

# Training and Internship Programme Support for Ukrainian Municipalities (TIPS4UA)

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

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### Abbreviations:

TIPS4UA	Training and Internship Programme Support for Ukrainian Municipalities
U-LEAD with Europe	Local Empowerment, Accountability and Development Programme
CoR	European Committee of Regions
EU	European union
UA	Ukraine
IO	Implementing organisation
IP	Implementing partner
HO	Host organisation
SM	Sending municipality
BoT	Bridges of Trust
NAUCS	National Agency of Ukraine on Civil Service

## TIPS4UA

Training and Internship Programme Support for Ukrainian Municipalities TIPS4UA – is a training and internship program for local government officials of Ukrainian municipalities at local and regional level in Europe. TIPS4UA was initiated by the [European Alliance of Cities and Regions for Reconstruction of Ukraine](#) and is being implemented by the [European Committee of Regions](#) (CoR) in cooperation with [U-LEAD with Europe](#) and implementing partners in EU.

TIPS4UA aims to enhance the capacity of Ukrainian municipalities when managing preparation and implementation of municipal projects. Focus is put on planning, preparation, implementation of municipal projects and public services. Guidance will be provided on how to:



TIPS4UA envisages the training and internship visit to a host municipality or region in the European Union or in the associated countries of two persons from the Ukrainian municipality: a municipal leader and a municipal specialist. This will help to improve the project management process in Ukrainian municipalities.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### TIPS4UA Implementing organisations

The overall implementation of the TIPS4UA program is the responsibility of the CoR and U-LEAD. The two organisations are responsible for:

- Organisation of the overall TIPS4UA capacity development programme in partner countries and organisations, ensuring quality and keeping the programme running,
- Selection of the participants from Ukrainian municipalities, making the match of participating staff members of Ukrainian municipalities and host organisations in the EU,
- Development and implementation of the Training course in STEP 1 (training course curricula prepared, trainers selected, training simulations executed),
- Creation and organisation of continuation of an expert network among the participants of the programme (Step 3),
- Organising feedback sessions and possible verification checks of training programme,
- Ensuring the quality of the reports from IP and consolidating them in the overall monitoring system,
- Promoting the program, developing and publishing success stories and supporting publicity of the results,
- Providing a certificate of successful completion of the TIPS4UA programme to participants (to be co-signed by HO, IP and IO) and “thank you letters” to host organisations.

### Implementing partners

IPs are identified by IOs and support HOs in organization of internships/hospitation. These organisations are responsible to:

- Coordinate and support HOs in organisation the TIPS4UA program in country/ies covered,
- Communicate and promote TIPS4UA in the country covered, motivate and where necessary search for host organisations to make arrangements for the hospitations to be implemented,
- Plan and support implementation of the hospitation visit to a host organisation (STEP 2):
  - Coordinate the preparation of the individual internship/hospitation plan, prepare it for signing,
  - Help HO to ensure accommodation, local transport, meals, welcome and farewell at arrival,
  - Organize the preparatory meeting, regular meetings and ensuring presence at those meetings,
  - Ensure financial track and keeping records,
  - Check the progress of the internship/hospitation visit,
  - Report to IO,
  - Ensure quality of the collaboration and suggesting necessary changes, addendums and solving problems if necessary.
- Support the sending municipality and others in the process to identify needs of the municipality, align tasks with the local development and recovery plan and define knowledge, skills to be learned over the visit and lead the preparation of the individual internship plan to the final draft.

### Host organization and mentor

Host organizations are local authorities (municipalities) and/or regional authorities/bodies/agencies depending on the legal and organisational structure in the EU or in the associated countries. Their tasks are as follows:

- Providing mentor(s) and where necessary covering mentor(s) costs to work with interns during the duration of the TIPS4UA, in particular during the preparation and implementation of internship/hospitation (STEP 2),

- Co-preparing individual internship/hospitalation plan for visit with IP, which will detail the internship activities and programme of the visit, sign it,
- Taking care of the local logistics and covering the related costs (accommodation, meals, local transportation),
- Participation in preparatory and regular meetings with the trainee/intern and the IP,
- Organising integration of the interns in the working process, ensuring necessary coordination, communication and working space,
- Ensuring, when possible and necessary, the use of tools, office equipment and software to enable advanced learning,
- Ensuring that all legal requirements in the host country are respected.

