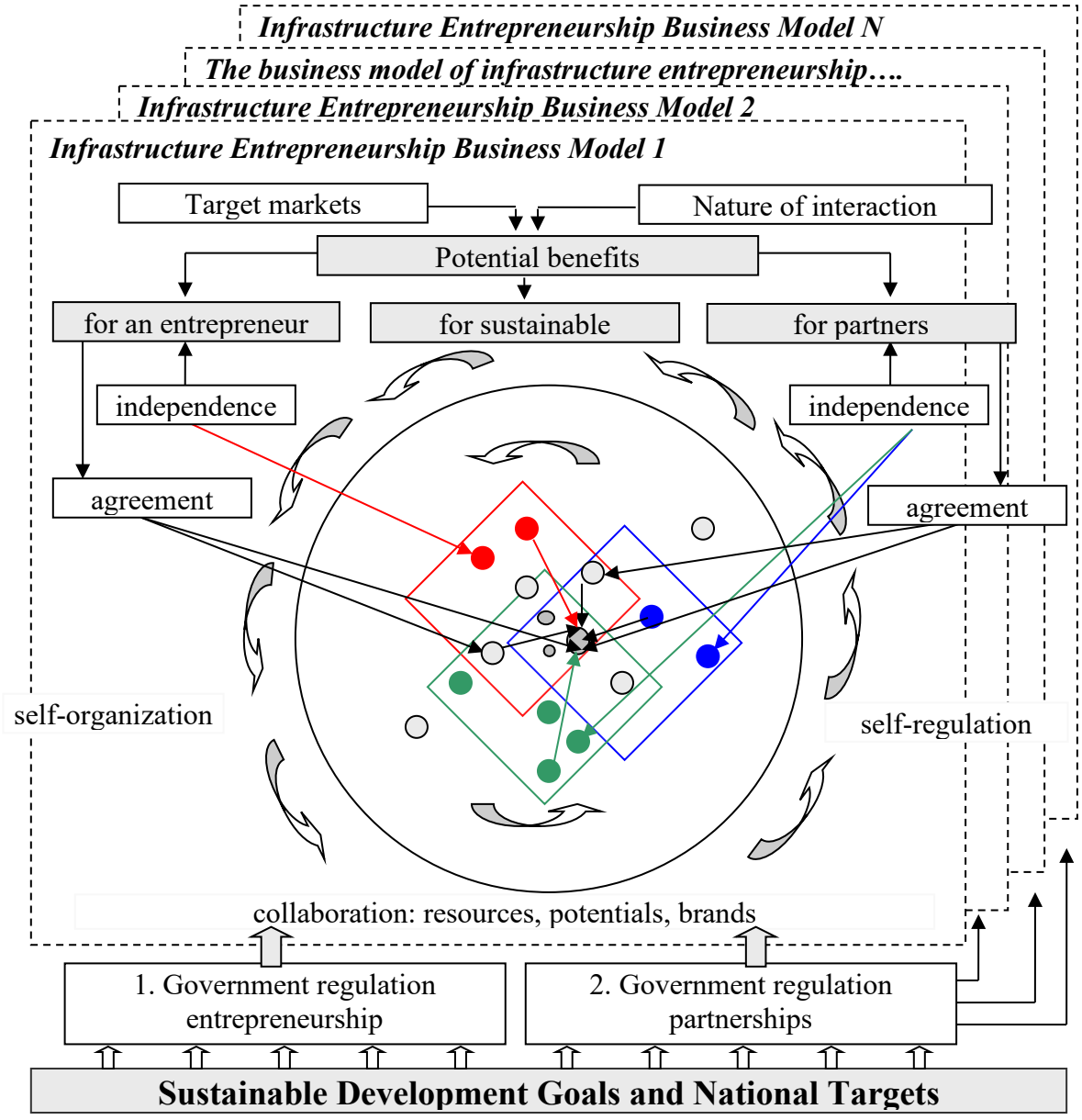


Figure 15 – Sustainable Development Infrastructure Entrepreneurship Model

Source: author's elaboration

It is important to emphasize that:

– Infrastructure business models refer to the internal organization and strategic profile of a specific entrepreneurial entity.

– Infrastructure partnership models, on the other hand, describe the broader

system of interacting stakeholders, outlining the framework of relationships, responsibilities, and shared goals.

Thus, while related, the business model of infrastructure entrepreneurship is not synonymous with the model of infrastructure partnership. They address different layers of institutional architecture: the former centers on the entrepreneurial unit, while the latter encompasses the multilateral configuration of actors involved in joint infrastructure ventures.

