

GIVIBES

A LEAN START-UP JOURNEY IN STUDENT SOCIAL INTEGRATION

Group 10

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gIVIBES



Stop scrolling through five apps.

One platform connects you to events,
communities, and people like you.



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Abstract

This report presents the Lean start-up life cycle for a geolocated social project, Givibes, created to facilitate the discovery of events, communities, and individuals in the city for students. The project is grounded in existing literature highlighting how international and relocated students frequently experience loneliness, social isolation, and difficulties in forming meaningful social connections, particularly during the initial period after moving to a new city (Zheng et al., 2023). The report is divided in three parts: (i) the journey of the product and the first three iterations of the Lean canvas, (ii) why and how the business model evolved and strategic positioning and (iii) reflections on possible directions in doing future iterations.

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PART 1
The Journey



The Lean Start-up journey

The idea originated from the observation that students- particularly those that move to a new city, such as international, Erasmus, or off-campus students- struggle to understand the local social landscape. Prior research shows that international students often experience loneliness as a result of disrupted social networks, cultural disconnection, and difficulties in establishing meaningful relationships in the host country (Zheng et al., 2023). The information about events, communities and the student-friendly venues is scattered across different platforms like Instagram, WhatsApp groups, Facebook pages and word of mouth. This fragmentation has created high cognitive effort, feelings of fear of missing out (FOMO) in people, and thereby social isolation. Loneliness is defined as a subjective and distressing experience arising from a discrepancy between desired and actual social relationships (Perlman & Peplau, 1981), and has been shown to negatively affect social functioning, emotional well-being, and the ability to form new connections among international students (Zheng et al., 2023). By building this platform application, we aim to bridge the gap between students and event organisers. These findings suggest that the challenge addressed by the platform is not merely informational but is deeply connected to students' social integration and sense of belonging within a new urban environment.

The initial hypothesis was that a single, geolocated platform could act as a “source of truth” for student life in a city that benefits both the students' discovery and belonging as well as the local businesses and organizers. Early assumptions that formed the basis for the first iteration of the Lean Canvas included:

1. Students want to discover events and communities near them without actively searching across multiple platforms
2. Generic social media platforms are inadequate as they lack structure, discoverability, and location-based information.
3. Businesses are willing to pay for access to a clearly defined student audience.

1. Iteration 1: Problem space and Market fit

1.1 Problem Validation and Context

Urban cities welcome thousands of students every year, many of whom are relocating temporarily for projects and internships in and around the region. Research on student mobility and integration indicates that newcomers, particularly international students, frequently experience loneliness and difficulties in forming social ties, with loneliness being most acute during the initial months after relocation (Zheng et al., 2023). Importantly, recent studies show that loneliness among international students is not solely explained by the size of their social networks, but rather by a mismatch between desired and actual social relationships, as well as the limited availability of meaningful and emotionally supportive connections in the host environment (Bilecen et al., 2023). This supports the idea of creating a solution for social discovery and connection.

Qualitative evidence shows that loneliness among international students is associated with social withdrawal, stigma, and a perceived inability to access meaningful social opportunities, ultimately impacting their well-being and social functioning (Zheng et al., 2023).

The core problems that are identified are:

1. The lack of visibility of local student events and communities.
2. Fragmentation of information across multiple platforms
3. Difficulty for business and organizers to reach the “right” student audience.

1.2 Market and Competitor Analysis

Industry analysis shows that local event discovery remains fragmented across multiple channels, preventing any single platform from becoming the comprehensive "source of truth" for what's happening in a city (Malkin, 2015). We found three categories:

Social media (Instagram, WhatsApp, Facebook): These platforms are the primary tool for event discovery, with 64% of Gen Z and 61% of Millennials relying on social media to find events. However, users must navigate fragmented content across multiple channels and algorithm-driven feeds, which makes structured event discovery difficult. Engagement metrics like shares, clicks, and comments provide insight into audience interest, but do not offer a centralized, reliable overview of local events (Eventbrite, 2025).

Event platforms (Eventbrite, Ticketmaster) provide more structure than social media, but “information is self-contained within these apps” and “saving and sharing information... isn’t a simplified process,” limiting their ability to support niche filters or community context (Moran, 2020).

University channels only cover official institutional events, missing out on informal, student-led activities that are essential for helping newcomers connect and feel part of the community (Unite Students, 2024). Even though student associations actively try to reach more students, this usually happens once the students are more settled in and learn about such student associations in the first place.

1.3 Outcomes

Givibes positioned itself in the middle of social media and event platforms that combine geolocation, student-focus, and community-driven content. At this stage, the business model assumed that students would use the platform for free while business would pay a subscription or sponsorship fees.

The results of the Lean Canvas V1 established the problem-solution plausibility and the market relevance. However, the customer segments were broadly defined at this point and the assumptions about the users' needs were untested. This led to V2, which focused on customer discovery by asking students about their problems in interviews.

Problem	Adds information fragmentation/not consolidated and a practical “where to go nearby” pain.
UVP	Audience from only “students” to “students + registered expats”.
Unfair Advantage	Removed weaker claims

Lean Canvas				
Designed for: Geolocated social platform by students		Designed by: Students	Date: 08/12/2025	Version: 1
Problem Top 4 problems 1. Students have a limited knowledge of events and social activities happening in a city. 2. Feeling lonely because cannot celebrate same festivals/food as back at home. 3. Business don't have a direct channel to reach university students or specific segments. 4. Not being able to advertise self-organised events	Solution Top 3 features 1. Geolocated social map to display businesses, communities and events happening in the selected city. 2. Community based groups on the social platform. (filter by community, nationality or hobbies)	Unique Value Proposition A geolocated platform that connects students with nearby activities, communities, and businesses, making it easy to discover what's happening around them while giving local companies highly targeted access to the right students.	Unfair Advantage 1. Students' community made for students 2. Individuals can make groups as well for similar hobbies, examples: running club group 3. You can shared experiences if you are new to the city 4. Targeted marketing specifically for students. 5. Exclusive access to events associated with the app.	Customer Segments 1. Students moving to a new city 2. Students already living in the city 3. Businesses: bars, clubs, gyms, associations interested in reaching students 5. Communities: socially active, interested in student groups and events
Existing Alternatives Instagram Whatsapp university groups Bumble/Tinder EventBrite and MeetUp Turn Up Reddit University Groups	Key Metrics Activity Attendance Cultural and community connection Satisfaction (net promoter score) Usage frequency (every weekend or during festive season) Businesses feedback Business propensity to sponsorize events	High-Level Concept Geolocated app to find events and students communities near you: 1. Like Bumble for finding events, parties or activities 2. Like EventBrite for community events 3. Like Reddit for finding your niche events	Channels Path to customers 1. Associations 2. Businesses (Gyms, pubs, clubs) 3. Event managers 4. Students' events 5. Word of mouth	Early Adopters 1. Businesses that sponsor events related to the university life 2. Students who moved to an entirely different culture 3. Communities that are looking for new memberships
Cost Structure Fixed Costs: 1. People: Developers' salaries and Freelance costs 2. Hosting: Monthly fees for servers and cloud services to store user data and events. 3. Licenses/Software: Geolocation/Map API subscriptions, software tools for app maintenance. Variable Costs: 4. Marketing & Customer Acquisition: Instagram ads, partnerships with student associations, on-campus promotions. 5. Distribution Costs: Small promotional fees to student clubs, event organizers or business for promoting app events.		Revenue Structure • Subscription Fees: €10–30 per month per business for ongoing visibility on map/feed. • Featured Event Fees: One-time payment for enhanced visibility of specific events. • Sponsorship/Promoted Content: Businesses pay extra to boost posts on feed or map. • Potential Future Revenue: Partnerships with universities, premium features for communities (optional).		

