

ANALYTICAL RESEARCH · 2026 · Techosystem x Forbes Ukraine

# ACCELERATOR RESEARCH

## WHO IS BUILDING UKRAINE'S STARTUP ECOSYSTEM

*The first large-scale independent study of 22 acceleration programs shaping Ukraine's technology landscape*

22 programs · 78 cohorts · 1,489 startup alumni



## Disclaimer

This research is an analytical document prepared on the basis of data provided directly by accelerators in response to a structured questionnaire. The data have not been independently verified by a third party. Some figures may contain discrepancies due to differences in the accounting methodologies used by individual programs. This material does not constitute a recommendation regarding the choice of accelerator or investment advice.

Our aim was not to deliver a definitive verdict — each accelerator addresses different challenges and works with startups at different stages of development. Rather, we sought to provide founders, investors, and partners with an objective tool for navigating the ecosystem.

An accelerator ranking based on quantitative indicators using a normalisation methodology is published separately by Forbes Ukraine, in print and online.

## The Market Through the Lens of This Study

---

Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022 did not stop Ukrainian startups — it changed the logic of how they are born. While some startups evacuated and investors paused activity, accelerators remained the only structured institution supporting early-stage companies at a time when the traditional venture capital market had effectively frozen.

By 2026, the picture is fundamentally different. The 22 acceleration programs covered by this study have run at least nine cohorts since February 2022 among their most active participants, attracted thousands of startup applications, and graduated hundreds of teams. Some of those teams have already raised venture funding. Others are still looking for their first customer. Both outcomes are natural for an ecosystem being built under active wartime conditions.

This is the first comprehensive independent study to provide a detailed cross-section of the Ukrainian acceleration market: who these programs are, how they are structured, what they actually deliver to startups, and why their impact on the ecosystem is far broader than the headline figures of capital raised.

## Why Acceleration in Ukraine Is a Special Case

---

The global acceleration model that took shape after 2005 — through Y Combinator and the emergence of Techstars — assumes several conditions: a stable operating environment, an active early-stage venture market, founder mobility, and access to international markets. Ukraine has none of these in full.

Male founders cannot freely travel abroad. The traditional early-stage venture market in Ukraine was never well developed, and it contracted further after 2022. The very concept of "going to market" takes on an entirely new dimension under wartime conditions: for some startups the market is Poland or the Netherlands; for others it is the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

This is precisely why accelerators in Ukraine are adapting to fundamentally different circumstances. That adaptation is visible in everything: the geographic focus of their programs, the choice between equity and non-equity models, thematic priorities, and who each program is designed to prepare in the first place.

*"Raising investment, entering new markets, scaling the team" — these three challenges, cited by alumni of the vast majority of programs studied, are not classic entrepreneurial difficulties. In the context of 2022–2026, each of them carries a distinct layer of complexity that peers in Warsaw or London simply do not face.*

## Methodology

---

The study covers 22 acceleration programs with a connection to Ukraine: those registered or operationally present in the country, or specifically targeting Ukrainian startups. Data were collected through direct surveys — each program completed a structured form with more than 100 questions. The reporting horizon covers cohorts launched after 24 February 2022.

The original ranking concept envisaged a weighted scoring model with five key metrics: post-program funding (weight 0.30), startup survival rate (0.20), partner network (0.10), international mentor network (0.10), and in-program funding (0.30). The sum of these weights produced an overall score based on each criterion's contribution.

However, a systemic problem emerged during the final calculations: the data exhibit an extremely wide spread and strong asymmetry. Individual programs showed results an order of magnitude above the sample median. Applying weights in such an environment would only have amplified the structural inequality between different program types.

*Normalisation without additional weights converts each indicator into a comparative scale of 0 to 10, where 10 represents the best result in the sample for that criterion. The program with the highest startup survival rate receives the maximum score regardless of absolute funding volumes. This approach allows dissimilar programs to be compared more fairly, preventing a single outlier metric from dominating the entire ranking.*

Three programs have been placed in a separate "Emerging" category: WinWin Deep Tech Accelerator, Forvis Mazars Xfactory Ukraine, and Fozzy Venture Studio. They either lack cohorts with a 24-month horizon or have not yet accumulated sufficient time to enable a full assessment of long-term results.

The ranking built on this methodology is published by Forbes Ukraine. This study focuses on qualitative analysis and a detailed profile of each participant.