The formation of socially-oriented infrastructure entrepreneurship is possible under an appropriate business model – for example, in the form of social taxi services or clubs for people with hearing, visual, or mobility impairments. This type of entrepreneurship is more inclusive, integrating sustainable development principles focused on older adults, youth, women, and children. Examples include food delivery networks for low-income groups and the development of social kindergartens.

The methodology of the acceleration training program follows the same structure as that of the incubation program and includes similar components (goal, competency acquisition clusters, and their key outcomes) but with different thematic content.

The goal of the business acceleration training program is to strengthen the competencies of entrepreneurs and enable them to acquire new skills for running their businesses, exploring new areas of activity, and integrating sustainable development into their operations.

To achieve this, the program introduces participants to new entrepreneurial domains and helps them build competencies in the following training clusters:

- SWOT analysis and business expansion motives, including:
  a) expectations, motivations, and examples of successful business projects implemented by previous participants of acceleration programs, particularly in sectors with high potential for solving sustainable development challenges through small business (such as IT and e-commerce, socially-oriented enterprises, agriculture, and tourism – sectors relevant for Odesa region);
  b) updated business ideas for small and medium enterprises: top 50 business

ideas for expansion and top 10 for sustainable entrepreneurship; collaboration models and types; infrastructure entrepreneurship opportunities;

– Banking products for business: current credit offers, factoring, acquiring services, with concrete examples of institutions, market offer comparisons, bank rankings, and rating methodologies;

– Strategic business planning and business plan development for specific projects, including:

a) business growth strategies and integration of sustainability into operations, strategic frameworks, planning horizons;
b) interactive business model (canvas);
c) traditional and alternative financial sources – including grants (types, donors, conditions, limitations);
d) accounting and legal support for business model change and re-registration of activities under relevant economic classifications (NACE codes); managerial accounting and budgeting tasks, software tools;
e) business plan – summary, structure, and development procedures. Participants develop full business plans through individual and group exercises based on acquired knowledge and networking principles. This includes marketing and financial planning.

– Business proposal and pitch presentation technologies: goal, format, target audience, preparation process, crash-testing of typical projects, public speaking;

– Marketing and customer engagement: fundamentals of marketing strategy and tools; pricing policy; innovative instruments for sales promotion and brand awareness in e-commerce and socially-oriented business; social and territorial marketing;

– Human resource management: legal and accounting registration of hired employees; business team formation (team building), staff motivation and training; creative management and self-management; social mobility tools. Compliance with prevailing HR trends and norms such as:

a) salary increase ranging from 15–20% to 40–50% of base pay;

b) effective duration of salary raise impact: 0.5–1 year;

c) dual salary components: base fixed part and performance-based premium;

d) normative turnover rates for management staff: 4–7% to 12–15%;

e) evaluation of conflicts in incentive systems;

– Business communications and external environment: entrepreneur's image; types of business stakeholders and communication formats; digital communication; negotiation and business contact practices with international partners;

– Corporate social responsibility (CSR): principles of environmentally friendly and socially responsible business, community influence, cooperation and collaboration within local ecosystems; CSR systems and non-financial reporting practices.

Key Outcomes of the Training Clusters in the Acceleration Program. The main outcomes of the training clusters within the acceleration program are as follows:

– Business SWOT analysis and motivation for business expansion:

a) defining the direction of expansion or identifying the necessary resources for business growth;

b) assessing feasibility and sustainability;

c) evaluating threats and advantages of a new product (or its modified characteristics);

d) gaining confidence in the future success of the business and its alignment with sustainable development goals.

– Banking products for business – selecting sources of financing, preparing documentation for funding applications, evaluating the bank's rating and assessing credit instruments.

– Strategic business expansion and project planning:

a) choosing a development strategy (expansion, diversification, ecological, social or infrastructure entrepreneurship);

b) building a business model;

c) identifying sources of financial and investment resources (as needed);

d) defining taxation group and reporting requirements for sole proprietors or private enterprises;

e) developing a financial plan and cash flow forecast;

f) analyzing and planning financial conditions using financial analysis tools (profit and loss forecast, cash flow analysis, financial ratios, bankruptcy forecasting).

− Business proposal and business plan presentation technologies – preparing documents, presenting, and defending the entrepreneurial project.

− Marketing and customer relations (marketing tools and advertising):

a) developing a marketing strategy and tools for sales promotion;

b) preparing the marketing component of the business project.

− Personnel management:

a) building a business team (team building) with attention to regional labor market specifics;

b) legal and accounting procedures for hiring employees;

c) creating an effective employee motivation system.

− Corporate social responsibility:

a) formalizing the social component – implementing measures to shape an environmentally friendly and responsible business image, creating social benefits packages;

b) initiating cooperation within local communities and at the regional level (if relevant to the business), developing formats for non-financial reporting.

− Business communication and understanding of the external environment – identifying stakeholders in one's own business, compiling a list of regular business and internet communications.

