

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH OF SOCIETY IN THE DIGITAL ERA

Innovation, Technology, Guidance and Management of Education



Editors

Amit Kumar Goel

Prof. Iryna Shumilova

Prof. Nataliia Hrechanyk

Prof. Viktoriia Bokovets

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**Innovation, Technology, Guidance
and Management of Education**

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Index

Ukrainian Media in the Digital Age: Global Mission and Challenges for Sustainable Development	15
<i>Valentina Emelianenko</i>	
The categories of guide and guidance are a managerial phenomenon of the Ukrainian ethnos	19
<i>Shumilova Iryna</i>	
Guidance as A Key Resource for Transforming Educational Management in the Face of Global Challenges	26
<i>Hrechanyk Nataliia</i>	
The Role of the Innovation Ecosystem in the Competitive Advantage of A Higher Educational Institution	33
<i>Nadtochii Iryna</i>	
Use of Artificial Intelligence In Developing and Making Management Decisions	39
<i>Rusnak Alla</i>	
Digital Transformation Strategies for the Public Sector	45
<i>Rusnak Yurii Yu Nadtochii Iryna</i>	
Digital Innovations In Education: Psychological Aspects of Sustainable Personal Development	50
<i>Nadtochii Ilya Rusnak Alla</i>	
The Role of Clusters and Hubs in the Development of Innovation Ecosystems	55
<i>Avramchuk Tetiana Sergiivna</i>	
<i>Nechyporenko Tetiana Dmytrivna</i>	
МЕТОДИ орієнтування СТУДЕНТІВ на майбутнє в освітній політиці	60
<i>Боковець В. В., Янковський Б. П.</i>	
ВІРТУАЛЬНІ КОНСУЛЬТАНТИ-НУТРИЦІОЛОГИ: МАЙБУТНЄ ЧИ РЕАЛЬНІСТЬ?	69
<i>Борщ Марина Борисівна</i>	
<i>НУБіП України НУБіП України</i>	

Ideological Threats in the Modern World	72
<i>Toshev Suhrob Mirzaqulovich</i>	
Introduction of International Practice in Activating the Participation of Joint-Stock Companies in the Capital Market	76
<i>Suyun ugli Muminov Shokhijakhon</i>	
Competitive Strategies Used by Foreign Companies in the Building Materials Industry	83
<i>Musaxonov Rustam Musaxon o'g'li¹</i>	
Cybersecurity as A Key Factor of Digital Trust	90
<i>Narbut Anastasia Romanivna</i>	
<i>Nechyporenko Tetiana Dmytrivna</i>	
ІННОВАЦІЇ ТА ТЕХНОЛОГІЇ У РОЗВИТКУ СУСПІЛЬСТВА	94
<i>Остапенко Микола Олександрович</i>	
ЛОГІСТИКА ПОСТАЧАННЯ ЗЕРНА З УКРАЇНИ ПІД ЧАС ВІЙНИ	97
<i>Паровой Олексій Петрович,</i>	
<i>Наумов Дмитро Антонович,</i>	
ЛОГІСТИКА ПОСТАЧАННЯ ЗЕРНА З УКРАЇНИ ПІД ЧАС ВІЙНИ	101
<i>Безсмертна Оксана Владиславівна,</i>	
<i>Паровой Олексій Петрович,</i>	
<i>Наумов Дмитро Антонович,</i>	
ІШТУЧНИЙ ІНТЕЛЕКТ В НУТРИЦІОЛОГІЇ: ПЕРЕВАГИ ТА НЕДОЛІКИ	105
<i>ШЕЛИХ Марія Андріївна</i>	
<i>МАРКОВА Діана Вадимівна</i>	
<i>Науковий керівник: Яшник Світлана</i>	
ІНСТИТУЦІОНАЛЬНЕ ЗАБЕЗПЕЧЕННЯ ЕКСПОРТУ ЗЕРНА УКРАЇНИ	111
<i>Безсмертна Оксана Владиславівна,</i>	
<i>Слободянюк Яна Андріївна</i>	