## Inspiring Statistics

**>\$5M**

confirmed investment  
raised by alumni

**78**

cohorts run after  
24.02.2022

**+1,000**

Ukrainian startup alumni  
since 2022

**>\$1M**

funding raised during  
programs

Demand for structured support among Ukrainian startups did not decline after the full-scale invasion — it grew. Programs record anywhere from several dozen to more than 700 applications per cycle in the largest cases. At the same time, conversion rates — from application to enrolment — remain stringent: most programs select between 5% and 15% of applicants.

Post-program startup survival remains uneven and is largely determined by the stage at entry. Programs targeting the earliest stages (idea stage) record lower 24-month survival rates — this is a global norm for the venture market: the earlier the stage, the higher the natural attrition. Equity programs generally show higher post-program funding amounts — logical, since they select more mature teams and bear greater accountability for outcomes.

## Equity vs Non-Equity

---

One of the key structural dividing lines in the Ukrainian acceleration market is the treatment of equity. Of the 22 programs studied, the majority operate on a non-equity basis. This does not reflect market "backwardness" — on the contrary, it is a rational response to a specific context.

Non-equity models are predominantly funded through grants, corporate budgets, or government support. They can afford to back startups at the most high-risk stages — where an equity investor is not yet ready to enter. Equity programs concentrate on more mature teams and globally competitive niches.

### Equity programs in the sample:

- ReaktorX — 3–5%, focused on U25 founders from CEE with a pathway to San Francisco
- MITS Accelerator — 6–10%, defense tech, Y Combinator-style model
- Startup Wise Guys — 6–10%, 460+ investments across Europe and Africa
- ID Accelerator — 6–10% (equity/non-equity hybrid)
- YEP Accelerator — ≤2%, US track, focused on fundraising
- Mission Possible — ≤2%, 20-week execution-focused program
- Sikorsky Challenge Ukraine — 3–5%, hybrid model (equity + non-equity tracks)

Notably, even equity programs in Ukraine tend towards symbolically low stakes (≤5%) or hybrid models — in contrast to the standard YC (~7%) or Techstars (~6%). This reflects a competitive environment and an understanding that excessive dilution at early stages deters subsequent investors.

## Program Profiles

Below are detailed profiles of all 22 participants in the study, listed alphabetically. The focus is on each program's actual function within the ecosystem and what distinguishes it from others.

### 1. 1991 Accelerator

Type	Duration	Stage	Geography
<b>Non-equity</b>	<b>10–12 weeks</b>	<b>Pre-seed → Scaling</b>	<b>Global</b>

Ten years in the market — and the greatest scale among purely Ukrainian programs. 1991 Accelerator is not merely a program; it is infrastructure: offices in London and Kyiv, its own venture fund (1991 Ventures) for follow-on financing, and partnerships with the EBRD, Google, and the UK Government. Since 2022 the accelerator has run 9 cohorts, through which 179 Ukrainian startups have passed. Applications for post-2022 cohorts have exceeded 2,170 — one of the highest figures in the sample, attesting to a strong brand and market trust. Total alumni funding raised exceeds \$50 million. The unique positioning of 1991 lies in combining an investment readiness approach with a genuinely bilateral network: up to 30 international and up to 20 Ukrainian experts per program, more than 100 partners in Ukraine, and 50+ internationally. Its own fund allows it not only to introduce startups to investors but to participate in subsequent rounds itself.

#### Key Strengths

- Proprietary 1991 Ventures fund — enables follow-on financing for the best alumni
- Physical presence in London and Kyiv — a genuine bilateral network across two markets
- Highest application volume in the sample (2,323+ since 2022) — evidence of market reputation and trust

### 2. BGV Hardware Accelerator

Type	Duration	Stage	Geography
<b>Non-equity</b>	<b>16 weeks</b>	<b>Idea</b>	<b>Ukraine</b>

A program from Zhytomyr Polytechnic University supported by investment company BGV Group Management — an example of a regional initiative seeking to move beyond the capital's acceleration orbit. First cohort: 6 teams, each receiving grants of up to €3,000 for equipment purchases and access to university facilities for development and testing. Forty-three applications for 6 places — a real competition, significant for the region. BGV stands out among university programs for its genuine hardware focus and its institutional connection to an investment company. The program is at the beginning of its own trajectory; long-term results are still taking shape.