Each cluster is detailed in the timeline of the training program. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the acceleration training program is conducted through expert assessment of final program outcomes:

− cquisition of core competencies related to business development;

− completion of a business plan for the selected business expansion project aligned with sustainable development goals, including its presentation and public defense;

– acquisition of new knowledge regarding the opportunities and prospects of sustainable entrepreneurship, including its future impact and the advantages of collaboration;

– development (or reinforcement) of Soft Skills such as networking, public defense of entrepreneurial ideas and their relevance to sustainable development goals, business partnerships, and infrastructure entrepreneurship;

– development (or reinforcement) of competency in applying for grant programs.

Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Acceleration Programs. The effectiveness of acceleration programs is assessed using the same indicators defined previously for incubation programs. These indicators help to evaluate the effectiveness, sustainability, and viability of the outcomes, with a focus on the following dimensions:

– the satisfaction of the needs of the target audience, whose interests are represented by donors;

– the fulfillment of the grant implementer's mission as a change agent in the development of a new generation of entrepreneurship;

– the satisfaction of the needs of the grant program team – acquiring new knowledge, experience, communication networks, and the internalization of sustainable development values.

The application and interpretation of these indicators were previously demonstrated through the assessment of incubation programs developed for the Odesa region and implemented in various cities. A similar assessment for the acceleration programs conducted in Odesa region between 2017 and 2025 is presented in the following table 17.

As observed, the situation differs from incubation. Women demonstrate a broader age range for entrepreneurial activity (20–52 years versus 29–43 years for men), yet they lag slightly behind in terms of job creation (2.3 versus 2.56 jobs per entrepreneur) and significantly in terms of business income (UAH 43,860 versus UAH 56,140).

The outcomes of acceleration programs and their corresponding indicators are defined similarly to those of incubation programs (see Annex A), but with adjustments (Fig. 16).

Table 17 – Gender-Structured Characteristics of Acceleration Programs (2017–2025), Odesa Region

Indicator	2017	2018	2019	2020	2023	2025
Number of Participants	120	95	110	130	140	150
% Women	50%	52%	53%	51%	54%	55%
% Men	50%	48%	47%	49%	46%	45%
Share of Participants Who Launched or Scaled a Business	28%	32%	34%	37%	42%	45%
Share of Participants with Improved Business Skills	60%	62%	66%	69%	71%	75%
Share of Participants Reporting Sustainable Income	35%	38%	41%	44%	47%	50%
Share of Participants Engaged in Collaboration with Local Stakeholders	25%	30%	33%	36%	40%	44%

Source: author's elaboration based on [32,34]

Since participants in acceleration programs are already active entrepreneurs with operational businesses and a certain level of knowledge and experience, these programs place greater emphasis on the quality of development − namely, substantial business improvements facilitated by grant support. Special attention is given to the social impact of the entrepreneurial project and the entrepreneur's co-financing contribution.

General conclusions on the effectiveness of incubation and acceleration mechanisms and the structuring of these processes

Based on the outlined summaries and an analysis of real-life training programs in both incubation and acceleration, the following sequence is proposed for implementing sustainable development entrepreneurship programs (see Fig. 16).

A distinctive feature of the proposed approach to incubation and acceleration is its sequential-parallel, cyclically generative nature. This framework allows for the complete implementation of both incubation and acceleration as standalone grant programs, while simultaneously creating preconditions for launching new ones through a tiering mechanism. This mechanism helps build a pipeline of entrepreneurial ideas and projects aligned with sustainable development objectives, including those that were not initially selected.

