



Proposal for Collaboration: Empowering Non-Verbal Children Through Visual Language

To: Irina Strajescu, Executive Director, Moldcell Foundation

From: AO Scoala de Științe Sociale

Date: 30.12.2024

Request for Partnership and Funding Support to Develop a Communication Tool for Non-Verbal Children

Non-verbal children face immense challenges in expressing themselves, often feeling isolated and unable to connect with the world around them. In Moldova, over **539,000 children** exist, and globally, **1 in 44 children** is diagnosed with autism. Of these, up to **25% are non-verbal**. This means thousands of children in our country are trapped in silence, unable to share their thoughts and feelings.

At AO Scoala de Științe Sociale, we are creating an innovative solution—a communication app powered by **Blissymbolics**, a universal visual language. This app will empower non-verbal children by providing them with the tools to think, learn, and communicate, enabling them to build meaningful connections with their families and communities.

What We're Building

Our app will:

- 1 Illustrate thousands of visual symbols in recognizable pictures**, unlocking abstract concepts like emotions, relationships, and logic.
- 2 Develop adaptive puzzles**, tailored to each child's abilities and progress.
- 3 Include a translator tool**, allowing parents and mentors to understand what the child wants to communicate and vice versa.
- 4 Feature a drawing tool**, enabling children to express complex ideas and weave visual stories.

This app is not just a communication tool—it's a lifeline for non-verbal children to connect with their world.

The Foundation of Our Work

This project stands on decades of research and proven methodologies aimed at empowering children with communication challenges.

- **Blissymbolics:** At the core of our app is Blissymbolics, a visual language developed in 1949 by Charles K. Bliss with more than 5000 symbols and updating regularly. Unlike traditional languages, it's based on universal concepts rather than sounds or words. Blissymbolics allows children to express emotions, actions, and abstract ideas through intuitive symbols. Its success in augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) systems has already transformed lives around the world.
- **"NeuroTribes" by Steve Silberman:** This groundbreaking book highlights the diversity of autism and advocates for inclusive approaches that celebrate neurodiversity. It has inspired us to create tools that adapt to the unique strengths of each child.
- **"Thinking in Pictures" by Temple Grandin:** Temple Grandin's insights into visual thinking have shaped our understanding of how many non-verbal children process information. Her work underscores the importance of visual tools in unlocking their potential.



- **Isotype System:** The International System of Typographic Picture Education (Isotype) introduced a way to simplify complex information through visuals. Its principles guide our approach to designing symbols that are intuitive and universally understood.
- **MITA (Mental Imagery Therapy for Autism):** Research into early intervention and brain training for children with autism, such as MITA (3-year clinical trial of 6,454 children with autism), proves the power of visual learning tools. These studies validate our use of puzzles and visual exercises to build cognitive skills and facilitate communication.

This foundation ensures our app isn't just innovative—it's built on proven techniques that work. By combining the timeless insights of Blissymbolics with modern technology and research, we're creating a tool that is both groundbreaking and practical.

Impact and Urgency

Every moment matters for non-verbal children and their families. Each day without the right tools is another day of frustration, isolation, and missed opportunities for growth.

Our app has the potential to drastically improve the quality of life for non-verbal children by:

- **Unlocking Communication:** Enabling children to express their thoughts and needs using universally understood visual symbols.
- **Enhancing Inclusion:** Helping children connect with their families, peers, and communities, fostering social bonds and reducing isolation.
- **Empowering Families:** Giving parents and caregivers a way to understand their children, easing daily struggles and improving emotional well-being.

This is not just a technological solution; it is a deeply human one. By acting now, we can change lives, one symbol at a time.

Requested Support

Funding Needs

We are immensely grateful for every contribution, no matter the amount. Together, every effort counts towards making this project a reality. Below is our proposed budget to guide our development process:

1. **Prototype Development:** \$50,000 to create a functional prototype that demonstrates the app's potential impact.
2. **Full Project Development:** \$150,000 to complete the app, covering the following:
 - Symbols Illustration
 - Adaptive puzzle development
 - Translator design
 - Drawing tool implementation



Why Moldcell Foundation?

The Moldcell Foundation has a remarkable history of championing social innovation and supporting inclusive education. Partnering with us on this initiative aligns perfectly with your mission to empower vulnerable communities and foster technological solutions for meaningful change.

Your support will help us:

- Provide non-verbal children with a voice.
- Enhance cognitive development and social inclusion.
- Transform families' lives by reducing frustration and isolation.

How We Will Collaborate

1. **Regular Updates:** Transparent reporting on the use of funds and project milestones.
2. **Joint Recognition:** Co-branding opportunities in all project materials and application, presentations, and promotions.
3. **Community Engagement:** Involvement in launch events and workshops to demonstrate the app's impact.

Contact Information

We would be honored to meet with you to discuss this initiative further. Please feel free to reach out:

Contact Person: Vasili Braga

Position: Co-Founder, AO Scoala de Științe Sociale

Email: v.braga@sss.ngo

Phone: +373 69802048

Closing Statement

The opportunity to empower thousands of non-verbal children in Moldova is within reach. With your support, we can build a future where every child has the tools to connect, learn, and thrive. Together, we can transform lives and foster a more inclusive society.

We look forward to your response and hope to partner with Moldcell Foundation in this meaningful endeavor.

Warm regards,

Vasili Braga

Co-Founder, AO Scoala de Stiinte Sociale



ANEXA 1. Symbols, art and UX/UI Prototype





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