

Hromada Messaging Framework & Storytelling Strategy

Core Narrative Principle

Hromada does not speak for Ukrainian communities. Hromada amplifies their voices.

Every piece of messaging — site copy, social posts, donor communications, event remarks — must pass one test: **Is a Ukrainian voice leading this?** If the first thing a visitor sees, reads, or hears is an American explaining why Ukraine needs help, we've already lost the framing. The ask comes from Ukraine. Hromada is the infrastructure that makes the ask possible.

This isn't just good storytelling. It's the strategic answer to the single biggest objection we'll face: "Are you putting these communities at risk?" When Ukrainian mayors, NGOs, and communities are the ones saying "we want this, we need this, here's what we're asking for," the question answers itself.

The Three-Layer Message

Every communication should move through these three layers, in this order:

Layer 1: Ukrainian Voice (LEAD WITH THIS — ALWAYS)

A quote, a photo, a name, a community. A real person in a real place saying what they need and why.

"Our community lost power 47 times last winter. We are asking for a 30kW solar installation so our school can stay open when the grid goes down." — Mayor of [Municipality], [Oblast]

Layer 2: The Bridge (HROMADA'S ROLE)

Hromada connects that voice to people who want to help. We didn't identify the need — they did. We built the platform so their request can reach you.

Hromada is a platform built to carry these requests from Ukrainian municipalities to donors in the United States. Every project on our site was identified, scoped, and requested by the community it serves.

Layer 3: The Invitation (CALL TO ACTION)

Now that you've heard from them and understand how this works, here's how you can respond.

Browse projects. Choose a community. Fund their plan.

Key Messages by Audience

For US Individual Donors / Diaspora

- **Lead:** Ukrainian communities are rebuilding — and they're asking for your help specifically.
- **Support:** Every project on Hromada was identified by the municipality it serves. You're not deciding what they need. They already know. You're making it possible.

- **Transparency:** You can see exactly where your money goes: which community, which project, what it costs, and what it accomplishes. No black boxes. No middlemen. Every project has a named municipality, a specific scope, and a clear budget.
- **Proof:** Quote from a mayor or community leader. Photo of the site. Dollar amount and specific outcome (e.g., "30kW solar array = uninterrupted power for 1 school serving 400 children").

For Institutional Funders / Foundations

- **Lead:** Ukraine's decentralized energy reconstruction requires a decentralized funding model. Municipalities know what they need — they lack the channel to reach international donors.
- **Support:** Hromada is a verified, transparent platform connecting municipal-level energy needs with US-based funding. Projects are sourced through a network of Ukrainian NGOs and verified by on-the-ground partners.
- **Transparency:** Full project-level visibility — every listing includes the requesting municipality, partner NGO, project scope, cost breakdown, and implementation status. Fiscal sponsorship through Pocacito Network 501(c)(3) ensures financial accountability and tax-deductible giving. Donors and funders can track projects from request through funding to completion.
- **Proof:** Pipeline numbers (\$6.8M across 66 projects), partner NGO names, fiscal sponsorship through Pocacito Network 501(c)(3), advisory board credentials.

For the DC Policy Community

- **Lead:** US government aid to Ukraine has been cut. Civil society is stepping into the gap — and Ukrainian communities are leading the way.
 - **Support:** Hromada operationalizes what the policy community has been calling for: community-driven, decentralized, renewable energy reconstruction that builds resilience against Russian aggression.
 - **Proof:** CSIS alignment (Bandura/Romanishyn report calling for exactly this kind of platform), Böll Foundation advisory involvement, bipartisan framing (energy independence = security).
-

Site Homepage Messaging

Current State (approximate)

Generic hero text about the platform connecting donors with projects.

Recommended Revision

Hero Text: "Ukrainian communities are rebuilding. They're asking for your support."

Sub-hero: "Every project on Hromada was identified and requested by the Ukrainian municipality it serves. Browse their needs. Fund their plan."

Below the fold — Ukrainian voice block: A rotating or featured quote from a mayor, community leader, or partner NGO, with name, title, location, and photo. This should be the first piece of "content" a visitor encounters after the hero.

Example:

"We don't need someone to tell us what to rebuild. We need a way to reach the people who want to help us do it." — [Name], [Title], [Municipality]

How It Works section (reframe):

1. **Communities identify needs.** Ukrainian municipalities and partner NGOs submit renewable energy projects to our database.
2. **We verify and publish.** Each project is reviewed for feasibility, cost, and community impact.
3. **You fund their plan.** Choose a community, contribute directly, and track progress.

The subject of step 1 is Ukrainian communities — not Hromada, not donors, not Americans.

Transparency Block (prominent placement on homepage): Hromada's core promise to donors: you can see exactly where your support goes.

- Every project lists the requesting municipality, partner NGO, project type, and full cost breakdown
- All donations are tax-deductible through our fiscal sponsor, Pocacito Network, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit
- Projects move through visible stages: requested → funded → in progress → completed
- No funds go to overhead — 100% of donations support project implementation

Suggested headline for this block: **"Total transparency. From request to completion."**

LinkedIn Soft Launch Post

Structure:

1. Open with a Ukrainian voice (quote from Kostia or a mayor)
2. One sentence on what Hromada is
3. One sentence on why now (US aid cut, communities still rebuilding)
4. One sentence on what's on the platform (X projects, \$X in needs, across X oblasts)
5. Link to site
6. Close with invitation

Draft:

"The war destroyed our energy infrastructure. Decentralization is not just policy — it is survival."

That's Kostia Krynytskyi, our partner in Ukraine, describing why municipalities across the country are turning to renewable energy — not as an ideal, but as a necessity.