Protection of Youth From Information Warfare and Ideological Threats	116
<i>Toshev Suhrob Mirzaqulovich</i>	
ХАРЧОВА ПОВЕДІНКА ОСОБИСТОСТІ	130
<i>СТЕПОВА Аліна, студентка</i>	
<i>ШАМРАЙ Марія, студентка</i>	
<i>НУБіП України, м. Київ</i>	
Innovative Management Strategies: Shaping the Future of Organizational Success	136
<i>Temirov Azizbek Voit o'g'li</i>	
Cross-Sectoral Role of Innovation Ecosystems i, n Business, Logistics and Trade	142
<i>Nechyporenko Tetiana Dmytrivna</i>	
The categories of guide and guidanc are a managerial phenomenon of the Ukrainian ethnos.	147
<i>Shumilova Iryna</i>	
ПЛАТФОРМИ ВІДКРИТИХ ІННОВАЦІЙ: НОВІ ПІДХОДИ ДО СПІВПРАЦІ	154
<i>Міщенко Тарас Русланович</i>	
<i>Нечипоренко Тетяна Дмитрівна</i>	
ЛІДЕРСТВО У ЦИФРОВУ ЕПОХУ	160
<i>ГОЛУБЄВ Єлисей, студент</i>	
СТРАТЕГІЇ ВІДНОВЛЕННЯ ТА РОЗВИТКУ МІЖНАРОДНОГО ТУРИЗМУ УКРАЇНИ В УМОВАХ ВІЙНИ	163
<i>Давидюк Л.П., доцент кафедри ПЛМ</i>	
МЕТОДОЛОГІЯ SCRUM ЯК ІНСТРУМЕНТ ЦИФРОВОЇ ТРАНСФОРМАЦІЇ БІЗНЕСУ ТА ОСВІТНІХ ПРОЄКТІВ	171
<i>Притуляк В. В. Столярчук І. О. Шварц І. В.</i>	
ІНТЕЛЕКТУАЛЬНА ВЛАСНІСТЬ ЯК ФАКТОР КОНКУРЕНТНИХ ПЕРЕВАГ У ЦИФРОВІЙ ЕКОНОМІЦІ	178
<i>Віт Валерія Леонідівна студентка</i>	

ЦИФРОВІЗАЦІЯ ДЕРЖАВНОГО УПРАВЛІННЯ: ДОСВІД ТА ПЕРСПЕКТИВИ	184
<i>Дрейко Андрій Миколайович, студент</i>	
ЦИФРОВІ ІНСТРУМЕНТИ ДЛЯ ПІДВИЩЕННЯ ПРОДУКТИВНОСТІ БІЗНЕСУ	190
<i>Захар'яш Дмитро Володимирович</i>	
<i>Нечипоренко Тетяна Дмитрівна</i>	
СОЦІАЛЬНІ ІННОВАЦІЇ ЯК ЕЛЕМЕНТ СТАЛОГО РОЗВИТКУ	195
<i>Кульчиківська Антоніна Сергіївна, студент</i>	
<i>Нечипоренко Тетяна Дмитрівна,</i>	
AI ТА ВЕЛИКІ ДАНІ ЯК ІНСТРУМЕНТ СТРАТЕГІЧНОГО УПРАВЛІННЯ	201
<i>Маковіцька Юліана Віталіївна</i>	
Impact of Microblogging Platform on Investment Decisions in Retirement and Pension Products	206
<i>Mohammad Gayas Ansari Afreen Fatima</i>	
Role of National Education Policy (NEP 2020) in fostering sustainable education in the digital age	223
<i>Diksha Mattoo Dr. Garima Srivastava</i>	
Strategic Business Process Management: Innovative Approaches and tools for Sustainable Enterprise	224
<i>Shvarts Iryna Bohdab Ryba</i>	
СТРАТЕГІЇ ЦИФРОВІЗАЦІЇ ТА СТАЛОГО РОЗВИТКУ МУЛЬТИМОДАЛЬНИХ ПЕРЕВЕЗЕНЬ	225
<i>Давидюк А.П. Іщенко Ю.І.</i>	
ФОРМУВАННЯ СИСТЕМИ УПРАВЛІННЯ ПРИБУТКОМ НА ОСНОВІ ІННОВАЦІЙНИХ ПІДХОДІВ	230
<i>Вергелес Андрій Сергійович</i>	
<i>Кандидат економічних наук</i>	
МЕХАНІЗМИ РЕАЛІЗАЦІЇ ІННОВАЦІЙНО- ІНВЕСТИЦІЙНИХ СТРАТЕГІЙ ПІДВИЩЕННЯ КОНКУРЕНТОСПРОМОЖНОСТІ ЛОГІСТИЧНИХ ПІДПРИЄМСТВ	236
<i>Пілявоз Тетяна Миколаївна Ярмола О.С.</i>	