#### Key Strengths

- Genuine hardware focus with access to university equipment — rare among regional programs
- Direct connection to investment company BGV Group Management
- Grant funding (up to €3,000) for the material development of an MVP

### 3. Challenger Accelerator

Type	Duration	Stage	Geography
<b>Non-equity</b>	<b>15 weeks</b>	<b>Pre-seed → Seed</b>	<b>Global / Ukraine</b>

Founded by Harry Tallinn and Yurii-Volodymyr Blavt, Challenger Accelerator demonstrates an interesting evolution: early cohorts had a broader regional focus, but the fourth (current) cohort is entirely oriented towards Ukrainian teams in HealthTech, EduTech, and AI. The key competitive

positioning is bilateral mentor–startup matching: both the mentor and the team choose each other, raising the quality of the relationship. First cohort (Challenger AI Acceleration Program, Batch 1, 11 startups): \$1,340,000 in funding raised in the 0–12 months after completion, plus several undisclosed rounds. Survival rate at 24 months: 7 out of 11 startups. Across three cohorts, 21 Ukrainian teams have completed the program, collectively attracting more than \$1.4 million in recorded funding.

#### Key Strengths

- Bilateral mentor matching — raises the quality of mentoring relationships compared to standard assignment
- International mentor pool with 70% non-Ukrainian mentors — rare among purely Ukrainian programs
- Flexible program adaptation to the specific needs of each team

## 4. Fozzy Venture Studio

Type	Duration	Stage	Geography
<b>Non-equity (Emerging)</b>	<b>24 weeks</b>	<b>Pre-seed → Seed</b>	<b>Ukraine</b>

Fozzy Venture Studio is the corporate acceleration program of Fozzy Group, one of Ukraine's largest retail conglomerates (Silpo, Fora, Le Silpo, and other chains). Two completed cohorts, 11 Ukrainian alumni, and 138 applications over 24 months — demand exists and is growing. The process: selection → pilot preparation → piloting in a real environment → Demo Day with potential partners and investors. The program signs an NDA and draws up a concrete pilot plan, reducing the risk of purely decorative partnerships. Concrete results include commercial relationships with alumni AskFor and Obriy. The program is classified as Emerging: it has not yet accumulated cohorts with a 24-month horizon to enable a full survival rate assessment.

#### Key Strengths

- Piloting within Fozzy Group's real operating environment, with genuine market testing
- Direct access to a corporate client from Day 1 of the program
- Growing demand: 91 applications in the last 12 months against 22 total enrolments in the program's history

## 5. Forvis Mazars Xfactory Ukraine

Type	Duration	Stage	Geography
<b>Non-equity (Emerging)</b>	<b>20 weeks</b>	<b>Pre-seed → Scaling</b>	<b>Global</b>

XFactory Ukraine is the Ukrainian edition of the corporate program of Forvis Mazars, a global audit and consulting network with 40,000+ specialists in more than 100 countries. The first Ukrainian cohort graduated 7 startups at the end of 2025 — and all 7 are currently active (100% survival in the first batch). The value of XFactory lies in access to corporate expertise normally unavailable to early-stage startups: company structuring, international taxation, compliance, audit, and financial reporting. This is classic corporate acceleration, where the primary asset is access to the institutional knowledge and client base of a global firm. Emerging status: one cohort in Ukraine; insufficient long-term data for a full analysis.

#### Key Strengths

- 100% first-cohort startup survival at 24 months
- Access to the Forvis Mazars global network in 100+ countries — unique in the Ukrainian market
- Expertise in corporate structuring, taxation, and compliance — rare in traditional programs

## 6. Greencubator (GCIP 2 Advanced Accelerator)

Type	Duration	Stage	Geography
<b>Grant-based</b>	<b>24–26 weeks</b>	<b>Seed → Scaling</b>	<b>Ukraine</b>

Ukraine's only acceleration program operating directly under the auspices of UNIDO (the United Nations Industrial Development Organization) and funded by the GEF (Global Environment Facility). The GCIP 2 Advanced Accelerator focuses on cleantech and climate technologies — a niche in which the number of specialised programs is limited globally, and in Ukraine it is unique. First cohort: 16 graduates, a grant fund of \$160,000 against a total program cost of \$78,000. A duration of up to 26 weeks is the longest in the sample among non-equity programs. The adaptive structure — topics and invited experts tailored to the actual requests of each batch — is a rarity. The inclusion of ESG modules and environmental impact measurement is uncommon even in a global context.

#### Key Strengths

- Ukraine's only program under UN/UNIDO auspices in the cleantech space
- Grant fund of \$160,000 per cohort — one of the highest direct financial contributions in the sample
- Adaptive program: topics and mentors are selected to match the specific requests of each cohort

## 7. ID Accelerator

Type	Duration	Stage	Geography
<b>Non-equity / Equity (6–10%)</b>	<b>6 weeks</b>	<b>Idea → Seed</b>	<b>Global</b>

ID Accelerator is the youngest program in the study with complete data. Its distinguishing feature is a founder-centric approach: the program focuses not only on the idea or MVP but on the personality of the founder. 30+ hours of individual work with mentors, and continuous support from an operating director. First cohort: 20 startups, 13 active at 24 months, more than \$300,000 in funding raised. For the first cohort of a six-week program, this is a solid start. The hybrid model — partly equity, partly non-equity — provides flexibility in adapting to different startup profiles. The program has scaling potential if it maintains the quality of mentor engagement as the number of participants grows.

