



ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT OF THE "BELIEVE IN YOURSELF" FOUNDATION

2025

BELIEVE
IN(✨)
YOURSELF
foundation

About the Foundation

"Believe in Yourself" is a private foundation established by Ukrainian philanthropists Viktor and Iryna Ivanchyk in 2009. Over 16 years of activity, we have developed our own model of work, which differs from traditional charity, because we do not provide one-time assistance, but invest in people and systems that change the country for the long term.

Our approach is based on the belief that Ukraine's sustainable development is possible through education, community building, and the creation of ecosystems in which people can realize their potential. We work at the intersection of private philanthropy, civil society, and education, bringing together universities, businesses, international partners, and communities around common goals.

Over the years, the Foundation has supported more than 900 scholarship recipients, dozens of research projects, teachers, local entrepreneurs and communities across Ukraine. But the most important result is not the numbers, but the community of people who share the values of responsibility, development, and service to society, and who become agents of change in their communities.

**The war has not
changed our mission,
but only confirmed
its relevance.**



Areas of activity

Since its inception in 2009, the Believe in Yourself Foundation has been investing in the development and future of Ukraine through education as a tool for personal development, community building, and the formation of a responsible society.

This mission remains unchanged even in the context of full-scale war, and it is this mission that determines the logic behind all our projects.

In 2025, the Foundation was active in several areas.

It supported talented students and teachers,

funded scientific research,

developed the entrepreneurial potential of young people in the regions,

modernized community infrastructure, and helped veterans gain new professions through educational programs.

Despite the diversity of initiatives, they are all united by the common idea that knowledge, skills, and access to education are what enable people not only to survive difficult times but also to realize their potential and contribute to the country's recovery.



Education

Education has been at the heart of the Believe in Yourself Foundation since its inception.

Since 2009, the Foundation has invested in education as a long-term tool for personal development, community resilience, and the building of a responsible society. The entire ecosystem of the Foundation has been built around educational programs — scholarships for students, support for teachers and researchers, partnerships with universities, as well as initiatives aimed at developing the leadership and entrepreneurial potential of young people.

Over the past 16 years, the Foundation's educational programs have brought together

more than 900 scholarship graduates

— people who now work in science, business, the public sector, and government, and who continue to carry forward the Foundation's values.

In 2025, the Foundation's educational activities covered several levels of development: from supporting schoolchildren and students to investing in teaching and scientific potential.



Scholarship program

The Foundation's scholarship program has been in place since its inception and remains a key tool for supporting talented young people. Its goal is to provide students with access to quality education, community, and leadership development opportunities regardless of their social or life circumstances.

93 scholarships

were awarded in 2025 to students in the humanities, natural sciences, and technical fields at **six partner universities**:

1. National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy
2. Ukrainian Catholic University
3. Kharkiv School of Architecture
4. National University "Kyiv Aviation Institute"
5. Vasyl Stefanyk Carpathian National University
6. Zaporizhzhia National University

Special focus was placed on supporting young people affected by the war.

77 of the 93 scholarship recipients

are children of military personnel, veterans, and those who have been killed or are missing in action. For them, the scholarship is not only financial assistance, but also confirmation that their development is important to society.

Results for 2025:

93 scholarships

awarded to students in the humanities, natural sciences, and technical fields

77 scholarship recipients

are children of military personnel, veterans, or those killed or missing in action

6 partner universities

10+

events for the community of scholarship recipients and alumni

The program combines financial support with mentoring and leadership development, shaping a generation of professionals capable of influencing Ukraine's future.

For me, the scholarship is a profound testament to the fact that people believe in you. It gives you the strength and inspiration to create, develop, and not rest on your laurels. At the same time, the scholarship instills in me the desire to become someone who can support and help others in the future."

Viktoria Tokar, Ukrainian Catholic University, Psychology, 1st year

"For me, a scholarship is not just financial support, it is confirmation of my efforts and that I am moving in the right direction."

Vitalina Kostelnyak, National University "Kyiv Aviation Institute," Transportation Technology, 2nd year

Education

Partnership with Chevening

In 2025, the Believe in Yourself Foundation launched a partnership with Chevening — the UK Government's scholarship programme aimed at developing future leaders. As part of this partnership, **the Foundation will support two scholarships for Ukrainian candidates to study at leading UK universities.** For the Foundation, this support is a strategic investment in shaping a new generation of Ukrainian leaders who will receive a world-class education and return with the international experience, networks, and management approaches necessary for Ukraine's recovery and development.

