

Building Research Capacity in Wartime: The Giving Voice Initiative Supporting Ukrainian Scholars

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Abstract

Beginning in 2023, we launched the Giving Voice project to support Ukrainian authors in writing reports about the war in Ukraine, particularly those lacking experience or time to do so. The project built a network within the Ukrainian academic community and identified publication topics related to war crimes, human rights violations, the destruction of cultural heritage, and other consequences of war. Authors were connected with a team of experts who provided author-oriented pre-reviews, assisting with article structuring, statistical analysis, language editing, and other tasks necessary for successful peer review. To ensure focused assistance, we conducted a mixed-methods study exploring the experiences of Ukrainian researchers supported through the Giving Voice project. Key obstacles included financial constraints, insufficient academic incentives, limited methodological training, inadequate mentorship, weak teamwork, language barriers, and the psychological impact of war. A cultural emphasis on publication quantity over quality further complicates alignment with international standards. Wartime conditions intensified these challenges by reducing research time and damaging infrastructure, though international collaboration and grants offered partial relief. The Giving Voice project was regarded as essential for providing technical and editorial support. To address these challenges, we organized two workshops on scientific writing and training the trainers. The project resulted in 17 published articles and participation in two international conferences. Supporting Ukrainian researchers through structured mentorship, targeted training, and international partnerships is vital for overcoming wartime challenges and fostering global scientific integration. The Giving Voice project offers a model for crisis-responsive academic assistance.



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