

VENELIN DOBREV



welcome to my portfolio

About Me

I possess extensive experience in project management and communication management, leading the coordination and/or communication of over **50 projects** with public funding (municipal, national, or from the EU). Additionally, I have been involved in the organization and/or leading **over 200** groups webinars, training sessions, conferences and seminars, among which international formats like TEDx, Startup Weekend, Startup Grind and Europe Code Week. I have done one-on-one business and NGO consulting sessions for **over 100 organisations**, helping them become more innovative and competitive. I also have entrepreneurial experience as the co-founder of the first and biggest online media for only good news in Bulgaria - uspelite.bg and other business ventures.

My Purpose



I am passionate about innovations that make the world a better place!



My job experience:

With over a decade of expertise in project and communication management, I've been integral to the realization of more than 100 different successful projects, businesses and initiatives in Bulgaria and Europe.

I've played a pivotal role in piloting innovative projects in over 10 organisations, working on projects with combined budgets exceeding 20,000,000 EUR.

I am proficient in assisting with:

Given the enduring significance of **Project management** as a dynamic, long-term initiative, I always focus my project design is meticulously crafted to align with these two pivotal strategic orientations:

Project management:

- Identifying funding opportunities
- Support with drafting project proposals
- Project planning
- Project coordination and management
- Event management
- Business support services
- Administrative support
- Research activities, studies and analysis.
- Project communication
- Conducting and leading trainings.
- Mentoring.

Communication management:

- Communication strategy and planning.
- Communication management.
- Content creation.
- Communication analysis.
- Copywriting.
- Social media management.

Experience (highlights)

PROJECTS

Interregional Innovation Investments (I-3) Instrument (project management)

As Project Manager at Cluster Sports & Technology, I work on two EU co-funded, large-scale innovation projects under the /Interregional Innovation Investments/ (I3) Instrument: Digit-Pre and I3-INSHAPE. In Digit-Pre, I'm part of the leading team of the design and implementation of the innovation support programme, guiding participating companies through the process and ensuring alignment with EU innovation goals. I'm responsible for coordinating various elements in the projects: from strategic planning and stakeholder engagement to dissemination, SME selection, and ongoing support of funded SMEs. For I3-INSHAPE, I am part of the core project team within the lead partner organization, contributing to overall project governance, partner coordination, and strategic implementation. In this role as well, I was involved in the complete process of launching and managing open calls to support innovation-driven SMEs, ensuring transparency, impact, and compliance with EU standards.



Co-funded by
the European Union



Budget: 9,5 million EUR



DIGIT-PRE

The European support programme for innovative
solutions in prevention, prediction and remote care



Co-funded by
the European Union



Budget: 6,7 million EUR

INTERREG Europe (project management)

As project manager for Stara Zagora Regional Economic Development Agency, I have worked directly on the coordination of four different projects co-funded by INTERREG Europe. Each project was directed to a different strategic importance of the Stara Zagora region - INNOGROW (innovation in rural areas), GPP4Growth (green public procurement), De-Carb (low-carbon economy) and PLASTEKO (reduction of single-use plastic waste). For De-Carb SZREDA was the lead project partner and for PLASTEKO - communication leader.



Total budget: 7,3 million EUR

Erasmus + (project management and project communication)

As a project manager in Cluster Sports & Technology and Stara Zagora Regional Economic Development Agency and as communication manager of EPSI, I have been involved in over 20 Erasmus+ projects. Below, you can see two of the ones I have managed that I am most proud of: Re-Train (strategies to get people across Europe to be more physically active) and ESMIS (supporting sport facilities to be more sustainable).



Projects with national/municipal funding

In Bulgaria, I have worked on several projects with national funding that I am very proud of. With Stara Zagora Regional Economic Development Agency, we had a project for training and consulting people to start a business, which resulted in the creation of more than 20 SMEs, the majority of which survived the COVID-19 pandemic and are still active today. As manager of Beehive co-working space, I led small pilot projects for educating parents how to keep their children safe online, promoting the cultural heritage of the city of Varna and creating a pilot IT training for youngsters with physical disabilities in Varna. In all of these projects, I have achieved maximum impact with limited resources.