#### Key Strengths

- Founder-centric approach — 30+ hours of individual mentor engagement per participant
- Flexible hybrid model (equity/non-equity) depending on the startup's profile
- \$300,000+ in funding raised following the first cohort alone

## 8. IdeasLab

Type	Duration	Stage	Geography
<b>Non-equity (university)</b>	<b>13 weeks</b>	<b>Idea</b>	<b>Ukraine</b>

A program based at the Ukrainian Catholic University (UCU) — one of the clearest examples of how university acceleration can maintain global connections while retaining a local focus. IdeasLab is directed exclusively at students and offers a first safe step into entrepreneurship: a mentoring community of 80+ active members, access to a US partner university (Notre Dame University), and a grant of up to UAH 200,000. Seven cohorts since 2022, 52 graduates, 784 applications. Most participants are students with ideas. The real value lies in cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset and a unique bridge to the American university ecosystem.

#### Key Strengths

- Partnership with Notre Dame University (USA) — a direct bridge for students to the American academic ecosystem
- 80+ active mentors in the community — one of the largest mentoring pools among university programs

- Grant of up to UAH 200,000 for the best teams — real financial support at the earliest stages

## 9. Impact Business Accelerator

Type	Duration	Stage	Geography
<b>Non-equity</b>	<b>16 weeks</b>	<b>Seed → Scaling</b>	<b>Ukraine</b>

Initiated by the NGO Impact Force in partnership with SiLab Ukraine and the Ukrainian Social Venture Fund, Impact Business Accelerator occupies a unique niche at the intersection of commercial growth and measurable social impact. Three cohorts, 109+ graduates, 100% Ukrainian teams. The key differentiator is not "how to attract investment" but "how to build a business with embedded social impact." Participants leave with a ready impact strategy and concrete tools for measuring non-financial outcomes. In the 2023 cohort (40 startups): 30 out of 30 remained active at 24 months. Institutional support from the Ministry of Digital Transformation gives the program a systemic dimension.

### Key Strengths

- The only program in the sample focused on the impact economy and the measurement of social value
- Partnership with the Ministry of Digital Transformation — systemic institutional backing
- 30 out of 30 startups active at 24 months in the 2023 cohort

## 10. ISE Corporate Accelerator

Type	Duration	Stage	Geography
<b>Non-equity</b>	<b>12+ weeks</b>	<b>Pre-seed → Scaling</b>	<b>Global</b>

ISE Group is an innovation think tank and ecosystem builder with offices in Kyiv, Warsaw, and Washington. Recognition by the Financial Times in 2025 and 2026 as an innovation hub is a significant external quality signal. According to the 2026 Financial Times ranking, ISE is in the top 30 most active accelerators in Europe and ranks first for activity in Poland. ISE is accredited as a training partner for European DeepTech startups — teams from Belgium, Spain, Germany, the Netherlands, and other countries have passed through the program. A notable achievement is the Google partnership: ISE initiated a grant support program for Ukrainian startups that received over \$100 million in funding — an unprecedented step for Google in the region, accompanied by a personal visit from CEO Sundar Pichai to Warsaw for the official launch.

### Key Strengths

- Presence in three jurisdictions (Ukraine, Poland, USA) — real access to three distinct markets
- Financial Times recognition as an innovation hub in 2025 and 2026
- 50+ partners in Ukraine and internationally — one of the broadest partner networks in the sample

## 11. KSE Startup Ecosystem

Type	Duration	Stage	Geography
<b>Non-equity</b>	<b>16–24 weeks</b>	<b>Idea</b>	<b>Ukraine</b>

KSE Startup Ecosystem is an in-person incubator built on the MIT Disciplined Entrepreneurship methodology (24 steps). This methodology, developed by Bill Aulet, is regarded as one of the most systematic approaches to founder preparation: from problem identification to market validation, with clearly defined checkpoints. Two cohorts since 2022, 64 graduates, 483 applications. The 346 enrolled against 64 graduates indicates significant attrition during the program — for a methodology that emphasises real progress rather than mere course completion, this may reflect selection quality. Alumni funding raised: \$371,000.