An important element of the partnership is also **access to the Chevening alumni community in Ukraine,** which includes more than 600 professionals in the fields of public administration, business, education, and the public sector.

For the Believe in Yourself Foundation, this partnership is an opportunity to connect this international network with its own community of scholarship recipients and alumni, strengthening horizontal ties and the exchange of experience between leaders working for Ukraine's development.



"On behalf of the British Embassy in Ukraine, we are incredibly grateful to the Believe in Yourself Foundation for supporting two Chevening scholarships. The Believe in Yourself partnership will not only help support even more talented Ukrainians, but will also raise awareness of opportunities for young people and leaders from the regions."

Anastasia Gorashchenko, Chevening Scholarship Program Manager in Ukraine

Education

Research projects and support for researchers

✦ Long-standing partnership with the Ukrainian Catholic University

Along with supporting students and youth development, **the Believe in Yourself Foundation systematically invests in preserving and developing Ukraine's scientific potential.** For over ten years, we have been supporting research initiatives at the Ukrainian Catholic University, viewing science as an integral part of the country's sustainable development.

This partnership is based on the belief that **Ukraine's post-war recovery depends not only on the economy and infrastructure, but also on the preservation of intellectual traditions,** the development of the humanities and social sciences, and the understanding of historical memory, cultural heritage, and the values of society.

In wartime, academic work is often threatened by a lack of funding, loss of resources, or the forced migration of researchers. By supporting scholars, the Foundation invests in preserving knowledge that might otherwise be lost and in shaping a new generation of Ukrainian researchers capable of working at international standards.

In 2025, the Foundation supported six research projects at the Ukrainian Catholic University in the fields of history, theology, law, cultural heritage, and ancient text studies. These projects not only deepen academic knowledge but also lay the groundwork for public dialogue and strategic thinking about Ukraine's future.



✦ Support for teachers

Support for teachers remains one of the key priorities of the Foundation's educational program, as they shape the environment in which future professionals and leaders of change grow up. The scholarship is aimed at the professional development of teachers and the introduction of modern approaches to teaching, which enhances the quality of education for students.

In 2025, the Foundation's teaching scholarship was awarded to Oleksandr Kolesnikov, a practicing architect and a tutor at the Kharkiv School of Architecture. His professional activity combines architectural practice with teaching, which allows students to work with real cases, modern challenges, and relevant design tools.





The support of the Believe in Yourself Foundation has made it possible to implement several key areas of work.

First and foremost, it has contributed to the development of the educational process at the Kharkiv School of Architecture. Another important area is the professional development of faculty members, including participation in conferences, international architecture competitions, as well as the preparation and publication of academic texts in professional journals. It is also worth highlighting the opportunity to engage in public educational initiatives by delivering open lectures and career guidance events across various platforms.

Without the Foundation's support, many of these initiatives would have been significantly limited or would not have taken place at all.

Oleksandr Kolesnyk, lecturer at the Kharkiv School of Architecture

Participation in discussions on the transformation of higher education

Iryna Ivanchyk, co-founder of the Believe in Yourself Foundation, took part in the Forbes University forum dedicated to the future of higher education. The discussions focused on the role of business and government in transforming universities. During the panel discussion, Iryna Ivanchyk emphasized the importance of involving business representatives in university supervisory boards, noting that such an approach helps introduce modern management practices.

The forum brought together representatives of business, academia, government institutions, and universities, becoming a platform for discussing new approaches to the development of higher education in Ukraine.

A separate contribution of the Foundation to advancing the discussion was the distribution among participants of a methodological guide on corporate governance recommendations for universities, developed by the Believe in Yourself Foundation in partnership with the Embassy of Switzerland in Ukraine and Ernst & Young.



Developing entrepreneurial thinking among schoolchildren

In 2025, the Foundation also invested in the early development of entrepreneurial and leadership potential among schoolchildren from local communities where access to such programs is often limited.

In cooperation with MBA Kids International, the Foundation provided **five full scholarships to students in grades 7–11 from Cherkasy, Dnipropetrovsk, Odesa, Khmelnytskyi, and Vinnytsia regions**. The scholarship covered 100% of the cost of tuition for the Annual Entrepreneurship Program and enabled participants to undergo 30 days of intensive training.

The training was aimed at developing entrepreneurial thinking, financial literacy, project management skills, teamwork, and public speaking. During the training, students worked on their own business ideas and learned to take responsibility for their decisions.