The Role of the Innovation Ecosystem in the Competitive Advantage of A Higher Educational Institution

Nadtochii Iryna I.

*Doctor of Economic Sciences, Professor, Kherson Educational-Scientific
Institute of Admiral Makarov National University of
Shipbuilding, Kherson, Ukraine*

The innovation ecosystem of a higher education institution (HEI) is not just a set of laboratories, grants, and startup incubators. It is the interaction of people, institutions, processes, and rules that accelerate the creation and transfer of knowledge in partnership with business, the state, and society. Such an ecosystem directly fuels the competitive advantage of HEIs both in the educational services market and in the research and innovation space. Theories of the resource base (VRIN) and dynamic capabilities explain why intellectual capital, collaboration networks, and organizational structures are a source of sustainable advantage if they are valuable, rare, difficult to imitate, and supported by the institution's ability to adapt and scale innovations [1].

The conceptual principles of forming an innovation ecosystem as a source of competitive advantage for a higher education institution are the model from the «triple helix» to the entrepreneurial university:

1. Triple Helix – describes the effective interaction “university – industry – state”, within which the HEI acts not as a passive supplier of knowledge, but as a co-creator of innovation policy and the technology market. This transforms the role of universities in regional innovation systems [2].
2. Open Innovation reinforces this model by opening up organizational boundaries for two-way knowledge flows and joint commercialization of research results. For universities, this means flexible licensing models, shared labs, and corporate accelerators [3].
3. An entrepreneurial university (according to B. Clark) is an organization with a strengthened “leadership core”, diversified resources and an entrepreneurial culture that purposefully expands the “third mission”. This is a methodological framework for institutional transformation.

The European framework for self-assessment and capacity building is:

1. HEInnovate (EC & OECD) is a free self-assessment tool for HEIs’ innovativeness across 8 dimensions: (leadership, people, business collaboration, student entrepreneurship, etc.); the results help to identify priorities and create action plans [4].
2. EIT HEI Initiative (EIT, 2021–2027) is a program to develop the innovation capacity of universities: mentoring, access to the EIT ecosystem, and funding for the implementation of “Innovation

Vision Action Plans” [5].

3. European university alliances demonstrate how inter-university networks create shared “innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystems”, translating research results into practice more quickly [6].

The ecosystem becomes a competitive advantage for HEIs through:

1. Value creation mechanisms:

acceleration of R&D and commercialization: the presence of TTOs, incubators/accelerators, science parks and strong partnerships increases the speed of projects, reduces transaction costs and increases revenue from industrial contracts and IP. European studies record the evolution from linear “transfer” to co-creation with partners [7];

positioning and reputation: indicators of innovation, interaction with the industry, and impact on the development of territories are reflected in external benchmarks;

Dynamic capabilities: the ability to integrate/reconfigure resources (e.g., quickly launch new collaboration platforms or joint programs with the business) provides a lasting advantage even in a turbulent environment [1].

2. KPIs of competitiveness of an innovative higher education institution:

KEF perspectives: research partnerships; working

with business; working with the public and third sectors; IP and commercialisation; CPD and student start-ups; local development and regeneration; public and community engagement;

SDG-9 (THE Impact): patents and spin-offs, industrial revenues, industrial and infrastructure research ;

EIT HEI: implementation of IVAP plans, number of innovation structures created/strengthened, teams incubated and partnerships with KICs.