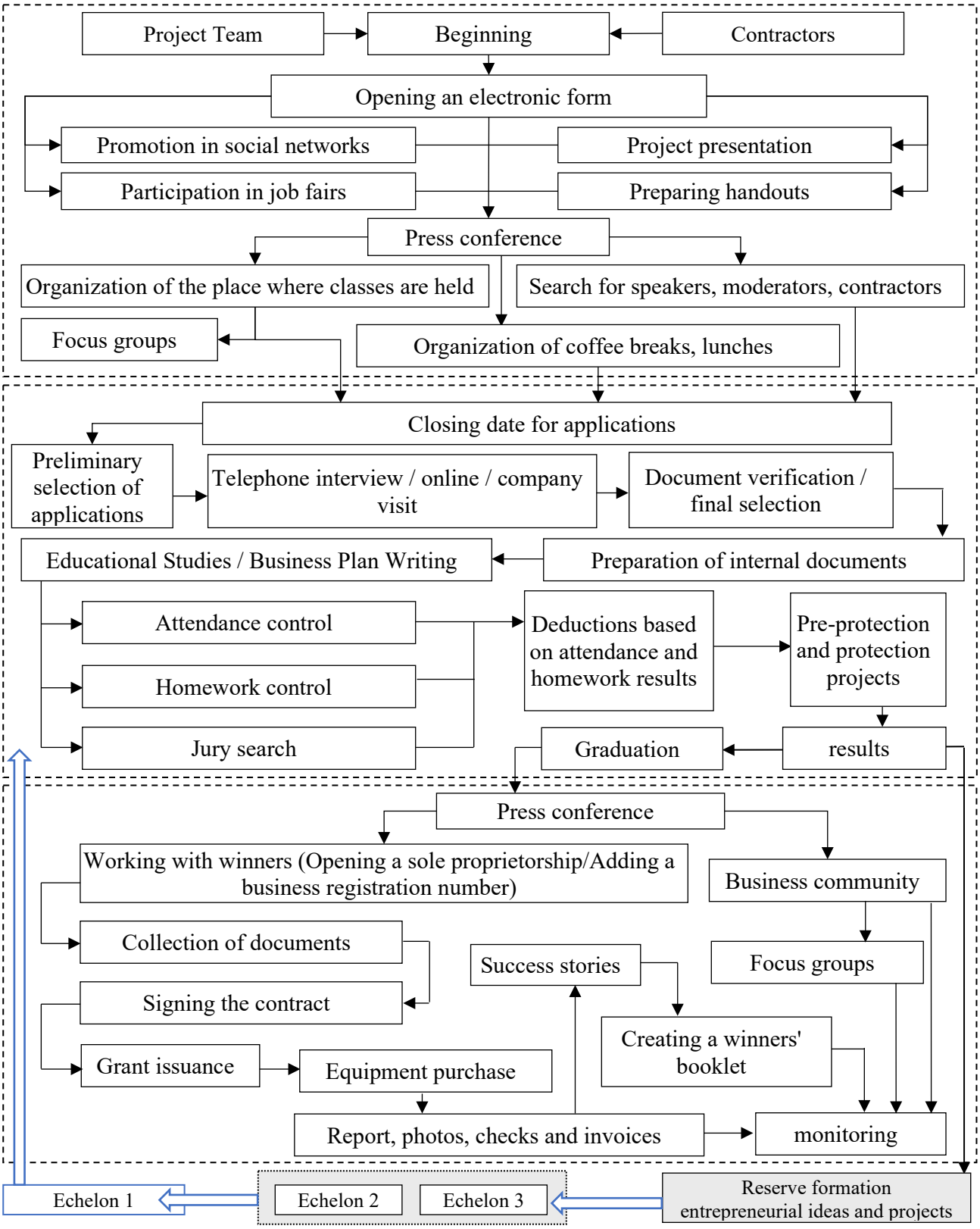


Figure 16 – Recommended sequence for conducting incubation and acceleration programs for sustainable entrepreneurship (Source: author's elaboration).

Source: author's elaboration

Thus, the coordinated application of incubation and acceleration can significantly

accelerate the development of sustainable entrepreneurship because:

1. Although differing in goals, objectives, and grant implementation mechanisms, the processes of incubation and acceleration should be structured under a unified logical framework and methodology, oriented specifically toward fostering sustainable entrepreneurship rather than generic small business development. This promotes the formation of a new value system for entrepreneurs and enhances their competencies accordingly, while also boosting the scale and speed of collaboration − particularly innovative collaboration focused on startups.

2. The proposed algorithm's sequential-parallel and cyclically generative structure enables the full execution of each program as an independent initiative, while simultaneously setting the stage for launching new initiatives. This structure supports a tiering mechanism that maintains a reserve of entrepreneurial ideas and projects capable of supporting sustainable development goals − even if they were not initially selected.

3. The model also incorporates infrastructure-based entrepreneurship as a promising avenue for sustainable business growth in an information- and innovation-driven economy. The developed model of sustainable infrastructure entrepreneurship reflects a wide range of partnership configurations that enable diverse forms of collaboration.

The proposed tools, models, and methodologies aim to improve the effectiveness of managerial decision-making and build infrastructure to support entrepreneurs during the post-crisis period.

First, a model of sustainable infrastructure entrepreneurship was developed, which accounts for the diversity of partnership formats and entrepreneurial autonomy within the legal and regulatory framework. This model highlights the distinction between the business model of an individual enterprise and the general structure of infrastructure partnerships, ensuring a balance between independence and coordination.

Second, the potential of social infrastructure entrepreneurship was analyzed, particularly in areas such as mobility, care services, food provision, and sports. This confirms the relevance of sustainable development tools even in sectors previously

seen as lacking entrepreneurial capacity.