Figure 1: Lean Canvas Iteration 1 (V1)

Lean Canvas				
Designed for: Geolocated social platform by students		Designed by: Students	Date: 10/12/2025	Version: 2
Problem Top 4 problems 1. Students have a limited knowledge of events and social activities happening in a city near you 2. Feeling lonely because cannot celebrate same festivals/food as back at home. 3. Business don't have a direct channel to reach university students or specific segments near their town 4. Not being able to advertise self-organised events 5. Information about community and events are fragmented and not consolidated in a single platform 6. Students would like to spend their time with their friends in pub or meet new people around the University environment. Most of the time it is difficult to understand where students spend their time, and it is difficult to find a pub nearby.	Solution Top 3 features 1. Geolocated map to display businesses events and communities and events happening around you and in another selected city in the selected city. 2. Community based groups on the social platform. (filter by community, nationality or hobbies)	Unique Value Proposition A geolocated platform that connects students and registered expats with nearby activities, communities, and businesses, making it easy to discover what's happening around them while giving local companies highly targeted access to the right students.	Unfair Advantage 1. Students' community platform made for students 2. Individuals can make groups as well for similar hobbies, examples: running club group 3. You can shared experiences if you are new to the city 4. Targeted marketing specifically for students: Exclusive access to events associated with the app:	Customer Segments 1. Students moving to a new city 2. Students already living in the city 3. Businesses: bars, clubs, gyms, associations interested in reaching students Communities: socially active, interested in student groups and events
Existing Alternatives Instagram Whatsapp university groups Bumble/Tinder EventBrite and MeetUp Turn Up Reddit University Groups	2. Key Metrics Activity Attendance Cultural and community connection Satisfaction (net promoter score) Usage frequency (every weekend or during festive season) Businesses feedback Business propensity to sponsorize events	High-Level Concept Geolocated app to find events and students communities near you: 1. Like Bumble for finding events, parties or activities 2. Like EventBrite for community events Like Reddit for finding your niche events	5. Channels Path to customers 1. Associations 2. Businesses (Gyms, pubs, clubs) 3. Event managers 4. Students' events Word of mouth	5. Early Adopters 1. Businesses that sponsor events related to the university life 2. Students who moved to an entirely different culture Communities that are looking for new memberships
Cost Structure Fixed Costs: 1. People: Developers' salaries and Freelance costs 2. Hosting: Monthly fees for servers and cloud services to store user data and events. 3. Licenses/Software: Geolocation/Map API subscriptions, software tools for app maintenance. Variable Costs: 1. Marketing & Customer Acquisition: Instagram ads, partnerships with student associations, on-campus promotions. 2. Distribution Costs: Small promotional fees to student clubs, event organizers or business for promoting app events.		3. Revenue Structure • Subscription Fees: €10–30 per month per business for ongoing visibility on map/feed. • Featured Event Fees: One-time payment for enhanced visibility of specific events. • Sponsorship/Promoted Content: Businesses pay extra to boost posts on feed or map. • Potential Future Revenue: Partnerships with universities, premium features for communities (optional).		

Figure 2: Lean Canvas Iteration 1 (V2)

2. Iteration 2: Customer Discovery

2.1 Problem Interviews and Key findings

A total of 10 interviews were conducted with students (local, international, Erasmus) and early professionals (Demographics in Appendix A.5). The interviews avoided pitching the solutions and focused on understanding their existing behaviour, as elaborated in The Mom Test (Fitzpatrick, 2013). Detailed interview guides are available in Appendix A.1, A.2. The interviews made it clear that our context is not a lack of events but a messy, unequal information and access landscape. Some students are deeply plugged into multiple channels while others depend on a few friends or closed groups and frequently miss opportunities. We learned that international and newly arrived students experience the strongest pain because they lack local networks, face language barriers and must rebuild their communities from scratch, while local students share the same structural problems in a milder form. We also saw that safety, verification, and moderation are not side issues, but core concerns that shape how comfortable people feel joining events or communities. At the same time, several participants framed missed events as “normal” or felt existing tools worked reasonably well, highlighting real risks around problem intensity, behaviours change and willingness to pay that we must take seriously when evaluating if and how a business model in this space can be viable.

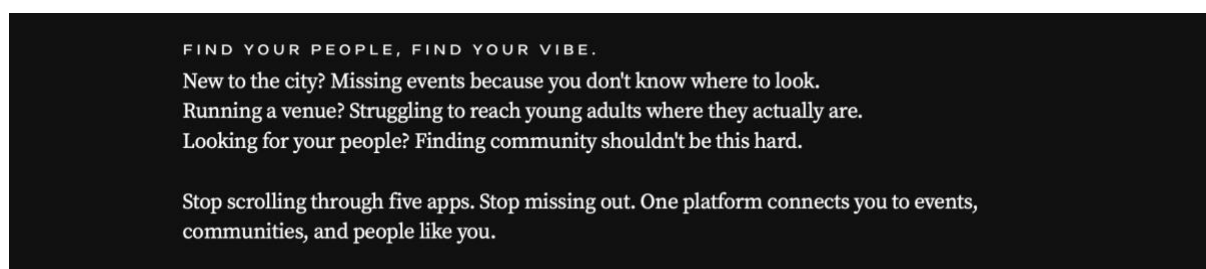


Figure 3: Givibes pitch tagline and problem framing

Key insights:

1. Students already use multiple platforms simultaneously and feel frustrated by the effort that is required to stay informed.
2. Newcomers experience a strong need for context – not just what is happening, but also information about who is attending, what is the actual vibe that should be expected, and whether they will feel comfortable going there alone or not.
3. Students are concerned about trust and safety that emerged as implicit concerns. The users prefer events that feel “verified” or are endorsed by known communities or people.