For the Foundation, this initiative is an important part of its educational strategy — an investment in young people at an early stage, when attitudes toward learning are formed, initiative is developed, and awareness of one's role in the community is established.

We see how differently children experience the process of working on their own microbusiness projects: some have already defined their ideas, while others are still exploring and testing different directions — and both approaches are equally valuable. That is why support for scholarships like these is so important: **they give children the opportunity to learn in a safe environment, to experiment, make mistakes, and gradually find their own path.**

Mykola Dorychenko, co-founder and CEO of MBA Kids International



Reintegration of veterans through training and reskilling

In 2025, the Foundation, in cooperation with the Sheriff security company, implemented two large-scale projects for the **professional reintegration of veterans in the fields of humanitarian demining and cybersecurity.**

The goal of these initiatives is to provide veterans not only with training, but also with real tools for economic stability and a return to civilian life through a new profession. Both areas meet the country's key needs in the context of war and recovery: territorial security and digital resilience.

Humanitarian demining training

60 veterans completed a certified course in accordance with IMAS standards and national regulations. The program combined technical training, psychological adaptation, and mentoring support, which allowed participants not only to acquire a new profession but also to gradually integrate into civilian life.

+5% growth in the professional community of deminers in critical regions

78% of graduates are employed in state or international structures involved in demining

60 veterans completed a certified course

+10% increase in the volume of territory cleared at the national level

Retraining in cybersecurity

The project to retrain veterans in cybersecurity was a response to two challenges: high demand for specialists in this field and the need for veterans to establish a new professional identity. The program combines theory, practice at a cyber training ground, work with the international Hack The Box Academy platform, and psychological support.

300 applications received

160 candidates passed technical screening

40 adaptation interviews

30 selected participants

7 lectures + 6 practical classes at the start

30 accesses to Hack The Box Academy

The program develops not only technical skills, but also a long-term trajectory for the professional development of veterans in the high-tech sector. The project is ongoing and will be completed in March 2026.

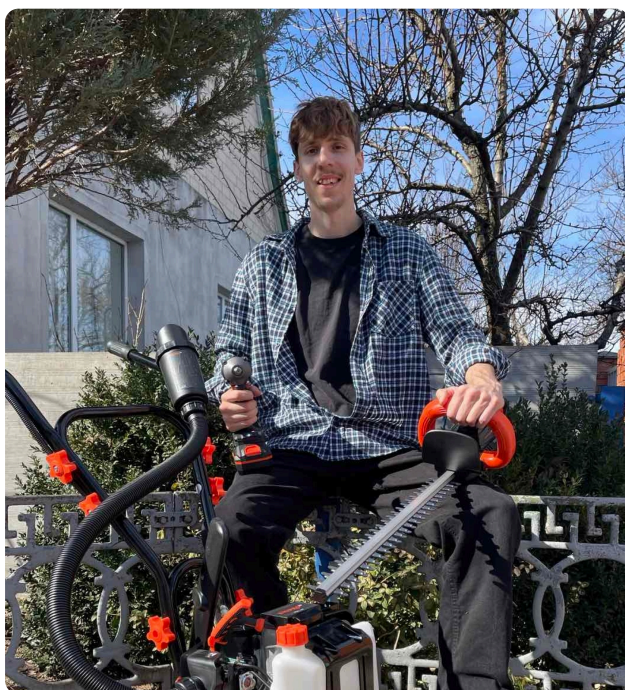
I see my mission as making the country safe.

Maksym Buzeruk, veteran and participant in a humanitarian demining course

Local community development and economic sustainability

In 2025, the Foundation focused part of its efforts on strengthening community capacity through small business support, entrepreneurial and digital skills development, and investment in accessible social infrastructure.

For the Foundation, community development is not a one-time intervention, but rather the creation of conditions under which people can shape the economic and social future of their towns and villages themselves.



◆ Economic empowerment of communities through entrepreneurship

The **Smilyvi 4.0 Project** became a tool for economic empowerment of communities through support for small businesses and agribusiness. It was implemented in partnership with **UMAEEF, Raiffeisen, Vodafone**, and the Astarta agricultural holding, which made it possible to combine financial support, expertise, and infrastructure capabilities for comprehensive support of small businesses in communities.

The **50 winners of the competition received grant equipment and systematic training in entrepreneurship** in the agricultural sector at leading educational institutions — the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine and the MIM Business School — which enabled them to modernize production, improve product quality, and transition to more structured business management.

For the project participants, the support meant not only access to equipment, but also a transition to more structured business management. As a result, the winners became local employers and active economic agents in their communities.