Today I'm sharing Hromada (hromadaproject.org), a platform that connects these Ukrainian communities directly with donors in the United States. Every project on the site was identified and requested by the municipality it serves.

Right now, 66 renewable energy projects across Ukraine — totaling \$6.8M in funding needs — are waiting for support. Solar installations for schools. Heat pumps for community centers. Energy independence, one hromada at a time.

The US government has pulled back. These communities haven't. They're asking for your help.

[Link]

Notes on the post:

- Kostia's quote leads. Not yours.
- "I'm sharing" is low-key. You're not announcing. You're opening a door.
- The stats give credibility without overwhelming.
- The close reframes the political context as Ukrainian resilience, not American failure.
- Tag Kostia, Michael Shank, relevant orgs if appropriate.

Email to Warm Contacts

Subject: Ukrainian communities are asking for support — here's how to help

Structure:

Short personal note → Ukrainian voice → what Hromada is → link → soft ask

Draft:

Hi [Name],

I wanted to share something I've been building. A colleague of mine in Ukraine, Kostia Krynytskyi, works with a network of mayors and NGOs across the country who are rebuilding their energy infrastructure with renewables — not because it's trendy, but because when Russia destroys your grid, decentralized power is the only kind that survives.

The problem is they have no way to reach donors in the US. So we built one.

Hromada (hromadaproject.org) is a platform that connects Ukrainian municipalities directly with American donors. Every project on the site was identified and requested by the community it serves. Right now there are

66 projects totaling \$6.8M in needs.

I'd love for you to take a look and share it if it resonates. And if you know anyone who might want to support a specific community, I'm happy to make a personal introduction.

Best,
Thomas

Launch Event Narrative Arc

For any event (Georgetown, NYU DC, or elsewhere), the structure should mirror the three-layer message:

Opening (5 min): Ukrainian Voice

- Video message from Kostia, a mayor, or a community leader — NOT a American policy expert
- If live video isn't possible: read a written statement from a Ukrainian partner, with their photo on screen
- The first voice the audience hears should be Ukrainian

Context (10 min): The Gap

- Brief framing of the aid landscape: what's been cut, what communities are facing
- This can be delivered by Max, Brendan, or Thomas — but framed as "here's the context for what you just heard"
- Data: 66 projects, \$6.8M, X oblasts, types of infrastructure

The Platform (10 min): Demo

- Live walkthrough of the site
- Show a specific project, walk through the community's request, show what funding would accomplish
- Keep it concrete: "This is [municipality]. Their school lost power 47 times last winter. They're requesting a 30kW solar installation. It costs \$15,000."

Panel / Discussion (20 min): Diverse Voices

- Include at least one Ukrainian voice (Kostia via Zoom if not in person)
- Michael Shank on communications and narrative
- A policy voice (Brendan, Max, or a Congressional staffer via SEEC)
- Keep it conversational, not lecture-style

Close (5 min): The Ask

- Come back to the community from the demo

- "You heard from [municipality]. Here's how you can respond today."
 - QR code to site, donation page, or specific project
-

Handling the Security Objection

This will come up. Here's the framework for responding:

Don't be defensive. Reframe around agency.

The objection:

"Aren't you creating a map of targets?"

The response (adapt to context):

"That's an important question, and it's one we take seriously. A few things:

First, our map shows municipalities, not precise project locations. The database does not and will not contain exact coordinates of infrastructure.

Second, the map displays needs — not existing assets. These are projects that haven't been built yet. Once a project is funded and moves to implementation, it is removed from the platform. The map does not reveal where operational infrastructure exists.

Third, and most importantly — the decision about the tradeoff between visibility and support is not ours to make. It belongs to the Ukrainian communities themselves. Every project on our platform was submitted by the municipality or a local partner NGO that made a deliberate choice to seek international funding. They understand the risks of their environment better than we do.

Fourth, the alternative — invisibility — has its own cost. When these communities can't reach donors, they don't get rebuilt. That's not safety. That's abandonment.

We continue to consult with security experts and Ukrainian partners on how to minimize risk while maximizing the platform's usefulness. But the foundational principle is that Ukrainian communities have the right to ask for help, and we have the responsibility to make that possible."

Voice and Tone Guidelines

Always:

- Lead with Ukrainian voices, names, places, quotes
- Use "communities" and "municipalities" — not "beneficiaries" or "recipients"
- Frame Ukrainians as agents, not victims: "they're requesting," "they identified," "they're rebuilding"
- Be specific: name the town, the project, the dollar amount, the outcome

- Acknowledge the war without making it the whole story — this is about reconstruction, resilience, and agency

Never:

- Lead with American voices explaining Ukrainian needs
- Use poverty-porn framing or desperation language
- Say "we identified" or "we selected" projects — the communities did
- Frame donors as saviors — they're partners responding to a request
- Minimize security concerns — take them seriously, then reframe around agency

The Resilience Argument (USE THIS EVERYWHERE)

Russia targets critical energy infrastructure deliberately — not just to cause suffering, but to break Ukrainian society's will to fight. Rolling blackouts, freezing winters, and infrastructure collapse are designed to instigate fatigue at the societal level. Every decentralized renewable energy installation makes that strategy harder to execute. When a school has its own solar array, Russia can't shut it down by hitting a central power plant. This isn't charity. It's resilience infrastructure that directly undermines Russia's theory of victory.

This framing matters because it transforms the narrative from "help people who are suffering" to "support communities who are fighting back by building something Russia can't destroy."

Watch words:

- YES: recovery, resilience, transparency, communities, municipalities, requesting, rebuilding, energy independence, partners, decentralized, societal resilience
- NO: beneficiaries, recipients, victims, saving, helping the helpless, war-torn, charity