### Sending municipality

- Propose good candidates eligible for the travel and provide necessary information and other support needed to develop project proposal,
- Positively promote and facilitate the cooperation with the municipality in the EU or in the associated countries,
- Maintain positive orientation towards introducing necessary steps and processes in the municipal administration to improve project management and investment projects' operations,
- Continue paying the full salary of its employee during the whole duration of the training and hospitalation,
- Ensure that the candidate for the internship/hospitalation to the EU member state has a solid working knowledge of the English language or the language of the receiving municipality/regional authority in the EU or in the associated country (one candidate could be at a basic level of language proficiency, while the seconded official should be able to effectively communicate with the mentor and get the maximum out of this experience),
- Pay for local and/or short international travel to and from the agreed international travel hub (e.g. airport, railway station or similar) in Ukraine or neighbouring country (Moldova, Hungary, Poland, etc),
- Cover the costs for participants' international travel insurance.

### Interns/Trainees

- Participate in the preparation of their respective individual internship plan, sign and follow it diligently,
- Travel to host country on time, according to the agreed plan and return to Ukraine,
- Comply with the host country's legalisation, rules and standards of processes in the host organization,
- Respect the host organisation's organisational culture and working conditions, diligently follow the agreed tasks and agenda, and comply with health and safety measures,
- Deliver a draft project proposal/idea already to the mentor and finalize project proposal within 3 months after the internship,
- Inform IP on any divergence from the agreed plans and other open issues if necessary.

### Invited participants for training and internship program

Only Ukrainian local government officials are invited to become Intern/Trainee under TIPS4UA and visit authorities in the EU and associated countries. There are two groups of officials that are prioritised under TIPS4UA:

- Municipal Leaders (Mayor, Deputy Mayor)
- Municipal Specialist (Project Manager, Specialist responsible for project work).

Municipal specialists are project managers and other specialists responsible for project work. When considering the applications, the intent is to attract participants who act in the sphere of preparation of municipal investment projects. They need to be senior enough to be able to learn, design, adapt and coordinate project management processes in their own municipality after return to their home post.

## Process of implementation

TIPS4UA program will be implemented within many phases from preparation to final management while 3 key steps are important:

- STEP 1: Preparatory training module organized online/offline in Ukraine (March-May 2025),
- STEP 2: Internships with practical experience in a hosting municipality or region in the EU or associated country (May-October 2025),
- STEP 3: Continuous capacity building within Community of Practice for Project Management (in October 2025).

The programme may continue in 2026 and 2027.

### Identifying Hosting Organisations (HO)

In summer 2024, the European Committee of Regions invited its members to express their interest in hosting representatives of Ukrainian municipalities and voice their willingness for cooperation.

To express their position, potential hosts will need to reply to CoR by the end of September 2024. HO will be invited to:

- 1) Undersign a formal letter of intent and
- 2) Fill in a questionnaire, covering project preparation experience, thematic fields where HO has strong experience and good practices to share, information on established partnerships and on-going projects with Ukrainian peers.

After the letters and questioners are received, the CoR will review all potential HO and inform them of their acceptance into the initiative. This will generate a first batch of data with details on specialities of host organisations to be matched with needs of Ukrainian municipalities.

### Identifying Ukrainian municipalities (SM)

In February 2025, the U-LEAD will publish a call for expression of interest among Ukrainian municipalities to understand their willingness and needs for participation in the TIPS4UA.

To express interest, potential Ukrainian municipalities will need to reply to U-LEAD by the end of February 2025. To do so they will have to submit:

- 1) formal letter of intent (stating willingness to cooperate and names and functions of the potential participants and their tasks in municipality related to project management) and
- 2) filled in questionnaire, which includes information about municipality, proposed TIPS4UA participants and covers needs for project preparation, thematic fields where support is needed in terms of administrative procedures and technical project preparation.

After the letters and questionnaires are received, U-LEAD will review the applications, analyse information there, including the one related to the proposed participants, complete the selection and inform Ukrainian municipalities of their acceptance into the initiative. This will generate a second batch of data with details on needs of Ukrainian municipalities to be matched with possibilities of European municipalities (HO).