An important feature of **"Smilyvi 4.0" project was its mandatory social component**. The project winners transferred part of the value they created to their communities in the form of food products and essential goods. This made it possible to combine support for small businesses with strengthening food security and social cohesion in 36 communities in six regions of Ukraine.

Local community development and economic sustainability



Serhii Bachylo

a military serviceman and entrepreneur, modernized his apiary "Honey Line" and reached a new level of production.



Yana Brusnik

from Poltava used grant equipment to develop her family business and create the infrastructure necessary for further growth.

Impact in numbers

50

winners of the grant program

50

new jobs created

36

communities in 6 regions received social support

✦ Renovation of a hospital and library in Kobelyaky

In 2025, the Believe in Yourself Foundation, with the support of **Malteser International**, implemented a project to improve the accessibility and inclusiveness of social infrastructure in the city of Kobelyaky (Poltava region).

The initiative covered the renovation of the city hospital and public library — two key spaces used daily by community residents.

The project aimed to remove barriers for people with limited mobility, older people, and other vulnerable groups, as well as to improve the quality and safety of medical and social services.

Розвиток громад і економічна стійкість

Вплив у цифрах

1 hospital has been renovated in accordance with accessibility principles

1 public library has been modernized

1 operating lamp has been installed

3 electrocardiographs have been purchased

An elevator has been installed to ensure barrier-free access

2 inclusive sanitary facilities have been equipped

26 windows been replaced and the energy efficiency of the premises has been improved



Thanks to the renovation of infrastructure and the installation of modern medical equipment, community members gained long-term access to safe and comfortable medical and social services.

"This project is much more than just renovating a building. The library has once again become a vibrant space for meetings, learning, and support. People feel cared for and see that they are remembered even in difficult times."

Oksana Cherkaska, director of the Kobelyatsky Public Library

"The lack of an elevator was not a one-time inconvenience, but a systemic obstacle that affected hundreds of patients every year and exhausted medical staff. Today, we have completely eliminated this risk."

Oleksandr Gorbenko, Director of the Kobelyaky City Hospital

Education

Digital skills and access to technology for schoolchildren from communities

As part of its educational focus, in 2025 the Foundation implemented a project aimed at developing the digital skills of schoolchildren from communities, particularly in small towns and rural areas, where access to modern technologies remains limited.

The project combined infrastructure support for schools with practical involvement of children in working with technologies.

As part of the initiative,

14 schools in the Poltava, Khmelnytsky, and Ternopil regions received computer equipment.

A total of

59 computer sets were donated,

allowing schools to upgrade their learning environment and provide students with access to basic digital tools in their daily learning process.

The second component of the project was the nationwide

IT Restart Ukraine 2025 hackathon,

the final of which took place in November 2025.

The hackathon was attended by

805 schoolchildren in 220 teams from 190 educational institutions in 19 regions of Ukraine.

The goal of the hackathon was to combine

IT skills with Ukrainian culture,

giving children the opportunity to work with themes of heritage and identity through modern technologies. Special emphasis was placed on involving children from rural areas.



As a result of the hackathon,
80 finalists, including 12 educational institutions,

received modern equipment: interactive whiteboards, robotics kits, 3D printers, and Arduino educational kits. This allowed schools to continue working with technology after the project was completed.

The project helped
reduce the digital divide between rural and urban schools,

increased students' motivation to learn technology, and strengthened teachers' ability to use digital tools in the educational process.

Cultural Resilience & Social Dialogue

In 2025, the Foundation combined community-level cultural work with active participation in nationwide cultural events. Through cultural trips, the Foundation worked with seven libraries in different regions, transforming them into platforms for discussion about identity, history, and shared experiences.

In addition, together with its partner, NGO "Library Country", the Foundation donated over 400 books to libraries and Resilience Centers—community hubs where people can receive free social services and psychological assistance. The new books help these spaces expand access to education, support cultural life, and strengthen communities.

A key component of the initiative was a series of public lectures on Ukrainian identity featuring Nataliia Kryvda, Ukrainian philosopher, Doctor of Philosophy, and professor at Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv. The lectures attracted more than 250 participants in person and reached a significantly wider audience online.

The Foundation also supported the national exhibition "Bread" at the Ukrainian House, one of Ukraine's leading cultural institutions. The project showed how cultural initiatives can work meaningfully with historical memory and the contemporary experience of war, while attracting wide and diverse audiences.

