

IT Arena 2022: Showing Resilience in Times of Uncertainty

The two-day event brought together international tech experts, tech companies management, government officials, media & influencers for an offline event.

LVIV, UKRAINE, October 11, 2022

/EINPresswire.com/ -- Seven months of the ongoing full-scale invasion hasn't become an obstacle for the IT Arena, a [tech event](#) that brought entrepreneurs, investors, startups, and media together to show unity, resilience and support

for [Ukraine](#). IT Arena hosted a competition for Ukrainian startups and 5 insightful panel discussions with a focus on cybersecurity, [military tech](#) and cooperation between government and business.



Panel discussion

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Organizer: Lviv IT Cluster

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Avenga, Vector Software,

Payoneer”

Stepan Veselovskyi

Brave, resilient and volunteer-driven

Day one of IT Arena started with Startup Semi-Finals hosted at a former glass factory, now revitalized into a creative space !Fest Republic. A few hours of pitching were followed by the event's opening ceremony at Lviv National Opera.

Following a short intro from the IT Arena CEO Stepan Veselovskyi, the first panel discussion kicked off. Serhiy Prytula and Taras Chmut, representatives of the two biggest charity foundations in Ukraine, Prytula Charity

Foundation and Come Back Alive, respectively, were joined by Haluk Bayraktar, CEO of Turkey's premier UAV manufacturing company Baykar, who connected online.

“Extreme times require extreme solutions,” said Haluk Bayraktar commenting on why his company donated three Bayraktar TB2s to Ukraine, impressed by the impact of the Ukrainian

volunteer movement through the “People’s Bayraktar” initiative (a crowdfunding campaign by Prytula Charity foundation that reached its goals within days).

Startup Competition

Due to the war, fewer startups than normally applied for the competition. Out of 70 applications, 28 teams have been qualified to pitch their ideas from the event’s stage, with 10 teams subsequently qualifying for the finals. The finalists focused on solving real-world technological and humanitarian emerging problems. Five of ten teams focused on medtech solutions. The winner of the Startup Competition 2022 became WRAP, an app automating video production flows. The team won the Best Startup Award and a \$20,000 prize from IT Arena, CRDF and USF.

Cybersecurity, government and UAVs

“One of the things that I’m looking forward to is getting more information about how Ukraine hopes to be a leader, a teacher, an educator after the war about how it handled its digital defence of networks and systems here,” said cybersecurity expert and journalist Kim Zetter, following her discussion with Viktor Zhora, Deputy Chairman of the State Service of SCIP and Kenneth Geers, External Communication Analyst at Very Good Security.

Two of the panel discussions focused on the importance of the tech business and Ukraine’s government working hand in hand in these turbulent times. Also, for the first time in its history, IT Arena featured a discussion on advancements in military tech, in particular, UAV technology. Ivan Tolchinsky, CEO & Founder of Atlas Aerospace, Cameron Chell, President and CEO of Draganfly, Ihor Maslov, Business Development Director at UkrspecsysteMS, and Yaroslav Kalinin, CEO of Infozahyst came together in conversation with award-winning defense reporter Illia Ponomarenko.

Strategic partnerships and inclusion

IT Arena is known for gathering the most prominent speakers, tech industry professionals and



Serhyi Prytula, Stepan Veselovskyi, Yuriy Ohonovskyi



Startup Competition 2022

partners who represent local and international tech business leaders. Three latest editions of the conference – in fully remote, hybrid and in-person formats – have been supported by USAID Competitive Economy Program. As the conference has been going on for 9 years, long-lasting partnerships are paramount.

With 34% of women working in tech in Ukraine, IT Arena wants to promote inclusion and diversity in tech. The organizers hope to welcome more women-led startups, women speakers and attendees in the future.

Despite two air raid sirens, a curfew limiting afterparties, and survivor's guilt of attendees, IT Arena 2022 went ahead in Lviv. In 2023, IT Arena will return for its 10th year, hopefully in a bigger format and in peaceful times.

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