### Matching

Matching of HO with representatives from Ukrainian municipalities will be done in March 2025 following the selection process of Ukrainian TIPS4UA participants to be organized in first week of March 2025.

The following prioritisation criteria will be taken into consideration for matching:

- Where possible, European HO will host internees of its an existing partner municipality in Ukraine (if such partnerships exist, and if the Ukrainian partner applied and is selected),
- If European HO doesn't have partner in Ukraine or its partner hasn't applied (wasn't selected), the match will be based upon:
  - Where possible, similar size and profile of municipality,
  - Thematic potential project and its field and practices which may suit Ukrainian municipality and support the development of partnerships.

The match will be done by the TIPS4UA IO (CoR and U-LEAD with Europe) and consulted with Implementing Partners (IP).

### Preparation of the internship visit

After the partners (SM and HO) are matched, the meeting between mentor and Ukrainian participants will be organized to share first personal information necessary for the preparation of the individual internship plan.

The individual internship plan will include:

- Names of interns, mentors and shadowing person from the IP to act as a support,
- Needs of the Ukrainian municipality which should be thoroughly reviewed and aligned with the local development and /or recovery plan. This alignment will help identify the specific sector and focus area for the project and to be prepared while visiting HO. Additionally, this will serve as the foundation for selecting the necessary skills, knowledge, and processes to be learned.
- Suitable good practice of the host to share,
- A programme/agenda with the dates and time of the onboarding meeting and exit meeting, as well as other relevant activities.
- Logistical plan: travel from and back to Ukraine, accommodation details, costs reimbursement procedures if in place (these should not overburden the Ukrainian sending municipalities),
- Health and safety tools and equipment to be used if needed.

Internship plan may include some materials to read to prepare for the internship (info about local self-government system, hosting municipality, projects implemented, etc).

The individual internship/hospitalation plans will be prepared in April-May 2025 jointly by HO and SM (with the involvement of Interns/Trainees) with the overall coordination of IP.

### STEP 1: Preparatory training module organized online/offline in Ukraine

The Preparatory training module will be organised in hybrid (offline for leaders and combination of offline and online modules for the specialists). Two sets of Preparatory training module:

- Language course:
  - Duration: up to 6 weeks
  - Topics: Basic language training of English or other language relevant for communication with local officials of the HO will be organized by U-LEAD with Europe.
- General project management training:
  - 3 two-days offline trainings for the leaders,
  - 2 two-days offline trainings and 6 weeks online training for specialists.
  - Topics to be covered:
    - Organization of project work in municipality,
    - Project Cycle Management,
    - EU Cohesion and Regional Policy and Coordination of Structural Instruments.
    - Ukraine Facility,

- Municipal partnerships.

The Preparatory training module will be implemented from March to May 2025.

Actual visit for internship/hospitality will be organized after participants successfully participated in STEP 1: Preparatory training modules organized online/offline in Ukraine.

### STEP 2: Internship with practical experience in a hosting European municipality

The exact internship dates will be identified jointly by HO and interns. As mentioned above, both interns from the UA municipality will travel together to the HO while municipal leader will stay with HO for up to one week, municipal specialist will stay for up to two weeks.

Where possible from travel perspective, interns will stay for one day in the capital of the country for the introductory session organized by the IP – in those cases where this exists and has accepted to assume a coordinating role.

In terms of format, an internship/hospitality visit may include:

- Orientation – onboarding session to provide general information about the HO, system, project being prepared in HO, meet host and others in the process.
- Practices sharing – site visits to present project implementation practices, construction and other sites, use of IT technology and other support tools in administration, good suitable practices,
- Learning – training inputs related to project preparation and implementation, review of the project documentation, discussion with experts and HO staff,
- Experience sharing – tips and practical insights on the work with EU funded projects, also talking to intermediary bodies for EU funds in host country, if possible,
- Exchange – venue for discussions, public consultations and hearings, networking, searching for partners in potential projects,
- Shadowing – trying the role of the host municipal officials (*how one does it in the EU*).
- Regular meetings among HO, intern and IP and 2 exit meetings where final exit report is to be discussed and visit closed.