Impact in numbers

7 libraries where cultural trips took place

400+ books donated to libraries and Resilience Centers

4 lectures on identity with the participation of Natalia Kryvda

250+ participants in offline events + online audience

1 strategic partner "Library Country"

Supported the exhibition "Bread" at the Ukrainian House





Support for intellectual and cultural communities

In 2025, the Believe in Yourself Foundation continued to support intellectual and cultural communities that play an important role in shaping public dialogue, developing critical thinking, and strengthening civic resilience.

The Foundation supported the activities of the [Aspen Institute Kyiv and Ukraïner](#) — initiatives that promote civic values, explore Ukrainian culture and identity, and shape the contemporary narrative about Ukraine both within the country and internationally. For the Foundation, this support is a contribution to the development of institutions that serve as examples of responsible leadership, influence the formation of public opinion, and strengthen trust in society.

A separate element of this work was the [grand sponsorship of the annual charity evening of the Ukrainian Catholic University in Kyiv](#) — an event that brings together the community of alumni, partners, and friends around supporting education and the development of UCU as an institution. For the Foundation, this is a continuation of long-standing partnership with the Ukrainian Catholic University and an investment in the institutional stability of Ukrainian education.

By supporting such initiatives, the Foundation works not only with individual projects, but also with an ecosystem of people and institutions that shape long-term change in society.

"Believe in Yourself Space" as a space for strengthening the Foundation's impact

The strategic priorities of the Believe in Yourself Foundation include not only supporting individuals and institutions, but also scaling up its impact through communities. The Foundation's team and founders believe that sustainable change happens when proactive people have a physical space to meet, think together, and move from talk to action — through regular contact, around ideas, books, coffee, and events.

To this end, on December 1, 2025, **the Foundation opened Believe in Yourself Space**, a space in the historic part of Kyiv for people and organizations seeking to bring about change in Ukraine through education, responsible leadership, and collaboration. Believe in Yourself Space combines several functions:

- 1. A lecture hall**
for public events, discussions, and closed meetings.

- 2. A coffee shop**
as an informal space for communication.

- 3. STOİK Books bookstore,**
which shapes the intellectual environment of the space.



"Believe in Yourself Space" as a space for strengthening the Foundation's impact



First results

Since its opening, the team has held more than 10 events in open and closed formats. A separate area of the space's work is the Impact Breakfast initiative — a format of intellectual breakfast meetings with people whose decisions and daily work are creating real change in Ukraine.

The first Impact Breakfast was dedicated to contemporary Ukrainian patronage and the role of women in philanthropy. Kateryna Zagoriy, co-founder of Zagoriy Foundation, Hrystia Hranovska, co-founder of the Hrystia Hranovska Foundation, and founder of the Believe in Yourself Foundation, Iryna Ivanchyk, were invited to participate in the discussion. The participants shared their experiences of building philanthropic initiatives, supporting education, culture, and social projects, as well as their own vision of how private responsibility can be transformed into sustainable social impact.