Third, a methodology for sustainable entrepreneurship incubation and acceleration programs was developed. It includes objectives, a cluster-based competence structure, effectiveness assessment tools, and training programs covering financial, legal, marketing, and managerial components. Mechanisms for project selection, evaluation, and support in line with sustainable development principles were also proposed.

Fourth, the effectiveness of infrastructure-based incubation and acceleration mechanisms was demonstrated through implemented programs across various regions of Ukraine. Special attention was given to their cyclic-generative structure and their capacity to form a pipeline of ideas and projects capable of addressing pressing social challenges.

The proposed approaches offer a comprehensive system of tools for managing sustainable entrepreneurship in the context of structural transformation and economic recovery. These tools can be adapted to the needs of public institutions, civil society organizations, and small businesses engaged in sustainable development activities.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

This research has comprehensively examined the transformation of institutional and digital tools for managing sustainable development-oriented small businesses during the economic recovery period. Based on an in-depth analysis of theoretical approaches, international practices, and real-case implementations in Ukraine, the study proposes a system-integrated approach to entrepreneurship management that aligns with the principles of sustainability, inclusiveness, and innovation.

1. Sustainable development entrepreneurship refers to business activities directly aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the daily operations of an enterprise. This form of entrepreneurship represents a new paradigm, in which SDGs are embedded into the core logic of entrepreneurial thinking, behavior, and value creation. Unlike traditional industrial or post-industrial businesses, it requires a fundamentally different governance toolkit. The integrated management system spans three levels: macro (national), meso (regional), and micro (enterprise or organization). While the first two levels depend on the economic governance model and its sustainability transition, the micro-level engages indirectly.

2. The governance toolkit for sustainable entrepreneurship in an information-innovation economy must enable forward-looking, integrated, and digitally enhanced decision-making. Its core components include:

− digital instruments presented via a digital platform for sustainable entrepreneurship management;

− a model for socially responsible selection of business ideas and projects aligned with SDGs;

− frameworks for rapid business model assessment;

− tools for competence development among entrepreneurs;

− a set of indicators for SDG-oriented idea and project evaluation.

The digital platform centralizes services to support awareness, innovation, and competence-based action, thereby fostering sustainable entrepreneurial activity from idea generation to implementation.

3. The socially responsible selection model for business ideas and projects acts as a key mechanism to support initiatives that target specific SDG challenges. Two main groups of projects are identified:

− those eligible for grant funding by national or international donors (e.g. charitable foundations, NGOs, educational institutions, or independent innovators);

− those intended for self-realization or collaborative implementation by self-employed individuals and small or medium enterprises.

Each group has its own application pathways but shares a unified evaluation logic based on SDG alignment and innovative potential.

4. Business models and the tools for their express assessment are shaped by two critical factors:

− the evolving configuration of nine core blocks (customers, value proposition, channels, customer relationships, revenue streams, key resources, key activities, partnerships, and cost structure);

− the entrepreneur's sustainability orientation.

Sustainable entrepreneurship expands responsibility across all blocks, creating new growth points. Business model assessment considers structure complexity, effectiveness, cost, benefits, and alignment with SDG tasks, using a tailored toolkit for rapid evaluation.

5. The profile structure and competency base of the system-integrated governance model for sustainable entrepreneurship development define the goals, organizational functions, resources, information, and business processes of sustainability-focused business models. The purpose of the profile format is to formalize essential model components such as information flows, resource use, functional structure, and operations. Profiles are categorized as identical, supportive, or conflicting. The competency base includes:

− entrepreneurial competence enriched with social and ethical sustainability values,

− managerial competence encompassing decision-making, ethical reasoning, and adaptive skills in uncertainty.

Together, these competencies shape sustainable entrepreneurial behavior, contributing to socio-ecological-economic growth, value transformation, and the emergence of innovative business practices. A dedicated competency development program for sustainable entrepreneurship has been elaborated.

6. The grant-based governance mechanism is a powerful tool for catalyzing sustainable entrepreneurship. It addresses early-stage risks and fosters collaboration. Methodological support includes:

- socially responsible project selection tools;
- entrepreneur competency assessment models;
- guidance on building competent grant program teams;
- recommendations for program administration and performance evaluation.

Adapting this mechanism to the sustainability context involves shifting its purpose, instruments, outcomes, and team values. Collaboration among grants and between programs is a key component.

7. The approach to socially responsible selection of business ideas and projects includes a unified algorithm and specific components:

- defined grant topics aligned with sustainable development priorities;
- a multi-filter model for project selection (e.g. formal eligibility, sustainability relevance, innovativeness, composite rating system);
- a scoring methodology using sustainability and innovation indicators.

Ideas and projects are divided into three tiers:

- those meeting the threshold score;
- those reaching 75–99% of the threshold;
- those below 75%.