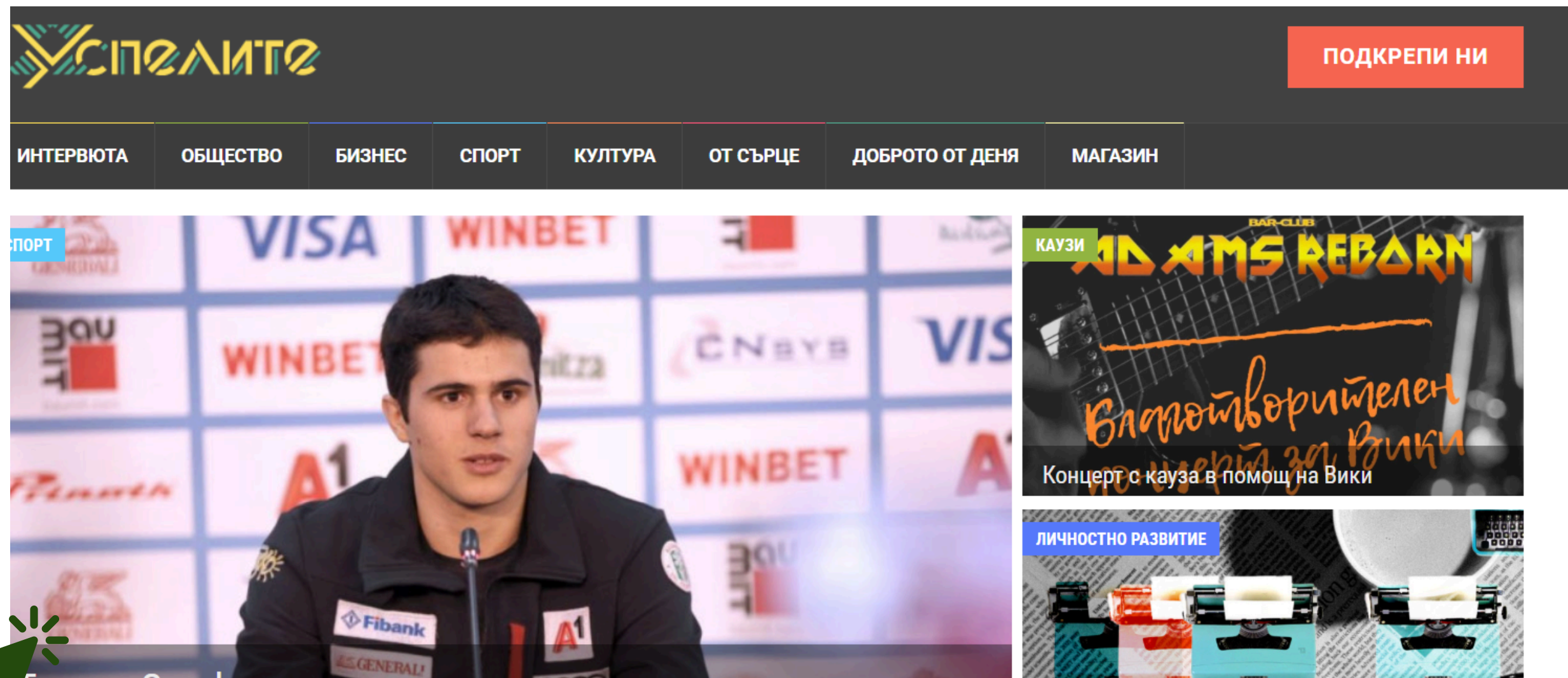


Experience (highlights)

BUSINESS VENTURES

Uspelite.bg - online media for good news only

In 2013, I had the idea to start an online media platform with inspiring stories and good news. That is how uspelite.bg was born. As one of the co-founders, I was part of this business from day 1. In seven years, we managed to develop this into a sustainable online media with over 100,000 monthly readers. Over the years, we also contributed to positively influencing the media landscape in Bulgaria by raising awareness about the lack of positive news in the mainstream media, which resulted in the start of the first ever news emission for good news only on national TV. I left the project in 2020, however, it is still active to this day. For uspelite.bg I was awarded by Forbes 30 Under 30.



otbaba.bg - social e-commerce business

In 2018, I had the idea to start an e-commerce platform for handmade products created by elderly people. That is how otbaba.bg was born. We sold over 200 pairs of hand-made products and achieved break-even within months, however, legislation in Bulgaria is not favorable to employing elderly people on welfare. Due to the administrative burden, we had to stop operating the business, which received great customer reviews and huge media attention. For otbaba.bg I was awarded with a media award for 40 people under 40 that make a change in Bulgaria for the better.



Experience (highlights)

EVENTS

Events I have organised

Over the past 10 years I have organised over 200 different offline and online events in Bulgaria and the Netherlands. From conferences to trainings, seminars, courses and many more. Among them, there are several well-recognizable formats:

- TEDx - 3 editions in Stara Zagora, Bulgaria
- Europe Code Week - 5 editions (2 in Varna, 3 in Stara Zagora, Bulgaria).
- Startup Grind - 8 editions in Varna, Bulgaria.
- Startup Weekend - 2 editions in Varna, Bulgaria.

The majority of events I have organised have been for community development and directed in helping people get additional knowledge and learn new skills. Only at Beehive Co-working Space I have organised over 100 events like this with my team.



Experience (highlights)

WRITING & CONTENT CREATION

Communication and content creation

Over the years I have also worked a lot in communication management and high-quality content creation. Some examples can be seen below:

Communication strategy

I have developed communication strategy for the European Platform for Sport Innovation (EPSI) and also done communication strategies for various EU-funded projects

Reports

I have conducted various methodologies, studies, reports, guidelines, analyses and policy recommendations for projects and initiatives I have been working on. Two examples can be seen below:

- [Transferability guidelines for best practices to tackle physical inactivity across Europe.](#)
- [Action plan with policy recommendations to support SMEs in rural areas in Bulgaria.](#)

Articles

I have written various articles covering different complex topics in fields like cybersecurity, policies, innovation, business, etc. I apply 3 examples below:

- [PCI DSS v4.0 – what is new and what you should be aware of?](#)
- [EU Industry Days 2021: The Curious Case of Bulgaria's Energy Heart and Its Road to Zero-Carbon](#)
- [How can we fall in love with Europe again?](#)

Highlights

AWARDS & MEDIA

Awards in Bulgaria

2017

One of the Exclusive Young People of Bulgaria classes in the Business, Economics, and Entrepreneurship category, given by JCI Bulgaria for my work on the online media uspelite.bg

2018

Member of the Forbes 30 Under 30 selection for Bulgaria as co-founder of the online media uspelite.bg

2019

Member in the selection of "40 under 40" by the national Darik Radio for people who are changing Bulgaria for the better for my work on the e-commerce store with social cause otbaba.bg

I have over 50 media appearances in Bulgarian media - national TV, radio and online media over the years. I have also been included in several YouTube channels and podcasts and I have been a speaker at TEDx event.

Let's Work Together



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