2.2 Refining of Customer Segments

Based on the insights, customer segments can be refined as primary, secondary users, and paying customers. The primary users, being students of Erasmus, international students, expats with urgent social needs. The secondary are the long-term students and

locals who contribute content and sustain engagement. And third, paying customers are the businesses, event organizers, and later communities that are seeking more visibility and analytics.

This led to the changes in the Lean canvas (V2→V3)

1. Stronger emphasis on “New arrival mode” and onboarding.
2. Introduction of verification mechanisms.
3. Clear distinction between consumers, communities, businesses, and event organizers.

2.3 Outcomes

With V3, we shifted the business model from a generic “student social app” to a need-driven onboarding and discovery tool. It is now optimized for newcomers which are sustainable through local users. These insights helped us in development of a prototype and the subsequent solution interviews to evaluate the product.

Problem	Adds staff/community need (“staff want to find communities”), friends-of-friends discovery, and “poor communication/unclear event descriptions.”
Solution	Adds clear event descriptions (target audience, vibe, cost) and a verification system for events/venues/student-created activities.
Customer Segments	Erasmus + recent movers, business types like bars/gyms/cultural venues, student associations, and legally registered expats
Early Adopters	Shifts focus to expats/Erasmus/international newcomers + student associations, and explicitly notes businesses are not primary early adopters.
Cost Structure	Moves from generic cost items to rough monthly estimates (dev, hosting, tools, marketing, distribution/partnerships).
Revenue Structure	Broadens “promoted content” buyers to include businesses + communities + associations + cultural venues (not just businesses).
Unfair Advantage	Added multicultural student-made platform; user-centered approach; team capability

OLD VERSION				
Designed for:		Designed by:		Date:
Lean Canvas		Geolocated social platform by st		16/12/2025
		Students		3
Problem	Solution	Unique Value Proposition	Unfair Advantage	Customer Segments
People's problem(s) - Students struggle to what is happening, where, and for whom an event is really meant. - Staff and working expats want to find communities to be a part of culturally - People want to find other people, be friends and then go to events of similar interest! Business' problem(s) - Business don't have a direct channel to reach university students or specific segments near their town - Associations want to advertise self-organised events - Events go unnoticed due to poor communication, unclear description.	- Geolocated map to display businesses events and communities and events happening around you and in another selected city. - Community based groups on the social platform. (filter by community, nationality or hobbies) - Clear event descriptions (type of event, target audience, vibe, cost). Verification system for events, venues, and student-created activities.	"One trusted place to discover real student events, communities, and activities near you." * * A geolocated platform that connects students and registered expats with nearby activities, communities, and businesses, making it easy to discover what's happening around them while giving local companies highly targeted access to the right students.	- Students' platform made for students from multiple cultures (We have different point of view and different problems, so we can characterize the problem in the best way) - The team work with a user centered focus. (What is the best of the user?) - We are the target audience, hence understand the problem better - We have designers, technical expertise and developers to make this project.	- Students moving to a new city: Erasmus students and students who recently moved to a new city. - Students already living in the city but poorly informed about events. - Businesses: bars, clubs, gyms, cultural venues, associations, event organizers interested in reaching students 20-30 years old people - Communities: socially active, student associations, interested in student groups and events - Legally registered EXPATS
Existing Alternatives	Key Metrics	High-Level Concept	Channels	Early Adopters
Instagram Whatsapp university groups Bumble/Tinder EventBrite and MeetUp Turn Up Reddit University Groups	- Activity Attendance - Cultural and community connection - Satisfaction (net promoter score) - Usage frequency (every weekend or during festive season) - Businesses feedback - Business propensity to sponsorize events	Geolocated app to find events and students communities near you: - Like Bumble for finding events, parties or activities - Like EventBrite for community events - Like Reddit for finding your niche events	Path to customers - Associations - Businesses (Gyms, pubs, clubs) - Event managers - Students' events - Word of mouth	- Businesses that sponsor events related to the university life. - Students who moved to an entirely different culture. - Communities that are looking for new memberships. - Expats that want to meet other people of similar culture/ interests (students, staff etc) - Erasmus students in multicultural cities (more interested in events) - International or out-of-town students in their first months in a new city (more interested in community, but also events) - Student associations actively organizing events but struggling with visibility. - Businesses that sponsor events related to the university life (NOT the main early adopters)
Cost Structure		Revenue Structure		
People: Developers' salaries and freelance support for MVP development (full-stack + mobile + light UI/UX/QA) *€2,300/month Hosting: Cloud backend, database, storage, CDN for geolocated events, posts, and user data *€100/month Licenses/Software: Map/Geolocation API (Mapbox/Google Maps free tier initially), analytics, design and dev tools *€50/month Variable Costs: Marketing & Customer Acquisition: Geo-targeted Instagram ads, on-campus posters, welcome-week activations, student association collaborations *€250-€50/month Distribution Costs: Partnership & Promotion: Small promotional fees to student clubs and event organizers, launch incentives (vouchers/freebies), early business onboarding *€100-200/month		- Subscription Fees: €10-30 per month per business for ongoing visibility on map/feed. - Featured Event Fees: One-time payment for enhanced visibility of specific events. - Sponsorship/Promoted Content: Businesses, communities, associations, cultural venue pay extra to boost posts on feed or map. - Potential Future Revenue: Partnerships with universities, premium features for communities and associations (optional).		

Figure 4: Lean Canvas Iteration 2 (V3)

3. Iteration 3: Solution Validation

3.1 Solution Interview and Prototype testing:

In the iteration 3, we designed a working prototype for consumer side and business side which was tested through solution interviews. Detailed interview guides are available in Appendix A.3, A.4. The participants interacted with the interface while explaining their thought process. (thinking out loud protocol). The key insights that we validated were:

1. Users prefer a geolocated map with a list view.
2. The detailed event descriptions such as *cost*, *crowd-type*, *vibe*, and *language* were considered important for the people.
3. The users expressed a clear preference for staying within one platform for buying the tickets for the event instead of being directed to a third party service.