**Key Strengths**

- MIT Disciplined Entrepreneurship methodology (24 steps) — a systematic approach with a clear trajectory
- 483 applications across 2 cohorts — one of the highest interest scores for a university program
- In-person format with deep mentoring from practicing entrepreneurs and the KSE community

**12. MITS Accelerator**

Type	Duration	Stage	Geography
<b>Equity (6–10%)</b>	<b>26 weeks</b>	<b>Pre-seed → Scaling</b>	<b>Global</b>

MITS Accelerator is a six-month, Y Combinator-style program for Ukrainian defense tech startups, run in partnership with American University Kyiv by founders Perry Boyle, Anton Melnyk, Denys Hurak, and Alina Lovchynivska. Defense tech is the most specific niche among all programs studied. The 26-week duration is the longest among equity programs in the sample — rational for defense tech, where development and certification cycles are far longer than in SaaS. Of 20 enrolled, 12 have graduated across two cohorts. Acceleration serves as an entry point to the MITS Capital ecosystem, with the potential for subsequent investment and export support. 100% survival rate in the tracked cohort at 24 months.

**Key Strengths**

- The only specialised equity program for defense tech startups in the sample
- Acceleration as an entry point to the MITS Capital ecosystem — with the prospect of follow-on funding
- Practical support on export matters and international certification of defense solutions

**13. Mission Possible**

Type	Duration	Stage	Geography
<b>Equity (≤2%)</b>	<b>20 weeks</b>	<b>Pre-seed</b>	<b>Ukraine</b>

Mission Possible Acceleration — founded by Sviat Sviatnenko — is positioned as an execution-oriented program. Two-week sprints with concrete targets around product, customers, and revenue; regular standups and strategic sessions with an EIR. Three completed cohorts, 55 Ukrainian graduates, \$1.62 million in funding raised. In the first batch, \$25,000 was raised in months 0–12, and a further \$895,000 in months 12–24 after completion — indicating that the program prepares teams well for later-stage rounds and that its impact manifests with a delay. Challenges noted include limited early-stage rounds from Ukrainian funds and the inability of male founders to travel abroad for sales.

**Key Strengths**

- Execution format with two-week sprints — a culture of accountability and genuine momentum
- 80+ mentors and 150+ investors in the program's ecosystem
- Partnership with Saïd Business School (University of Oxford) for access to its academic network

**14. Radar Tech**

Type	Duration	Stage	Geography
<b>Non-equity</b>	<b>12–24 weeks</b>	<b>Idea → Seed</b>	<b>Ukraine / Regional</b>

Radar Tech was founded in 2016 as Ukraine's first corporate accelerator. 15 cohorts, 500+ total graduates in its history, 9 cohorts and 800 applications since 2022. The core model is open innovation: corporate partners define specific business challenges; startups propose solutions and earn the

opportunity to pilot them within a real corporate environment. This substantially reduces risk for both sides: startups gain their first real client, while corporations access cheap innovation without their own R&D. Ninety-five Ukrainian startups have passed through the program since 2022. The network of 50+ corporate partners in Ukraine is a real asset that cannot be replicated through mentoring sessions.

#### Key Strengths

- Ukraine's first corporate accelerator (2016) — the longest institutional memory in its segment
- Open innovation model: real corporate challenges + piloting within the client's environment
- 50+ corporate partners in Ukraine — the largest corporate network in the sample

## 15. ReaktorX

Type	Duration	Stage	Geography
<b>Equity (3–5%)</b>	<b>6 weeks</b>	<b>Idea → Pre-seed</b>	<b>Regional (CEE)</b>

ReaktorX is fundamentally different from the other programs studied: it is regional (CEE), oriented exclusively towards founders under 25, and involves an actual relocation to San Francisco. An investment of \$50,000 (under the new formula) per selected team, 2 weeks in a CEE city, and 1 month in SF — with no structured program, only the search for customers. "Sink or swim" — that is how the program itself describes its approach. This is a deliberate departure from learning formats in favour of genuine market stress. Twelve batches in total; of the 15 startups from the new formula, 4 are Ukrainian. ReaktorX is an example of a program that is less "Ukrainian" by formal criteria but has a real impact on the mobility and global readiness of CEE founders.

