



RE:UKRAINE PROJECT

INTERIM REPORT **2024**

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About the Center for Innovation



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We are a catalyst to improve the built environment and inspire innovation.

We facilitate the exchange of ideas, knowledge, and insights to address challenges and opportunities in our industry.

This mission drove CFI to begin a collaboration with Dobrobat to begin planning for innovative reconstruction in Ukraine, even as the current war continues.

Dobrobat, founded in the early in 2022, is a Ukrainian-based volunteer construction battalion that assists survivors in the de-occupied territories in the restoration of housing and social infrastructure. They work closely with Ukrainian mayors in many damaged regions of the country.

Today, Dobrobat has over 50,000 volunteers throughout Ukraine.



Background: The War in Ukraine

The War in Ukraine is an ongoing international conflict between Russia and Ukraine, which began in February 2014. Following Ukraine's Revolution of Dignity, Russia annexed Crimea from Ukraine and supported pro-Russian separatists fighting the Ukrainian military in the Donbas war. The first eight years of conflict also included naval incidents, cyberwarfare, and heightened political tensions.



In February 2022, Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine and began occupying more of the country.

The current war has had a staggering impact on the people of Ukraine.

The total number of Ukrainian and Russian troops killed or wounded since the war began is over half a million, according to New York Times.

Nearly 1.5 million homes have been destroyed during the war in Ukraine, with direct damage to buildings and infrastructure reaching into the billions of dollars.

Over 30,000 Ukrainian civilians have been killed.

According to the United Nations, over 10 million people have been displaced or are seeking refuge abroad. Ukraine has a population of just over 34 million right now. This is a steep decline from 2020, when the population was almost 44 million. Many in Ukraine fear that some of those who have fled due to the war, will never return.

Over 3800 schools in Ukraine have been damaged or destroyed. Above is a photo of Irpin University, a school of public finance in Irpin, a city close to Kyiv. The man in the foreground is, Dmytro Serebrianskyi, the President (Rector) of the university - wondering how to bring his students back.

Over 1,700 medical facilities have been damaged or destroyed. A Ukrainian noted: *"When our accounting department and the blood transfusion center caught fire, Russian forces started hitting that area on purpose,"* said the hospital staffer. *"They burned the hospital to the ground."*

Why is the Center for Innovation Involved?

The scale of the devastation has been immense and while some rebuilding is happening today, it will take enormous resources to reconstruct this nation.

And one thing that every architect and builder knows, good planning can make all the difference in creating better projects. Once the war ends, Ukrainians will want to return home. And if they don't have homes, kindergartens for their kids and jobs, they won't be able to return. Rebuilding now, even as the war continues, is essential. And planning for rebuilding homes and hospitals is critical.

Courageous leaders in Ukraine have been tasked by President Zelensky to not only repair critical infrastructure damaged by the war but also begin planning for peace-time reconstruction. CFI believes that the reconstruction of Ukraine must be led by the people of this nation- it is our American and European opportunity to share the best of design, technology, and construction with Ukrainians. They, and they alone, will choose a path for rebuilding in a way that resonates with their people.



Estimates of the reconstruction costs are enormous, making this the biggest opportunity for large scale innovation in the design and construction industry since World War II.

It is horrifying to say, but the war in Ukraine is not the only place in the world today where our hearts bleed over war.

Many countries around the world face the challenge of mobilizing to build hundreds of thousands of housing units. The world will learn a great deal from Ukrainian reconstruction.

How the Center for Innovation Partners with Ukrainian NGO Dobrobat:



Center for Innovation

On July 28, 2023, CFI partnered with Dobrobat, to host a national conversation in Kyiv, Ukraine. Over 400 government ministers, mayors, builders, architects and concerned citizens gathered to discuss post-war reconstruction with CFI leaders. This was the first open, public meeting in Ukraine for Ukrainians to discuss obstacles and opportunities to reconstruction. The event was free and was recorded and live-streamed. CFI hosted a post-Ukraine trip webinar on August 25th to recap the conference and what we learned.



Dobrobat

At the conference, CFI and Dobrobat issued an open call to Ukrainians: mayors, members of parliament, builders, architects, and technologists to come to San Francisco to see advanced means and methods of construction. CFI agreed to cover all the costs for participants, who in return needed to commit to actively participate on the trip and to share their knowledge when they returned home.

In Fall, 2023, US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken visited with Dobrobat while on a visit to Ukraine.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken in conversation with Dymytro Ivanov, Director of Dobrobat and participant in the CFI: Dobrobat Study Trip to San Francisco



Creating a Community of Practice



Study Trip participants met with former Ambassador Michael McFaul from the Spogli Freeman Institute at Stanford University.

Ukrainian Study trip

In January 2024, with the assistance of the US State Department, Office of Global Partnerships, Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Grace Farms Foundation and other donors, CFI hosted a delegation of ten Ukrainian government officials and design and construction experts to the San Francisco Bay Area. Ukrainian participants in the Study Trip committed to participating in the trip as a “community of practice” signing agreements to continue to work together to begin planning for a sustainable, Ukrainian led reconstruction process, even as the war continues.