Entrepreneur competencies are evaluated three times: after the training, at the program's end, and interactively throughout the process. This enables the accumulation of creative solutions and the adjustment of training programs based on real-time competency dynamics.

8. The scientific-methodological framework for building grant program teams and defining their competency profiles is based on a revised division of roles and

responsibilities. This affects team functionality in key ways:

- General functions evolve due to the complex, unstructured task of fostering sustainable entrepreneurship. This requires:
  a) new administrative strategies to manage emerging risks,
  b) updated tools for evaluating business ideas and projects.
- Specific functions include:
  a) a four-stage project selection process with novel sustainability-focused criteria,
  b) comparative analysis of competing proposals based on innovation,
  c) combining digital platform tools with traditional approaches to address diverse grant program directions.

The ideal team profile is not determined by quantity but by a system of competencies, achieved through combining professional roles and leveraging individual potential.

9. The administration of a grant program throughout its lifecycle revolves around four core pillars:

- Relationships (coordination between program and personnel, entrepreneurs and experts, mentors and teams);
- Motivation procedures for both staff and participants;
- Resource management (planning, allocation, monitoring, analysis, and adjustment);
- Decision-making mechanisms (from program launch to closure, including selection and oversight).

These elements define the architecture of grant administration as a cohesive system. Evaluation of program effectiveness should consider the satisfaction of three stakeholder groups: the target audience, the program implementers, and the grant team itself.

10. Sustainable entrepreneurship collaboration refers to joint creative efforts among entrepreneurs, self-employed individuals, academia, civil society, and local authorities. It is based on shared interdisciplinary competencies and interaction norms

that differ from market logic. This model extends beyond the private sector, promoting:

- joint initiatives,
- knowledge and technology exchange,
- support for sustainable development solutions through co-creation.

Collaboration can involve shared resources, joint branding, and cross-sectoral networks. Mentorship plays a vital role by expanding learning opportunities and helping avoid typical startup errors.

11. Promising areas for collaboration in sustainable entrepreneurship include:

- New types of business activities emerging in response to sustainability challenges (green, eco-oriented, or social enterprises), which can be implemented at any scale and where collaboration is typically voluntary.
- Infrastructure-based entrepreneurship, which inherently requires collaboration between business, society, and government.
- Small-scale business activities that directly contribute to national sustainable development priorities.
- Innovation-focused collaboration involving external knowledge, technologies, startup processes (including testing and expert evaluation), intellectual property protection, and promotion of startup ideas.

Collaboration may involve joint use of resources, competencies, and brands, which is especially relevant in trade due to the presence of both global models and domestic infrastructure (e.g., retail networks and recognizable local brands). Mastery of this collaboration process is supported by mentorship, which helps expand the entrepreneurial funnel and compensate for common startup mistakes through accumulated knowledge and experience.

12. The development of sustainable entrepreneurship can be significantly accelerated through a dual approach that combines two infrastructure mechanisms – incubation and acceleration. Despite having different goals and tools, both processes can be synchronized and structured within a unified methodological framework to:

- Ensure alignment with sustainable development principles,
- Cultivate a new system of entrepreneurial values and competencies,

– Enable faster and broader innovation-driven collaboration, particularly in launching startup projects.

13. A structural framework for sustainable entrepreneurship incubation and acceleration programs is proposed, outlining:

– Shared objectives and priorities,

– Key areas of influence,

– Infrastructure-based entrepreneurial directions.

Recommendations are also provided for duration, methodology, and evaluation of program effectiveness.

A core feature of the proposed model is its sequential-parallel, cyclically generative nature. It enables both standalone incubation/acceleration cycles and the concurrent preparation of follow-up initiatives. This is supported through a staggered filtering mechanism, which creates a pipeline of business ideas and projects – including those not selected in earlier rounds – that are nonetheless aligned with sustainability objectives.

Additionally, infrastructure entrepreneurship is substantiated as a priority direction in today's innovation-oriented economy, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises engaged in logistics, sports, or commerce. The developed model of sustainable infrastructure entrepreneurship reflects the full spectrum of partnership variations.

The implementation of the proposed tools and approaches for managing sustainable development entrepreneurship enables not only to enhance the effectiveness of business activities in the context of post-crisis recovery, but also to shape a new architecture of interaction between business, society, and the state, oriented towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

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APPENDIXES

Annex A. Examples of recommended grant topics (grant requests)

Table A.1 – Sustainable Development Goals: Examples of Recommended Grant Topics (Grant Requests) – for Grantmakers, Sustainable Development Entrepreneurship Ideas and Projects – for Entrepreneurs