Architecture of the innovation ecosystem of higher education institutions:

1. Leadership and strategy.
2. Infrastructure: science parks, shared laboratories, fablabs, testbeds, corporate campuses.
3. Interaction institutions: TTO/bridge offices, entrepreneurship centers, accelerators, “one-stop shop” for business [7].
4. Rules of the game: IP policies, joint roadmaps with regional authorities, joint research contracts and revenue sharing models [7].
5. Culture and talents: entrepreneurial tracks for students and NPP, interdisciplinary master’s programs, dual career tracks «scientist-entrepreneur» [7].

When forming a strategy for building and scaling an ecosystem, there are certain risks: fragmentation of initiatives, slow IP procedures, and weak regional connectivity.

The risk of fragmentation of initiatives can be reduced through portfolio management, PMO for innovation, shared KPIs with faculties [4]. Slow IP procedures can be mitigated by template agreements, framework contracts, clear revenue sharing policies [7]. Weak regional connectivity can be strengthened by participation in European Innovation Ecosystems and “connected regional innovation valleys” programs [8].

The innovation ecosystem is a strategic “engine” of competitive advantage of HEIs. It combines resources (talent, IP, partnerships) with dynamic capabilities (fast learning, scaling, co-creation with the market). The European HEInnovate framework, the EIT HEI program and EUA practices provide clear guidelines, and Ukrainian legislation provides an institutional basis for action. The advantage goes to those universities that measure their progress, professionalize interaction with partners and turn the “third mission” into the core of the strategy.

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Amit Kumar, Assistant Professor at Department of Commerce & Business Management, Integral University Lucknow, India, has done his B.Com. & M.Com. from Lucknow University and PGDBM (Finance) from IPM Lucknow. Mr. Kumar brings with him over two decades of distinguished teaching experience in the fields of Commerce and Management. He has taught at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, with core specializations in Finance, Economics, and Accountancy. A passionate educator and lifelong learner, Mr. Kumar is recognized for his commitment to academic excellence and student development. He is an accomplished researcher and author, with numerous publications in reputed national and international journals, as well as several authored books. His scholarly work has earned him invitations to speak and lecture at universities across Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Thailand, and beyond, where he is frequently called upon to inspire and guide students. In addition to his academic pursuits, Mr. Kumar is a noted QS World University Rankings expert and a peer reviewer for prestigious Scopus and Web of Science-indexed journals. Known for his approachable demeanor and positive personality, he is highly respected by colleagues and students alike.



Iryna Shumilova is a Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Professor of the Department of Management and Educational Technologies at the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine. She has thirty years of experience in Ukrainian universities. She teaches courses for undergraduate and master's students in educational management. She works with postgraduate students from China. Scientific interests: formation of a person's value worldview, development of professional competence, technology of Guidance in Ukrainian education. Research directions for cooperation: public and educational activities of zemstvo activists (late XIXth – early XXth century), development of professional competence, the culture of Guidance in Ukrainian education, educational management.



Prof Nataliia Hrechnyk, The formation and improvement of the professional competence of a modern educational manager on the basis of cultural studies, the substantiation of the essential and content characteristics of the emotional and ethical leadership of the head of an educational institution/department, the formation of the ability of value-oriented management in uncertain conditions, national-patriotic education and the formation of citizenship of students of higher education. Research directions for cooperation: Education of the personality of students of higher education, educational management.



Bokovets Viktoriia, Head of the Department of Entrepreneurship, Logistics and Management of the Ukrainian National Technical University, Doctor of Economics, Professor. Makes a personal contribution to the development of education and science, possesses high professionalism, which contributes to the strengthening of the intellectual capital of the state. Has more than 10 textbooks, more than 200 scientific and methodological works (including in scientometric databases). Takes an active part in international internships and international conferences, symposiums. Has prepared more than one generation of highly qualified specialists and takes an active civic position.



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