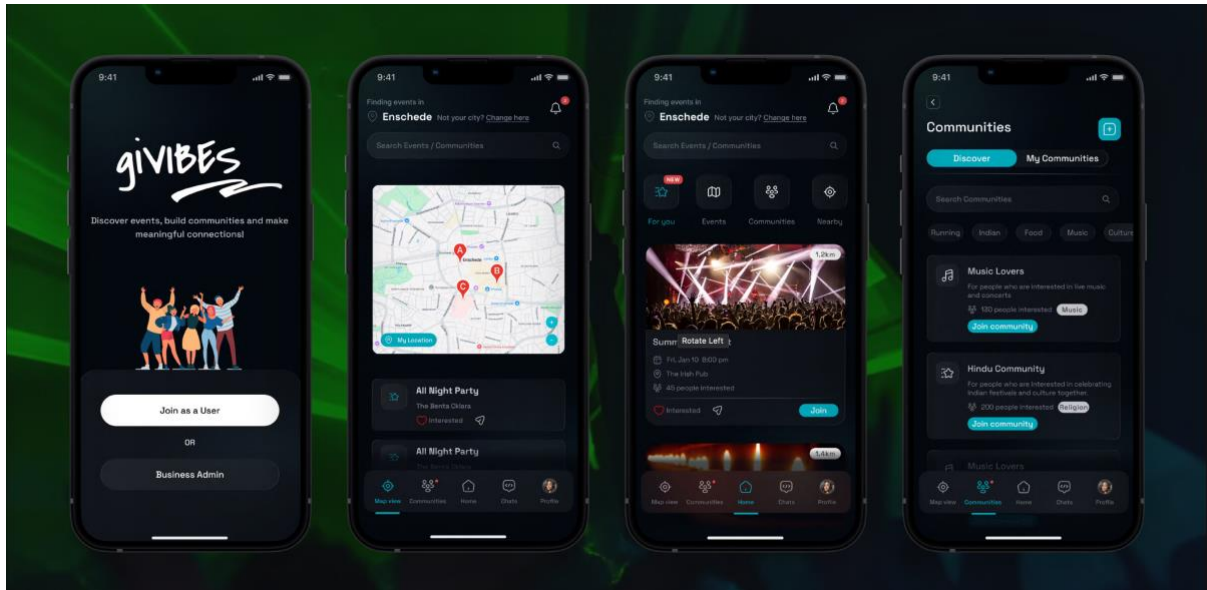


Figure 5: Consumer Prototype

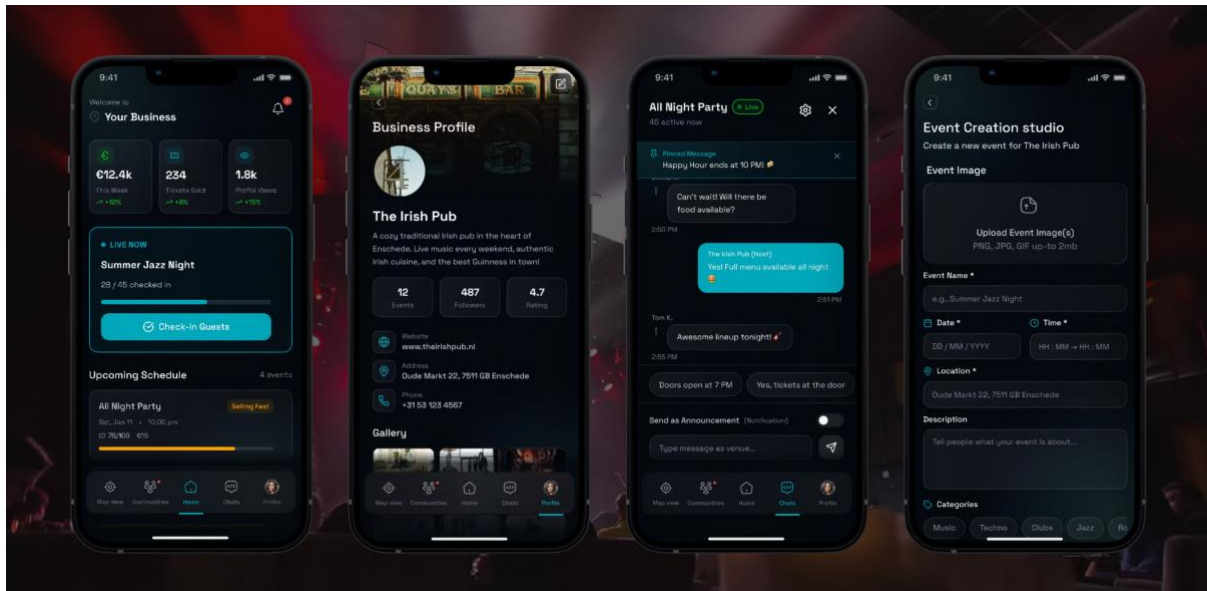


Figure 6: Business Prototypes

3.2 Pricing and Monetization Reflections

Pricing assumptions were refined based on the interviews with the businesses and organizers:

1. The subscription fees (€35/month) were perceived as a reasonable of the visibility and analytics provided.
2. The ticketing fees scaled with the volume of people. It was preferred over flat fees, which aligns with Givibes revenue with the organizer's success (increases with more people).
3. Communities were introduced as paying customers once they reach a certain size, which reflects increasing value creation.

Tickets sold	Fee	Fixed costs* *no costs for a free event
1–30 tickets	6% fee	minimum per event €49
31–70 tickets	5% fee	minimum per event €49
71–150 tickets	4% fee	minimum per event €49
150+ tickets	3% fee	minimum per event €49

Figure 7: Pricing logic based on tickets sold

3.3 Outcomes

The third Lean Canvas integrated ticketing, community subscriptions, and verification mechanisms. The business model evolved into a progressive funnel. From free discovery to engagement to monetization through subscriptions and ticketing.

Problem	Adds stronger “pain” framing (lack of social context/trust signals like who’s going + vibe + credibility; missed opportunities/FOMO; lack of a structured reliable discovery tool) and adds a clearer business pain (time/cost + uncertainty whether the “right people” will show up).
Solution	Adds verified + detailed event information and integrated ticketing (in-app ticket purchase to reduce friction).
UVP	“one trusted place to discover local events/communities/activities near you,” and target as young people + registered expats.
Customer Segments	Narrows to young people in the city (incl. Erasmus/newcomers); refines organizer side to event organizers + businesses (bars/gyms/cultural venues) plus associations/communities and registered expats.
Key Metrics	Adds event attendance (how many users actually attend) and engagement through COIN usage.
Channels	Reframes channels to explicitly include student forums/word of mouth, university associations, and organizer outreach; adds “both sides” acquisition tactics (e.g., referral/COIN incentives, welcome-week campaigns)
Cost Structure	Expands to include in-app payment support/extra storage, payment gateway + certificate fees, referral incentives, and COIN system management overhead.
Revenue Structure	Specifies business/event organizer subscriptions (~€35/month, scalable by size) and adds platform ticketing fees (tiered %/fee); introduces early access/onboarding incentives.