#### Key Strengths

- \$50,000 direct investment per selected team — no lectures, straight to money and market
- An actual month in San Francisco with a sole focus on acquiring first customers
- Partnership with the European Startup Embassy for access to the CEE ecosystem

## 16. Sikorsky Challenge Ukraine

Type	Duration	Stage	Geography
<b>Equity (3–5%) / Non-equity (hybrid)</b>	<b>8 weeks</b>	<b>Idea → Scaling</b>	<b>Global</b>

An open innovation ecosystem founded by Inna Maliukova, Ihor Peier, and Oleksii Strutynskyi. Sikorsky Challenge Ukraine is arguably the most hybrid participant in the study: it combines different track types (equity and non-equity), different stages (from idea to scaling), and a broad coalition of participants — universities, research institutions, corporations, funds, civil society organisations, and government bodies. 12 cohorts in the program's history with more than 1,000 total participants; 8 cohorts since 2022; 40 Ukrainian startup alumni in the tracked horizon. The focus on "training to order" and the commercialisation of university R&D is a distinguishing feature. The network of 28+ universities is a serious asset for academic startups.

#### Key Strengths

- The broadest coalition partnership in the sample: universities, corporations, funds, government, and civil society
- Unique "training to client / producer / investor" model — three distinct tracks within a single system
- Links to a network of 28+ universities for the commercialisation of academic R&D

## 17. Startup Incubator of Odesa Polytechnic National University

Type	Duration	Stage	Geography
<b>Non-equity (university)</b>	<b>15 weeks</b>	<b>Idea → Pre-seed</b>	<b>Ukraine</b>

The Startup Incubator of Odesa Polytechnic is a structural unit of the university with 14 completed cohorts and 138 graduates in its history. The program's inclusion in the study is significant from the perspective of regional representation: Odesa is one of the key cities in building a distributed, rather than exclusively Kyiv-centric, startup ecosystem. The systemic role of a university incubator lies in cultivating an entrepreneurial environment at the regional level.

#### Key Strengths

- 14 completed cohorts — one of the longest tracks among university programs in the sample
- A regional anchor for the Odesa startup ecosystem
- An innovative environment facilitating interaction between academia and entrepreneurship

## 18. Startup Wise Guys

Type	Duration	Stage	Geography
<b>Equity (6–10%)</b>	<b>14 weeks</b>	<b>Pre-seed → Scaling</b>	<b>Global</b>

Founded in 2012, Startup Wise Guys is one of the most active accelerators in Europe and Africa: 460+ investments in startups from more than 60 countries, offices in Tallinn, Milan, Bilbao, and Malaga. 52 cohorts, 436 graduates, 51 of whom are Ukrainian startups across the program's history, and 16 in post-2022 cohorts. Focus: B2B SaaS, Fintech, cybersecurity, XR, sustainability, web3, and Proptech. The distinguishing feature is vertically focused sprints: Market Engineering Sprint, Sales Sprint, and Product Sprint. This provides a depth of development difficult to achieve in horizontal formats. Ten out of 11 startups remained active at 12 months in the last tracked cohort.

#### Key Strengths

- 460+ investments in 60+ countries — the largest international investment track in the sample
- Vertically focused sprints (Market Engineering, Sales, Product) — structured depth instead of broad education
- Clear vertical specialisation (B2B SaaS, Fintech, Cybersecurity) — a corresponding mentor pool

## 19. Startup School KNEU

Type	Duration	Stage	Geography
<b>Non-equity (university)</b>	<b>8–9 weeks</b>	<b>Idea → Pre-seed</b>	<b>Global</b>

Startup School KNEU from the Kyiv National University of Economics focuses exclusively on students, schoolchildren, and postgraduates. Five cohorts, 40 total graduates, 4 cohorts since 2022, 39 Ukrainian alumni. The top three projects receive funding from the Project Development Fund — a direct incentive for the most promising teams. Thirteen corporate partners in Ukraine and 35 Ukrainian mentors per program attest to genuine business community engagement. The program's impact lies primarily in cultivating entrepreneurial thinking among a student audience.

#### Key Strengths

- Project Development Fund — the top three teams receive direct funding following Demo Day
- Exclusive focus on students, schoolchildren, and postgraduates — reaching the earliest entrepreneurial audience
- 35 practicing mentors per program for a university format — above average for the sample

## 20. Tech StartUp School

Type	Duration	Stage	Geography
<b>Non-equity (university)</b>	<b>12 weeks</b>	<b>Idea → Scaling</b>	<b>Ukraine</b>

Tech StartUp School at Lviv Polytechnic is one of the few university programs that works with teams from the idea stage all the way through to scaling. Access to engineering laboratories, bio-laboratories, and robotics equipment represents a real material advantage for hard-tech startups. Three cohorts since 2022, 300 applications, 50 graduates. Between 15 and 30 Ukrainian and 10 to 15 international experts per program — a higher level of international reach than most university programs. Twenty corporate partners is a notable asset for a university format. Laboratory infrastructure is a meaningful competitive advantage for teams developing physical products.