In terms of topics, the internship/secondment visit should cover

- Thematic sector and suitable good practices which may help Ukrainian municipality to find efficient solutions for their investment projects,
- Absorption capacity solutions in HO (budget and financial planning, overall infrastructure planning, linking different bodies of administration in one functional system, project planning, methodology, decision making processing, preparation of tendering and contracting, implementation of projects and capacity to implement, monitoring, access to EU funding),
- Cooperation, networking and partnership with other municipalities and regions (where applicable) for bigger projects and joint administrative solutions.

Internship/secondment will be implemented between May and October 2025.

Participants are required to return to Ukraine as indicated in the Individual internship plan. After return the interns and the SM are required to further participate in work of the programme to assure results are implemented in their municipality.

### STEP 3: Continuous capacity building within Community of Practice for Project Management

Upon return to Ukraine:

- Participants continue their professional duties in their municipality and further develop and help in implementing their project that started to develop in HO.

- Participants will join the Community of Practice for Project Management and will be regularly offered by U-LEAD thematic trainings (including the ones on soft skills) and opportunities for professional exchange.

## Financial arrangements

Implementing organisations are financing:

- Implementation of overall TIPS4UA programme, in line with their bilateral agreement and respective capacities,
- Institutional and international promotion and communication.

Implementing partners are financing:

- Promotion of the TIPS4UA in the country covered by IP,
- Own administrative costs for the implementation of activities,
- International travel (both ways) for the interns from the agreed international travel hub (funding comes from U-LEAD for the participants from up to 25 SM in 2025).

Host organisations are financing:

- Accommodation and meals at the visit location (accommodation and subsistence allowance can be offered in line with the host's financial possibilities and living standards),
- Short local travel when this is needed for the implementation of the individual internship plan and preparation of the draft project proposal,
- Salary and nationally agreed payments of the mentor,
- Working space with related costs (electricity, office materials and similar).

Sending organisations are financing:

- Local and/or short international travel to and from the agreed international travel hub (e.g. airport, railway station or similar) in Ukraine or neighbouring country (Moldova, Hungary, Poland) depending on the travel arrangements while they are encouraged – if possible – to finance the whole trip of the intern to the host organisation location,
- salary and nationally agreed payments of the interns when at visit,
- costs related to international travel insurance.



## Indicative implementation of the pilot phase

Activity	Responsible	2024					2025												2026			
		8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4
Preparation of Call for interest and questioners for EU and Ukraine	IO	■																				
Call for interest for HO	CoR	■																				
HO to Express interest (end September 2024)	HO		■																			
Call for interest from Ukrainian municipalities	U-LEAD							■														
SM to Express interest (end February 2025)	SM							■														
Selection of Ukrainian municipalities	U-LEAD								■													
Preparing matches	U-LEAD									■												
Preparation of Individual internship plan template	U-LEAD				■																	
Meeting HO for detailed agreement	IP					■	■	■														
Development of the Preparatory training module organized online/offline in Ukraine	U-LEAD	■	■	■																		
Piloting and certification of training curricula with NAUCS	U-LEAD			■	■	■	■															
Preparation of the individual internship plan	SM, HO, IP								■	■												
<b>Implementation of the Preparatory training module organized online/offline in Ukraine (Step 1)</b>	U-LEAD								■	■	■											
Assessment of potential UA participants (result of the Stage 1) and final selection of participating partners and pairs	IO										■											
Finalisation of the individual internship plans	IP, HO, SM											■										
Preparation of the internship/ secondment schedule	U-LEAD											■	■									
Organization of trips for internships	SM, HO, IP											■	■	■	■							
<b>Internship with practical experience in a hosting municipality in the EU or associated country (Step 2)</b>	SM, HO, IP											■	■	■	■							
Monitoring of internships	IP											■	■	■	■							
Exit report preparation	HO, SM											■	■	■	■							
Exit report approval	IP											■	■	■	■							
Preparation of Project Proposals by TIPS4UA participants	SM											■	■	■	■							
Final event for 2025 participants and launch of Community of Practice	IO																■					
Feedback session for 2025	U-LEAD																■					
Fine tuning of 2026 annual schedule	IO																■					
<b>Continuous capacity building within Community of Practice for Project Management (Step 3)</b>	SM, U-LEAD																	■	■	■	■	