Designed for:		Designed by:	Date:	Version:
Geolocated social platform by students		Students	13/01/2026	4
Lean Canvas				
Problem	Solution	Unique Value Proposition	Unfair Advantage	Customer Segments
People's problems - People living in a city, especially newcomers, but also long-term residents, struggle to understand what is happening, where, and whether an event is relevant to them. - Event discovery is fragmented across social media, chats, and word of mouth, leading to missed opportunities and FOMO. - Lack of social context and trust signals (who is going, who it's for, vibe, credibility) makes attending events feel uncertain and risky. - People want to meet others with similar interests but lack a structured, reliable way to discover events and communities that feel socially safe. Business / Organizers problems - Businesses, associations, and organizers lack a direct, targeted channel to reach the right local audience. - Event promotion suffers from low visibility, unclear positioning, and poor audience targeting. - Businesses and organizers spend time and money without knowing if the right people will actually show up.	- Geolocated map to discover events, communities, and local businesses, with filters for interests. - Social platform with community groups, filterable by interests, nationality, or hobbies, helping users connect with like-minded people - Verified and detailed event information, including type, target audience, vibe, and cost, ensuring trust for events, venues, and user-generated activities. - Integrated ticketing for events, allowing users to buy tickets directly within the app, reducing friction and ensuring a seamless experience.	"One trusted place to discover real student events, communities, and activities near you." "One trusted place to discover real local events, communities, and activities near you." * A geolocated platform connecting young people, students and registered expats with nearby activities, communities, and businesses, making it easy to discover what's happening around them while giving local companies highly targeted access to the right students.	- Platform designed for young people from multiple cultures, allowing us to understand different perspectives and address their needs effectively) - The team work with a user centered focus. (What is the best of the user?) - We are the target audience, hence understand the problem better - We have designers, technical expertise and developers to make this project.	- Young people in the city, including Erasmus students and newcomers. - Students/Residents already living in the city but poorly informed about events. - Event organizers: professionals and associations who run events and need visibility and verified attendees. - Businesses: bars, clubs, gyms, cultural venues, event-organizers and other local companies interested in reaching 20-30 years olds. - Communities: socially active, student associations, interested in student groups and events or hobby-based communities. - Legally registered expats.
Existing Alternatives	Key Metrics	High-Level Concept	Channels	Early Adopters
- Instagram – general social discovery, passive event exposure - WhatsApp university groups – peer-to-peer event sharing, limited reach - Bumble/Tinder – social connections, not event-focused - EventBrite / MeetUp – event listings, less social/community integration - Reddit University Groups – discussion and recommendations, not centralized	- Event attendance (how many users actually attend events) - Cultural and community engagement (level of interaction in communities) - User satisfaction (Net Promoter Score) - App usage frequency (weekends, holidays, or special events) - Business willingness to pay / sponsor events - Engagement through COIN usage(1)	Geolocated app to find events and students communities near you: Consumer: Geolocated app to discover events, student communities, and local businesses near you. Like Bumble for finding events or activities, EventBrite for community events, Reddit for niche interests. Connects users with like-minded people, communities, and relevant activities. Business / Organizer: Provides a direct, targeted channel to reach the right local audience. Promote events with featured posts or enhanced visibility on the map. Access actionable analytics to measure attendance and ROI. Flexible monetization via subscriptions, promoted content, or per-event fees.	Consumers (students, expats, young professionals): Instagram, WhatsApp groups, university forums, word of mouth, student associations, local communities. Event Organizers / Businesses: Direct outreach to bars, clubs, gyms, cultural venues; partnerships with student associations: event fairs or expos; email campaigns; targeting organizers. Both sides: App store presence, referral programs(1), early access/demo (2) invitations; campus activations or welcome-week campaigns.	- Expats who want to meet people with similar cultural backgrounds or interests (students, staff, etc.) - Erasmus and international students in multicultural cities, especially during their first months, interested in both community and events - Student associations actively organizing events but struggling with visibility - Event organizers looking for an easy way to reach the right audience and test event promotion - Businesses sponsoring student-related events (secondary early adopters)
Cost Structure		Revenue Structure		
Fixed / Ongoing Costs People: Developers' salaries + freelance support for MVP (full-stack, mobile, UI/UX, QA) ~ €2,300/month. Could increase if we add in-app payment system and COIN management (~€300–500 extra initial support). Hosting / Infrastructure: Cloud backend, database, storage, CDN for geolocated events, posts, and user data ~ €100/month. Adding in-app payment support may require extra storage and security (~€50 extra/month). Licenses / Software: Map/Geolocation API (Mapbox/Google Maps free tier), analytics, development & design tools ~ €50/month. Payment gateways (Stripe, PayPal) may incur certificate/SDK fees (~€10–20/month). Variable / Marketing Costs Marketing & Customer Acquisition: Geo-targeted Instagram ads, campus posters, welcome-week activations, student association collaborations ~ €250–450/month. Referral Program Incentives: Vouchers, freebies, or COIN rewards for inviting users ~ €50–150/month initially. Distribution / Partnership Costs Partnership & Promotion: Small promotional fees to student clubs, event organizers, launch incentives, early business onboarding ~ €100–200/month. Payment Processing Fees: Fees charged by payment gateways per transaction (e.g., 3–6% per ticket sold). Considered a variable cost tied to sales. COIN System Management: Reward issuance, tracking, and redemption mechanics – included as part of initial development costs and minor monthly overhead (~€20–50/month for monitoring and maintenance).		Subscription Fees: Businesses & Event Organizers: Basic subscription €35/month for visibility and analytics; price increases for additional services and features. Communities: Tiered subscription based on members (0–20 free, 21–50 €X, 51–100 €Y, 100+ €Z). Promoted Content / Featured Events: Optional one-time payment to boost posts or events for greater reach. Optional Ticketing: Fees apply only when tickets are sold through the platform; scales with ticket volume (1–30 tickets: 6% fee min €49; 31–70 tickets: 5% fee min €49; 71–150 tickets: 4% fee min €49; 150+ tickets: 3% fee min €49). Group discounts available. Early Access / Demo Incentives: Selected businesses, event organizers, and communities get X months free access + 2 free promoted campaigns per month on up to two events. Future Potential: Partnerships with university communities, premium features for communities and associations.		

Figure 8: Lean Canvas Iteration 3 (V4)

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PART 2

The resulting business model
and strategic positioning



The resulting business model and strategic position

Based on the 3 Lean start-up iterations and thorough discussion on the problems and solution interviews. GIVIBES is now positioned as a two-sided market platform which connects people like students and adults with event organizers, communities and local businesses. Rather than hosting events or taking on the risk of demand, the platform facilitates discovery of events and communities, transactions by verifying organizers and communities, geolocation information and allowing focused outreach. This positioning emerged from the insights gained through our interviews where people expect free access to event information, while organizers are willing to invest in recognition/visibility, demographics targeting, and performance feedback.