#### Key Strengths

- Access to engineering, bio-, and robotics laboratories — a material advantage for hard-tech teams
- 10–15 international experts per program — one of the highest international figures among university programs
- 20 corporate partners for a university format — strong business engagement

## 21. WinWin Deep Tech Accelerator

Type	Duration	Stage	Geography
<b>Non-equity (Emerging)</b>	<b>12 weeks</b>	<b>Pre-seed</b>	<b>Ukraine</b>

WinWin Deep Tech Accelerator from AI HOUSE is the organisation's first deep tech program, which has since evolved into a Hardware Edition. Eight graduates, with a focus on AgriTech, Cybersecurity, Autonomous Systems, Robotics, BioTech, and Quantum Computing. The program was created with the support of Ukraine's Ministry of Digital Transformation. Despite the small cohort size, 70 applications for 8 places indicate a significant level of competition for a niche program. The systemic role of WinWin is to demonstrate that deep tech acceleration in Ukraine is both possible and in demand. The program is classified as Emerging: it has one completed cohort but requires a longer horizon for a full assessment of long-term results.

#### Key Strengths

- Government support from the Ministry of Digital Transformation — an institutional signal of the priority given to deep tech
- 70 applications for 8 places — a 1:9 ratio, one of the highest in the sample for a niche program
- 27 speakers and 15 mentors from leading tech companies for a specialised program

## 22. YEP Accelerator

Type	Duration	Stage	Geography
<b>Equity (≤2%)</b>	<b>12–14 weeks</b>	<b>Pre-seed → Seed</b>	<b>Global</b>

YEP Accelerator, founded by Andrii Zaikin, is an example of successfully combining a low equity stake (≤2%) with a serious fundraising network. Six cohorts, 49 Ukrainian graduates, \$2.8 million in alumni funding raised since 2022 (cumulative across all cohorts, not a single batch). 708 applications since 2022. The three pillars of YEP's uniqueness: a high volume of investor meetings (Ukraine, Europe, USA); tailored program adaptation with specialist mentor selection for each startup; and a US track with warm introductions to mentors and clients in America. Network of 100 international companies and 76 international fund partners — one of the broadest investment networks in the sample. The Demo Day winner receives \$25,000 non-equity from YEP and UMAEF u.ventures.

#### Key Strengths

- 76 international fund partners — the largest investment network in the sample
- US track with warm introductions to mentors, investors, and clients in America

- \$25,000 non-equity for the Demo Day winner — a real financial incentive within the program

## Summary of Program Participants

The table below provides a concise profile of each program. Emerging status reflects the limited time horizon available for assessing long-term results, not the quality of the program.

Accelerator	Type	Stage	Duration	UA Alumni	Cohorts	Geography
<b>1991 Accelerator</b>	Non-equity	Pre-seed → Scale	10–12 wks	179	9	Global
<b>BGV Hardware Accelerator</b>	Non-equity	Idea	16 wks	6	1	Ukraine
<b>Challenger Accelerator</b>	Non-equity	Pre-seed → Seed	15 wks	21	3	Global / Ukraine
<b>Fozzy Venture Studio</b>	Non-equity (corp., Emerging)	Pre-seed → Seed	24 wks	11	2	Ukraine
<b>Forvis Mazars Xfactory</b>	Non-equity (corp., Emerging)	Pre-seed → Scale	20 wks	7	1	Global
<b>Greencubator (GCIP 2)</b>	Grant-based	Seed → Scale	24–26 wks	16	1	Ukraine
<b>ID Accelerator</b>	Non-equity / Equity	Idea → Seed	6 wks	13	1	Global
<b>IdeasLab</b>	Non-equity (univ.)	Idea	13 wks	52	7	Ukraine
<b>Impact Business Acc.</b>	Non-equity	Seed → Scale	16 wks	109	3	Ukraine
<b>ISE Corporate Acc.</b>	Non-equity / corp.	Pre-seed → Scale	12+ wks	119	8	Global
<b>KSE Startup Ecosystem</b>	Non-equity (univ.)	Idea	16–24 wks	64	2	Ukraine
<b>MITS Accelerator</b>	Equity (6–10%)	Pre-seed → Scale	26 wks	12	2	Global
<b>Mission Possible</b>	Equity (≤2%)	Pre-seed	20 wks	55	3	Ukraine
<b>Radar Tech</b>	Non-equity (corp.)	Idea → Seed	12–24 wks	95	9	Ukraine / Regional
<b>ReaktorX</b>	Equity (3–5%)	Idea → Pre-seed	6 wks	4*	3	Regional (CEE)
<b>Sikorsky Challenge UA</b>	Equity / Non-equity	Idea → Scale	8 wks	40	8	Global
<b>Startup Incubator (OPU)</b>	Non-equity (univ.)	Idea → Pre-seed	15 wks	—	1	Ukraine
<b>Startup Wise Guys</b>	Equity (6–10%)	Pre-seed → Scale	14 wks	16	23	Global
<b>Startup School KNEU</b>	Non-equity (univ.)	Idea → Pre-seed	8–9 wks	39	4	Global
<b>Tech StartUp School</b>	Non-equity (univ.)	Idea → Scale	12 wks	50	3	Ukraine
<b>WinWin Deep Tech Acc.</b>	Non-equity (Emerging)	Pre-seed	12 wks	8	1	Ukraine
<b>YEP Accelerator</b>	Equity (≤2%)	Pre-seed → Seed	12–14 wks	49	6	Global