Sustainable development goals development	Topics of grant requests	Entrepreneurship ideas and projects sustainable development
1	2	3
Goal 1. Eradicate poverty	1.1 First aid and retraining for modern professions (1.1) 1.2 Creation of new zones and monitoring of social entrepreneurship (1.2). 1.2 Compensation of social costs of entrepreneurs (1.2) 1.3Employment in business of socially vulnerable groups of the population: ATO veterans, disabled people, internally displaced persons, migrants (1.3)	1.1 Social tax (1.2). 1.2Social bakery or social hotel: employment*(1.3).*
Goal 2. Eradicate hunger, develop agriculture	2.1 Improving the well-being of rural communities and vulnerable categories of producers (2.2). 2.2 Expanding sales markets and increasing the added value of products of small and medium-sized enterprises and cooperatives serving agriculture (2.2) 2.3 Increasing agricultural activity and growing rural opportunities (2.3).	2.1 Organic produce (microgreens, corn, greenhouse greens, garlic) (2.2). 2.2 Recycling of coffee shop waste (2.3)
Goal 3. Good health and well-being	3.1. Home care: care for single pensioners, consulting on financial, utility, legal, medical and sanitary issues (3.1, 3.4, 3.5) 3.2 Scholarships and grants for healthcare professionals (3.9) 3.3 Support for medical/scientific research, educational programs, economic initiatives in the field of health care (3.4, 3.7) 3.4 Support for healthcare reform (3.9) 3.5 Prevention of the spread of AIDS: care, testing, support (3.3)	3.1 Private medical rehabilitation facility: rehabilitation, massage, alternative medicine, (3.6, 3.8); 3.2 Private clinical laboratory (3.3, 3.4, 3.7) 3.3 Psychological office (3.8) 3.4 Healthy eating advice (3.8)
Goal 4. Quality education	4.1 Retraining of socially vulnerable groups in modern professions (4.5) 4.2 Business incubation as an element of sustainable development: business training (4.3, 4.5)	4.1 Financial Literacy Center (4.4, 4.5) 4.2 Education and development of children in the IT sphere (4.5).

	4.3 Basic education and gender equality – a culture of sustainable development*(4.3, 4.6, 4.7)*	4.3 Providing distance learning English language services (4.5) 4.4 Teaching children sewing and needlework (4.4) 4.5 Early childhood development (4.1, 4.2) 4.6 Environmental education of school students (4.7)
Goal 5. Gender equality	5.1 Support for SMEs owned and managed by women (5.4, 5.6). 5.2 Activities aimed at improving the situation of women and girls*(5.1, 5.4, 5.6)*	5.1Social Bakery "Nut House"*(5.6).* 5.2 Sports camp for teenagers (5.1, 5.3).
Goal 6. Clean water and adequate sanitation	6.1 Organizations of water supply and wastewater disposal in rural areas (6.1, 6.2). 6.2 Introduction of innovative waste water treatment technologies into SME activities (6.2)	6.1 Aboutcleaning of water channels (6.1) 6.2 Reconstruction of sewer collectors (6.2) 6.3 Repair of the water supply system (6.1, 6.2)
Goal 7. Affordable and clean energy	7.1 Creating a favorable legal, regulatory and market environment and developing institutional, administrative and technical capacity that will facilitate the implementation of energy efficiency measures in public buildings (7.1). 7.2 Compensation for energy efficiency measures when creating a small business (7.2, 7.3). 7.3 Association of homeowners for the implementation of sustainable energy-efficient solutions (7.4)	7.1 Private solar power plant (7.1) 7.2 Hydro or hydrogen power plant (7.2, 7.3) 7.3 Green energy: assistance in implementing a green tariff (7.4).
Goal 8. Decent work and economic growth	8.1 Employment of vulnerable groups (8.3). 8.2 Creating space for self-employment and employment for a certain period of time to gain experience (8.4, 8.5). 8.3 Improving the employability of VET graduates (8.4) 8.4 Decent conditions for temporary employment of IDPs and local population in local labor markets and performance of socially significant works for the benefit of the local community. (8.3, 8.4) 8.5 Cash-for-work wage compensation 8.6 Introduction of innovative production technologies or its modernization for the purpose of job creation (8.1) 8.7 Development of high-tech enterprises (8.2, 8.6)	8.1 Production of batteries for electric vehicles (8.1, 8.2) 8.2 Nanny Agency (8.3) 8.3 School of the modern teenager (8.4) 8.4 Platform for investors and startups (8.6)
Goal 9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure	9.1 Creation of information infrastructure and information support in rural areas*(9.1 9.6)*	9.1 Cycling (9.1) 9.2 Electric car rental (9.2) 9.3 Lease of state-owned areas and their conversion into paid parking (9.3).