GIVIBES strategically places itself in a space between general social media sites and ticketing platform services. Current social media platforms like Instagram, WhatsApp and Facebook offer a broad reach, but they do not have proper structure, verification, and local relevance and even if they do, people are not aware of it and miss out on events quite often. The ticketing platforms only focus on transactions, missing out on wider context or social information. GIVIBES stands out as a geolocated, community focused and orientation platform, catering to a wide range of people such as young adults like students, newcomers, expats and residents. Its main advantage is that it brings all the events and communities into one trusted app so that people don't have to reach or search across many different apps, all this by leveraging social proof, community cues and confirmed organizers to assist in attendance choices among various user categories.

From a business model perspective, GIVIBES works as a Freemium platform: On the consumer side, the service is offered for free, encouraging more people to use and gain network growth. While on the organizer's side, we make money through subscriptions, provide extra visibility for events, and fees from ticket sales. Moreover, communities are essential to the platform, It is possible to create and utilize communities without any cost, yet bigger or more engaged communities might need to pay for verification and improved visibility once it reaches a certain size. This helps build trust on the platform by clearly separating verified communities from informal and unverified groups. Acting as a mediator, the platform doesn't own any inventory, fund events in advance, or ensure participation in attendance. This type of broker setup minimizes the need for capital demand and reduces operational while enabling income generation based on the value it creates. In terms of platform economics, such mediation models frequently show good ROI (return on investment) once a significant scale has been achieved, as additional users and events can be accommodated at a relatively low extra cost.

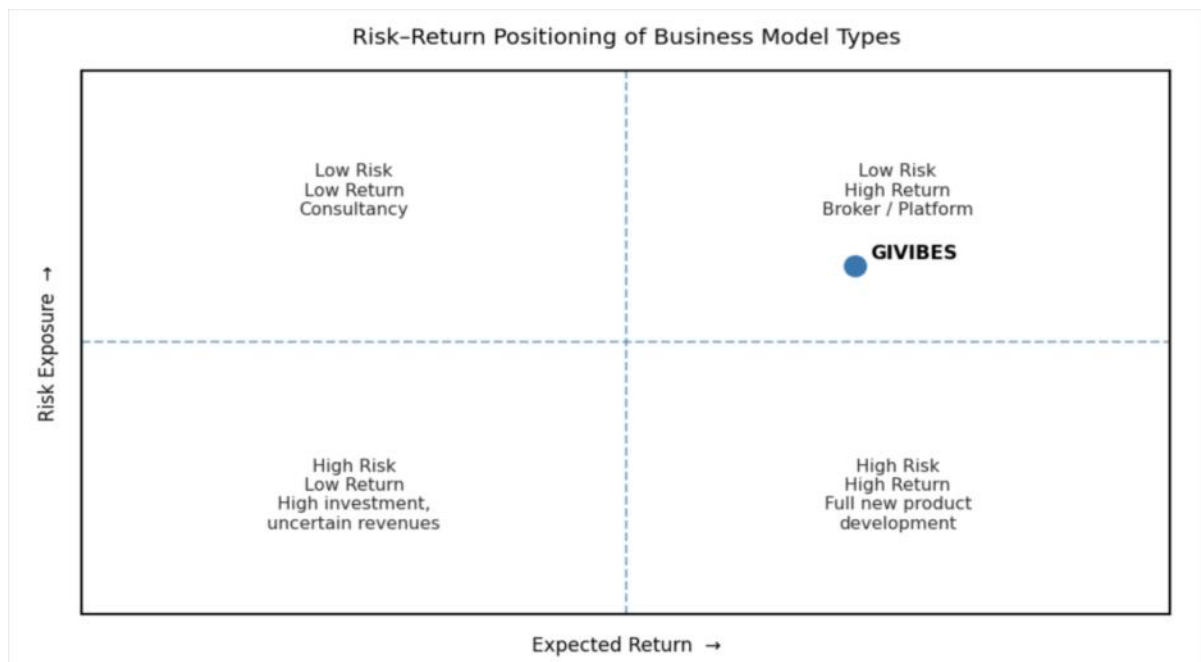


Figure 9: Positioning of business model types in terms of risk and return. GIVIBES's position indicates the potential for returns of the chosen intermediary platform model instead of its actual financial results at present.

The advantages of this model are two-sided. For organizers GIVIBES helps boost performance by accurate targeting of the audience, cutting down on wasted marketing efforts and offering insights through analytics and confirmed RSVPs. For the users, it reduces the cost of searching and coordination, and makes the users feel safer through verification methods, by providing clear information and visible social proof. From society's point of view, the platform can facilitate social inclusion by making it easier for newcomers to participate and help them feel less lonely and less worried about missing out on things.

Simultaneously, the selected business model brings certain downsides and risks. GIVIBES has a common cold-start issue because creating value depends on bringing people on both sides of the platform. The measures of trust and verification, although essential to the value offer, they also lead to continuous moderation expenses making the operations more complicated. Additionally, excessive dependence on a narrow set of event categories might limit the range of people it includes and weaken its long-term impact on society, unless other types of events are also actively promoted. These compromises emphasize that the platform's success is more about carrying its main focus rather than quick expansion of new features.

Overall, the two-sided broker model offers GIVIBES a significant growth opportunity and income potential, yet it can be unstable during its initial stages. Its long-term success relies on keeping trust intact, having enough high-quality events, and avoiding a shift towards unfocused social networking. When implemented carefully, the model matches economic value with real social benefits.

gIVIBES

PART 3
Future iterations



Future Iterations

Previous iterations and interviews have provided valuable insights; however, the sample size of businesses and organizations remains limited. As a result, several assumptions about the value proposition and the business model remain unvalidated. Additional interviews with potential business users are necessary to refine our understanding and guide the prototype development.

The key hypotheses to test are as follows. First, local businesses and event organizers should perceive clear value in a digital platform that simplifies event promotion and increases visibility among young people in the city (students and registered expats). Second, young people are expected to engage more when events are personalized based on their interests and location. Third, social features such as communities, group chats, and an activity feed should significantly increase engagement and retention compared to platforms that simply list events. Fourth, while businesses may not initially pay, they might adopt paid features once the benefits (such as increased attendance, better targeting, and measurable performance) become evident. Fifth, businesses and event organizers will value an optional “done-for-you” marketing service (brand and campaign management) because it reduces their effort and improves promotion outcomes compared to managing multiple channels on their own.

To explore these hypotheses, the next prototype version should become a refined beta focused on learning rather than profit. Before launching, the cost of the beta must be weighed against the potential insights it can generate. This beta should prioritize features that test the most critical assumptions, reuse existing infrastructure, and keep the scope limited to reduce complexity and risk.

The refined prototype will include two distinct experiences: a consumer-side app for young people in the city (students and registered expats), and an organizer-side dashboard for businesses and event organizers. The consumer app will remain free to remove adoption barriers and encourage active participation. Core features will allow users to discover upcoming events and communities, filter by interest and distance, view events in list or map formats, see verified event details (type, target audience, vibe, cost), buy tickets inside the app, and participate in event-related chats.