International cooperation

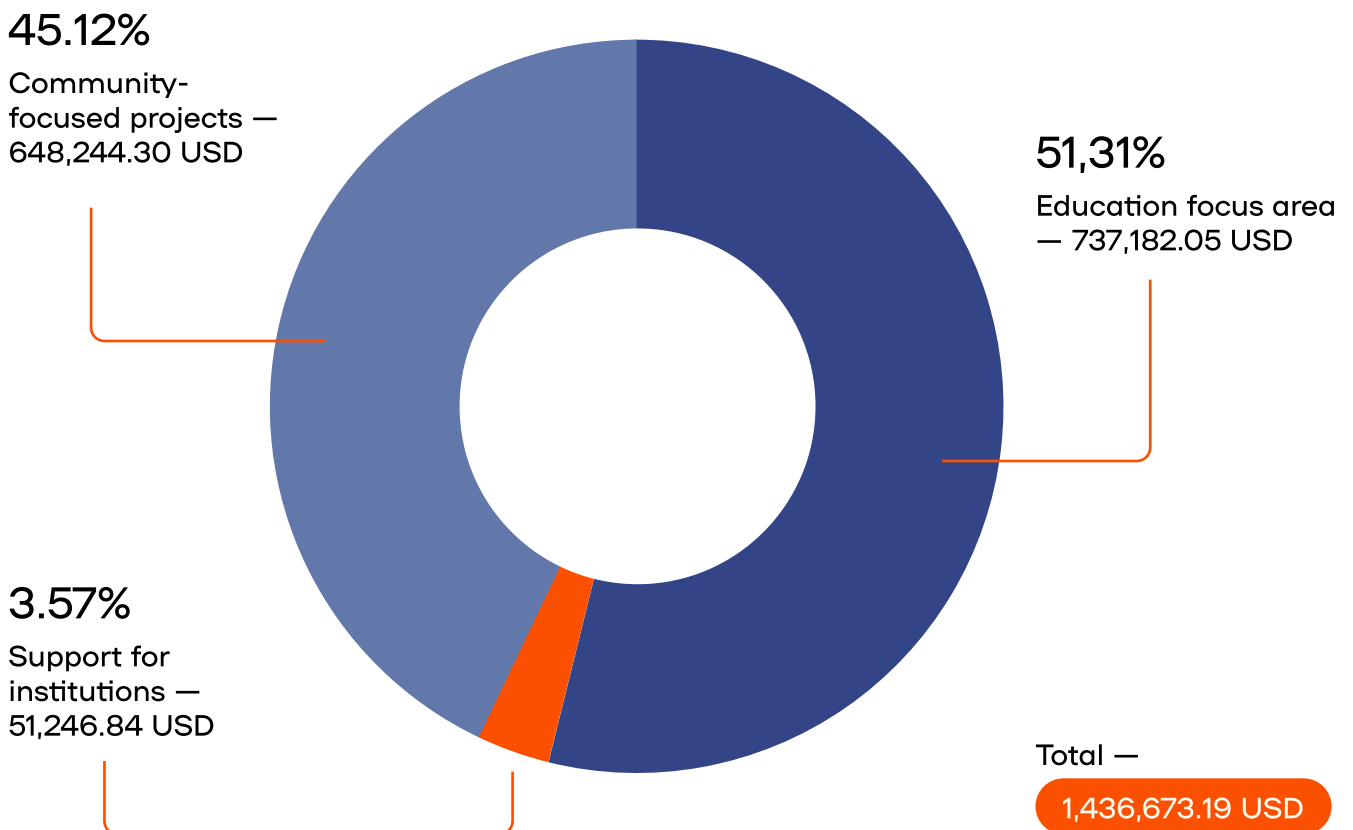
In 2025, the Believe in Yourself Foundation became part of Foundations for Ukraine, an international coalition of philanthropic organizations that brings together foundations from Europe and North America to support Ukraine.

Participation in Foundations for Ukraine gave the Foundation access to an international community for sharing experiences, implementing joint approaches to impact assessment, and coordinating efforts in the fields of education, culture, and community development. For the Foundation, this also means integration into a broader philanthropic context — a transition from supporting individual projects to coordinated international decisions.

In 2026, the Foundation plans to use this partnership to develop joint initiatives, attract new international partners, and strengthen institutional capacity.

Foundation expenditures in 2025

All figures are presented in USD



In 2026, the Foundation will focus on scaling up programs that have already proven their effectiveness, as well as launching new tools to support people and institutions.

Scaling up the scholarship program

The Foundation plans to increase the number of scholarship recipients and expand the program's geography. A separate focus will be on implementing a structured leadership component through mentoring, community work, and the development of managerial and civic skills.

Believe In Yourself Award

In 2026, the Foundation plans to launch the annual Believe In Yourself Award for people and initiatives that continue to create value and take responsibility even in difficult conditions. The award will be a tool for public recognition of contributions to the development of communities, education, culture, and public life.

Higher education and science

The Foundation will strengthen its work with universities and research institutions. A separate area of focus will be participation in discussions and initiatives on corporate governance reform in universities as a tool for improving the quality of management, modernization, and sustainability of higher education.

Local economic development of communities

The Foundation will continue and expand the Smily project as a tool for small business development and strengthening the economic sustainability of communities. In 2026, the program will focus specifically on the development of women's entrepreneurship.

Culture and Publishing

In 2026, the Foundation will begin cooperation with the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine in the field of book publishing. The main focus will be on expanding access to quality literature and supporting libraries and cultural centers as spaces for learning and interaction.

Development of "Believe in Yourself Space"

The space in Podil will become a permanent platform for the Foundation's events, meetings, and initiatives. In 2026, regular program activities, the development of new partnerships, and the strengthening of the space's presence in the public and expert environment are planned.

International collaboration

The Foundation plans to strengthen its international focus, in particular through participation in the Foundations for Ukraine coalition and the development of partnerships with international philanthropic and educational organizations. This will allow scale up successful Ukrainian practices, attract new resources, and integrate the Foundation's activities into a broader international context of support for Ukraine.