## Research Findings

22 programs, 76 cohorts, more than 9,000 applications, and 1,489 Ukrainian startup alumni since 24 February 2022 — these figures demonstrate that Ukraine's acceleration infrastructure is functioning and developing even under active armed conflict. Below are five key findings.

1

### Specialisation Is Becoming the Standard, Not the Exception

A clear trend toward vertical specialisation is emerging among the programs studied: defense tech (MITS), deep tech and hardware (WinWin), cleantech (Greencubator), impact entrepreneurship (Impact Business Accelerator), and corporate piloting (Fozzy Venture Studio, Radar Tech). Horizontal programs with broad thematic coverage remain numerically dominant, but narrowly specialised formats demonstrate a better fit between startup needs and program resources. Founders increasingly choose a program not for its overall brand but for the relevance of its mentors, partners, and sector network.

2

### Universities Build the Foundation — but Need Tracking Systems

At least 7 of the 22 programs are affiliated with universities. University acceleration fulfils an irreplaceable function: it reaches an audience not yet ready for market-rate programs, cultivates entrepreneurial thinking at the earliest stages, and serves as a natural first step toward systematic entrepreneurship. At the same time, the systemic weakness of the university segment is insufficient tracking of graduates. Most such programs lack structured mechanisms for monitoring outcomes after completion, making it impossible to fully assess their long-term impact on the ecosystem.

3

### Non-Equity Dominates — and This Reflects Market Structure

The majority of programs in the study are non-equity, funded primarily through grants, corporate budgets, or government support. This is not a sign of market weakness — it is a rational response to the absence of a developed early-stage venture capital market in Ukraine. Non-equity programs can support startups where an equity investor is not yet ready to enter. Equity programs naturally concentrate on more mature teams and globally competitive niches. This binary structure is stable and likely to persist in the medium term.

4

### Three Systemic Challenges That Do Not Change

Regardless of program type, stage, or specialisation, alumni consistently face the same three challenges: raising funding, entering international markets, and scaling the team. This means that completing an accelerator does not resolve these problems — it only prepares founders to work with them. The most effective programs are those that do not limit themselves to education but directly connect startups to investor pipelines, corporate clients, or international partners — eliminating an access deficit rather than a knowledge deficit.

5

### Corporate Acceleration as a Structural Response to the First-Client Deficit

Fozzy Venture Studio and Radar Tech demonstrate fundamentally different but related approaches: a corporation opens its operating environment to test startup solutions. This is a qualitatively different value proposition compared to mentoring models: not "we will teach you how to sell" but "we will provide you with a real client within the program itself." In conditions where landing the first B2B contract remains the greatest barrier for most startups, corporate acceleration has significant potential for further development in Ukraine.

*The real question is not whether Ukraine has a startup ecosystem — it does, and this study confirms it. The question is whether, over the next 3–5 years, it will be possible to build a structural transition from grant-based to market-based early-stage financing. The answer depends on investors, the state, and international partners no less than on the accelerators themselves. The accelerator ranking with quantitative scores based on normalised indicators is published by Forbes Ukraine, in print and online.*

## Thank You

---

This study will be published annually. If you have corrections, comments, or suggestions, we would be glad to hear them.

If you run an accelerator with an impact on the Ukrainian startup ecosystem and were not included in this first study, we would be delighted to see you in the next edition.

For all enquiries, please contact:

**[contact@uatechecosystem.com](mailto:contact@uatechecosystem.com)**