The delegation included builders, construction experts, an architect, a representative from UNESCO, a member of parliament, a local government official from Kharkiv (Ukraine’s second largest city and one of the city’s hardest hit by Russian shelling) and NGO leaders from Dobrobat.

While in the San Francisco Bay Area, the delegation met with leading researchers at UC Berkeley Stanford University and NASA, visited transformational construction projects like UCSF Health’s new hospital project (one of the largest hospital projects in the world); Presidio Trust (a former military base now one of America’s favorite parks), Factory O/S (an industrialized construction factory focused on worker health), and more. Technical experts and media partners facilitated an exchange of ideas and expertise that will pave the way for reconstruction success.

You can view a list of Ukrainian participants and their stories on our [website](#).

Public Events

In conjunction with the Study Trip:

January 24, 2024

12:00 - 2:00 PM

Commonwealth Club/World Affairs Council Presentation

Ukraine Firsthand: Resistance, Resolve, Recovery

Speakers: Konstantyn Demenkov, Volodymyr Kreidenko, Daryna Nedzelska, Andrii Lakshtanov



January 25, 2024

5:30 - 8:00 PM

Shack 15/Ferry Building, San Francisco

Speakers: Konstantyn Demenkov, Andrii Lakshtanov, Rostyslav Smirnov

Moderator: Thomas Debass, Special Representative for Global Partnerships, US Department of State

January 26, 2024

6:00 - 8:00 PM

Manny's, 16th and Valencia St., San Francisco

Speakers: Rostyslav Smirnov, Volodymyr Kreidenko, Anna Kyrii, Daryna Nedzelska

Moderator; Shakira Ramdass, US State Dept.

January 26, 2024

12:30 - 2:00 PM

SPUR

Speakers: Anna Kyrii, Andrii Lakshtanov, Andrii Boldov

Moderator: Margie O'Driscoll /Center for Innovation

Special guest: Speaker Nancy Pelosi

January 29, 2024

9:00 - 10:00 AM

KQED Radio (largest radio station in northern California)

Speakers: Konstantyn Demenkov, Andrii Lakshtanov, Volodymyr Kreidenko

Moderator: Alexis Madrigal

What's Next?



Study Trip Wrap Up

AECOM hosted a session wrap up at the end of the Study Trip. At this meeting, the Ukrainians identified several key take-aways that the tragedy of war offers:

- An opportunity to rebuild differently
- The need to think deep and act fast to rebuild
- The opportunity to develop a "people" centric reconstruction, that respects all people
- The chance to not just build back better but also build *forward*

Participants agreed to continue to work together on projects and to host public sessions with Ukrainian colleagues when they returned home. In the five weeks since they have returned home, Study Trip participants spoke on Ukrainian radio programs and made presentations to peers at: UNESCO, Union of Architects of Ukraine, City of Kharkiv and the Ukrainian Parliament.

CFI and the Study Trip members continue to meet bi-weekly to frame the next phase of our partnership.

Several trip participants also participated in a Center for Innovation webinar which can be found on our website and [YouTube](#).



Projects for 2024

The Ukrainian Community of Practice has identified three priority projects to begin in 2024:

01. Increasing knowledge of advances means and methods of construction at the university level

In conjunction with the US based, Education Alliance for Ukraine, CFI is developing a program for construction management students, offering 450 hours of technical training over 90 days at the following University's:

- Lviv Polytechnic National University
- Kyiv National University of Construction and Architecture
- Kharkiv National Automotive and Highway University (focusing on infrastructure)

This program is set to launch in May 2024.

02. Increase knowledge of advanced means and methods of construction for professionals currently working in design and construction

This virtual design and construction program would be provided in conjunction with Stanford University's Center for Integrated Facilities Engineering and is currently used in Sweden and Peru

03. Rebuild Irpin University

This university for public administration, including public finance, ethics and law was severely damaged early in the war. Close to the city of Kyiv, students at this university are the governmental leaders of tomorrow, charged with bringing more democratic processes to all government practices. Re-envisioning government service, as well as university education in the digital age, make this one of the most complicated yet potentially transformative projects that the Ukrainian Community of practice will undertake.



Other Projects Under Discussion:

- A second RE: Ukraine conference in Kyiv in 2024
- A possible exchange program with and between design and construction professionals in the US and Europe to work with Ukrainians to share their knowledge and/or assistance in rebuilding.
- Possible pilot project support for the reconstruction of Irpin University. No architect has been chosen. Might we explore how we can integrate the values of democracy in the physical manifestation of the most important school for Ukrainian government officials as they rebuild their nation?

Thank you

We thank you for your support of the Center for Innovations' RE: Ukraine Initiative. We were honored to have developed a Community of Practice with an amazing group of dedicated men and women. Their pride and love for their country remains strong, even in the face of so much personal tragedy. It was an honor to be of service in the creation of a shared vision to rebuild Ukraine using design and construction techniques that honor and respect people and the planet.

Sincerely yours,

Margie O'Driscoll



We Want to Thank Our Sponsors

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U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE



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