For businesses and event organizers, the beta will enable event creation, ticketing, basic audience insights, and limited premium features for controlled testing. Observing organizer behaviour will reveal which features are essential, guiding future iterations to make the platform more valuable on the organizer side. The goal at this stage is to validate willingness to pay without prioritizing revenue; once the ecosystem reaches sufficient usage and the beta demonstrates consistent quality, paid features can be introduced gradually.

In addition, the beta should pilot an optional managed marketing service for a small number of organizer partners (a concierge MVP). This service can include: event listing

optimization (copy, tags, and targeting), visual asset templates, campaign setup and scheduling, cross-channel posting guidance, and a simple monthly performance report tied to platform metrics (views, clicks, saves, ticket conversions). For example, GIVIBES could take an organizer's raw event draft ("Friday jazz night") and turn it into a consistent listing with clear target audience and vibe tags ("live jazz, 20–30, casual, English-friendly"), then push it to the right segments and report what worked. The hypothesis is that "marketing-as-a-service" will increase organizer retention and create a clearer ROI narrative than visibility alone, especially for smaller venues that lack time or expertise.

Beta testing should focus on a geographically defined area, such as Enschede, with access to a concentrated student population and a manageable number of local businesses, pubs, clubs, event organizers, and student communities. Free access will encourage participation and generate both quantitative usage data (activation rates, event interactions, chat participation, repeat usage, ticket conversion) and qualitative feedback through structured sessions and follow-up interviews. Key metrics should be tracked to prioritize future iterations based on engagement, retention, organizer activation, and adoption of the managed marketing service (opt-in rate, repeat usage, and willingness to pay).

The insights gained will inform iterative updates to both the prototype and the business model canvas. Scenarios for improvement include refining recommendations, strengthening verification and moderation workflows, adding or adjusting social features, simplifying event creation for organizers, and formalizing the managed marketing service into a clear package (what is included, what is optional, and what outcomes are reported). By testing assumptions in a controlled manner and continuously iterating based on real user behaviour, the platform can evolve in alignment with Lean Start-up principles, ensuring that development decisions are evidence-driven rather than assumption-based.

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Appendix:

A.1 Customer side interview guide for Iteration 2

A.1.1. Purpose

This guide is designed to help the team run replicable, unbiased problem interviews to validate core discovery challenges, current behaviours, and unmet needs around events, communities, and social connections.

The interviews follow Mom Test principles: focus on past behaviour, real experiences, and concrete decisions, especially not opinions or hypotheticals.

A.1.2 How to Run the Interview (Protocol)

Before the interview

- Do not explain the idea or pitch the product.
- Do not ask for opinions (“Do you like it?”, “Would you use it?”).
- Prepare to take detailed notes on specific examples and frustrations.

During the interview

- Ask questions in the given order.
- Let the interviewee speak freely; avoid interrupting or leading toward solutions.
- If a section is clearly not relevant (e.g. businesses), skip it.

Golden rule

- Focus on “tell me about the last time” → stay silent → dig into specifics.
- Duration: 30–45 minutes
- Target: students, international students.

A.1.3 Interview Questions

I. Context & Background (Warm-up)

- How long have you been living in this city?
- Are you currently studying or working?
- How often do you go out for events, parties, concerts, or social activities?
- The last time you went out for an event, what did you do and where did you go?

II. Major Changes When Moving

- How do you feel moving to a new city/country/continent?
- How long has it been since you moved?
- What are the biggest problems that you face here?
- What are the changes that you feel, and can you tell us about the differences that you feel from back home and here?
- How do you make friends in a new city?

III. Event Discovery

- How do you choose the places you want to visit when you move to a new place?
Can be events/concerts/ cafes/bar?
- What kind of places do you like to see?
- How often do you go for these?
- Have you ever missed an event because you did not know it existed?
- What is your main source from where you get information about these events?(Instagram, WhatsApp, Student Union, friends)
- Do you know how this information reaches you like stages- first stage--, second stage --, third---

IV. Geolocation

- Do you always plan your meetups, or do you do things spontaneously?
- Would you be interested in knowing what events/stuff is happening near you or any particular place?

V. Communities

- Are you part of any community currently?
- How to find groups/ communities that have the same interests as you? Eg: running
- Would you like to know about these communities?
- Is it easy/difficult to find people with similar interests? Why?
- How long did it take you to find these communities, and how did you find them?

VI. Problems

- What are the biggest problems you face when you try to find events or connect socially?
- Has being new to the country ever been the reason you did not know about certain events? And how does it feel left out?

VI. Other

- Would a platform that shows nearby events, communities, and student-only activities be helpful to you?
- What features would you like in an app for solving the same problem
- How important is it that events are verified, student-relevant, culture-related, or filtered to your interests? Conventions, communities, events – parties, watch parties (formula-1), sports

VII. Closing Questions

- In which situations do you feel most frustrated with your current approach to events or promotion?
- Was there anything specific about your experience here that stands out as particularly challenging?

VIII. Questions to Avoid

- Would an app solve this?
- Do you think this is a problem?
- Would you pay for a solution?

A.2. Business Side Questions for Iteration 2

A.2.1. Interview Questions

I. Context & Background (Warm-up)

- How long have you been running this business / organizing these events?
- Who is your primary target audience (students, general public, mixed)?
- How many events or promotions do you run per month on average?
- Walk me through your most recent event or promotion—what did you do to get people to know about it?

II. Questions

- How do you currently promote your events or offers to people?
- Which platforms work best for you today? (social media, flyers, student associations, etc.)
- What challenges do you face when trying to reach students or the general public in the city?
- Do you feel your business has enough visibility among new people coming to the city?
- How do you usually measure the success of your event promotions?
- Has there ever been an event that did not perform well because people didn't know about it?
- Would you be interested in a platform that groups people by communities (fitness, food, culture, music, nationalities, hobbies)?
- Do people often tell you that they didn't know about you before discovering by accident.
- How much money do you spend on current promotions and has it ever been wasted by not working out.
- How much would you pay monthly if a platform could guarantee visibility to people.
- How beneficial would it be if the platform helps you reach people with relevant interest.

- What would make you say no to use a platform like this ?
- What is missing in the current platform you use ?
- What is the hardest part in promoting your business right now?
- Would you be willing to pay 30eur for this app ?

II. Closing Questions Goal: Surface genuine value perception and identify deal-breakers or enablers.

- After seeing this prototype, what's the biggest benefit you see for your business?
- What would make you say no to using a platform like this?
- When would you realistically be ready to start testing or using a platform like this?
- Is there anything you expected to see but didn't?
- Can we follow up with you in a few weeks to share updates and gather more feedback?