	9.2 Support the use of innovations in small and medium-sized enterprises. (9.5, 9.10, 9.12, 9.13). 9.3 Scaling SMEs through job creation (9.10, 9.11). 9.4 Improving the ecological condition, supporting historically valuable objects of settlements, projects that contribute to improving the infrastructure of settlements (9.8, 9.9)	9.4 A modern private clinic that cooperates with medical education institutions and the state (9.4, 9.5, 9.7, 9.10, 9.11) 9.5 Creation of a telecommunications company that meets the needs of rural areas (9.1 9.6) 9.6 Interesting science: a factory of impressions for children (9.7)
	9.5 Expanding the use of electric transport within the tourism industry of the Odessa region (9.1, 9.2, 9.3)	9.7Sorting production waste for further use (9.8, 9.9)
Goal 10. Reduce inequality	10.1 Worldbuilding: Transformation or Conflict Resolution (10.2) 10.2 Retraining and employment of IDPs and local population (10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 10.4) 10.3 Organization of a center for families and children (10.3)	10.1 Franchise business (10.1, 10.2) 10.2 Private kindergarten (10.3) 10.3 Any social entrepreneurship: lawyer, advocate (10.1, 10.3, 10.4) 10.4 Center for Social and Psychological Support to the Family*(10.3)* 10.5 Resource Center for Special Families*(10.3)*
Goal 11. Sustainable development of cities and communities	11.1 Support for united territorial communities in implementing practical urban projects to improve the quality and living conditions of communities (11.1, 11.2, 11.4, 11.6) 11.2 Creating multi-stakeholder partnerships at regional and local levels to address sustainable development issues (11.2, 11.6) 11.3 Building community capacity for effective cooperation on the basis of sustainable development (11.2, 11.6) 11.4 Maintaining biological diversity and ecosystem conservation (11.5)	11.1 Restoring family history/city history (11.3) 11.2 Waste management culture: plastic, glass, paper (11.5) 11.3 Development of a social application for a phone that is tied separately to each city by geolocation (11.4) 11.4 Organization of tourist routes in the city/region/oblast (11.5) 11.5 Collaboration with local governments to screen educational films in rural areas (11.2) 11.6 Ecological houses, sandwich panels, round and energy-saving buildings (11.1)
Goal 12. Responsible consumption and production	12.1 Support for businesses that have a direct environmental component (12.3, 12.4) 12.2 Implementation of business projects on energy efficiency, protection/restoration of natural resources, formation of waste-free production and consumption behavior (12.2, 12.3, 12.4)	12.1 Delivery by electric cars or rovers around the city from customer to customer (12.2) 12.2 Biogas plant (12.3, 12.4). 12.3 Processing of production waste for further production (12.2). 12.4 Ecological poultry farm with a full cycle of product sales: carcass, offal, feathers, droppings, eggs (12.4)

Goal 13. Mitigation of climate change	13.1 Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by creating an enabling legal, regulatory and market environment and developing institutional, administrative and technical capacity to facilitate the implementation of energy efficiency measures in public buildings (13.1).	13.1 Energy audit (13.1). 13.2 Maintenance and installation of metal-plastic structures (13.1). 13.3Repair of household refrigerators(13.1).
Goal 14. Conserve marine resources	14.1 Environmental protection as a guarantee of the development of small and medium-sized businesses (14.2, 14.3)	14.1 Installation of sorting tanks on beaches (14.2) 14.2 Renting beaches from the state (14.2) 14.3 Mollusc, shrimp and mussel farming (14.3)
Goal 15. Protect and restore terrestrial ecosystems.	15.1 Development of ecological practice-oriented projects aimed at supporting biological diversity and preserving the ecosystem (15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 15.4) 15.2 Business incubator focused on the development of ecosystems and business innovations (15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 15.4)	15.1 Extraction and sale of artesian water (15.1) 15.2 Growing Christmas trees for sale (15.2, 15.4). 15.3 Renting fields from peasants or the state (15.1). 15.4 Organic farming (15.3)
Goal 16. Peace, justice and strong institutions	16.1 Prevention of human trafficking, sexual and labor exploitation of women and children (16.1, 16.2) 16.2 Strengthening social cohesion (16.7, 16.8). 16.3Restoring the livelihoods of IDPs and local populations affected by the conflict in eastern Ukraine*(16.7, 16.8)*.	16.1 Social legal and advocacy services (16.1,16.6) 16.2Travel employment agency*(16.2)* 16.3 Social protection service (16.1, 16.8)
Goal 17. Partnership for sustainable development	17.1 Innovativemultifaceted partnership between higher education institutions and SMEs(17.1). 17.2 Promoting entrepreneurship development by strengthening the capacity of state and local institutions that support the development of small and medium-sized businesses (17.1, 17.3).	17.1 IT company, with the possibility of employing students (17.3). 17.2Investment search agency (17.1) 17.3 Prozorro work courses (17.3)

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