III. Questions to Avoid

- Do you like it?
- Would you use this app?
- Is this a good idea for your business?
- Would you recommend it to other Organizers?
- How much would you pay?(without context about value)

A.3. Customers Interview Guide for Iteration 3

A.3.1. Purpose

This guide is designed to help the team run replicable, unbiased demo interviews to validate problems, user behaviour, trust mechanisms, and the value of events, communities, and organizers.

The interviews follow Mom Test principles: focus on past behaviour, real experiences, and concrete decisions, especially not opinions or hypothetical.

A.3.2 How to Run the Interview (Protocol)

Before the interview

- Do not explain the idea or pitch the product.
- Do not ask for opinions (“Do you like it?”, “Would you use it?”).
- Make sure the demo is ready and can be shown quickly.

During the interview

- Ask questions in the given order.
- Let the interviewee speak freely; avoid interrupting or defending the demo.
- If a section is clearly not relevant (e.g. communities), skip it.

A.3.3 Golden rule

- Show prototype first → stay silent → then ask questions.
- Duration : 30–45 minutes
- Target : students, international students, expats, early professionals

A.3.4 Interview Questions

I. Context & Background (Warm-up)

Goal : understand who the interviewee is and how relevant the problem might be.

- How long have you been living in this city?
- Are you currently studying or working?
- How often do you go out for events, parties, concerts, or social activities?
- The last time you went out for an event, what did you do and where did you go?

II. Event Discovery (Past Behaviour)

Goal : validate the problem without mentioning the solution.

- How do you usually discover events or social activities?
- Which platforms or channels do you check most often?
- Have you ever found out about an event after it already happened?
- If yes, can you tell me about the most recent time?
- When you find out about an event too late, what do you usually do?

III. Demo – First Impression (No Explanation)

Goal : understand what the product communicates on its own.

- Show the demo. Do not explain anything.
- Looking at this screen, what do you think this app does?
- What is the first thing you notice?
- Is there anything that feels unclear or confusing?

IV. Decision-Making: “Do I Go or Not?”

Goal : Identify the information that truly drives attendance decisions.

- When you look at an event here, what information do you need to decide whether to go?
- Is there any information that, if missing, would make you skip the event?
- Is there anything you personally don't care about seeing?

V. Map View vs List View

Goal : validate the real value of geolocation.

- In what situations would you use the map view?

- In what situations would you use the list view?
- If one had to be removed, which one would you miss more? Why?
- Do you currently switch between multiple apps just to understand where an event is located?

VI. Organizers, Promoters & Venues

Goal : Validate the distinction between different actors.

- When you look at an event, do you care about who organizes it?
- Do you care about which venue or place hosts it, even if you don't know it?
- Have you ever trusted an event more because you recognized the organizer or the venue?
- If the organizer and the venue are different, does that matter to you?

VII. Communities (Ask Only If Relevant)

Goal : Understand the role of communities without forcing interest.

- Are you currently part of any organized groups or communities? (sports, hobbies, culture, study, etc.)

If NO → skip to Section 8

If YES → continue

- Where do these communities exist today? (WhatsApp, Discord, Instagram, etc.)
- What do you mainly use these communities for?
- Have you ever discovered an event through a community?
- Knowing that a community you like is interested in an event — would that influence your decision to go?
- Would you prefer to:
 - Find a community first and then events, or
 - Discover an event and see which communities are interested?

VIII. Communities & Value Creation

Goal: explore business value without discussing pricing.

- If a community brings 30–50 people to an event, do you think that creates value?
- Who benefits the most from that?
 - The venue
 - The organizer
 - The people attending
- Does a large but inactive community have the same value as a small but very active one?

IX. Trust, Safety & Verification

Goal: validate trust as a core requirement.

- What makes you trust that an event is real and safe?
- What would make you avoid an event even if it looks interesting?
- How important is it for you that events or communities are verified?
- What kind of moderation would you expect in event chats or communities?

X. Implicit Comparison With Existing Tools

Goal: understand when current tools are “good enough.”

- For what would you still use Instagram or WhatsApp?
- For what would you use this app instead?
- In which situations would you go back to the tools you already use?

XI. Closing Questions

Goal: surface real value (or lack of it).

- In which situations would you realistically use this app?
- In which situations would you never use it?
- If this app disappeared tomorrow, what would you miss the most?
- Was there anything you expected to see but didn't?

XII. Questions to Avoid (Never Ask)

- Do you like it?
- Would you use this app?
- Is this a good idea?
- Would you recommend it to friends?
- These questions generate biased, unreliable answers.

A.4. Business Owners Interview Guide for Iteration 3

Target: Event organizers, bar/pub owners, association leaders, cultural organizers.

A.4.1. Interview Questions

I. Context & Business Background (Warm-up)

Goal: Understand the business type, current audience, and promotion approach—establish relevance.

- How long have you been running this business / organizing these events?
- Who is your primary target audience (students, general public, mixed)?
- How many events or promotions do you run per month on average?
- Walk me through your most recent event or promotion—what did you do to get people to know about it?

II. Current Promotion Channels & Challenges (Past Behaviour)

Goal: Validate the pain points organizers experience; understand current workarounds and frustrations.

- Which channels or platforms do you currently use to promote your events? (Instagram, flyers, email, word-of-mouth, student associations, etc.)
- Among these channels, which one gives you the most reliable turnout or engagement?
- When you promote an event, how do you decide which student groups or types of people to target?
- Have you ever had an event that didn't get the attendance you expected—what went wrong?
- What is the biggest frustration you face when trying to reach students specifically?

III. Prototype First Impression – Organizer View

Goal: Understand what the business features communicate on their own; surface intuitive understanding and gaps.

(Show the prototype organizer dashboard / event creation flow)

- Looking at this business dashboard, what do you think you would be able to do with it ?
- What stands out first about how events are created and managed?
- Is there anything confusing or unclear about the process?

IV. Event Creation & Management Experience

Goal: Validate that the event creation flow is realistic and matches how Organizers actually work.

- If you wanted to create an event listing here, walk me through what information you would need to add and why each piece matters.
- Compared to how you currently post on Instagram or create flyers, how much easier or harder would this be?
- How much time would you realistically spend setting up one complete event listing here?
- Is there any required information that would be annoying or difficult to provide?

V. Reaching Students & Targeting Capabilities

Goal: Validate that the platform's targeting and filtering tools address real business needs.

- When you look at the filtering options here (interests, nationalities, study levels, language), how useful would that be for reaching your target students?
- Have you ever struggled to reach a specific type of student—what type matters most to your business?
- If you could filter and send event notifications to students who match your ideal audience profile, how valuable would that be?
- Would you want the platform to show you which student groups are most interested in your event type?

VI. Tracking Performance & Analytics

Goal: Understand what business metrics matter and whether the platform offers meaningful feedback.

- How do you currently measure whether a promotion worked? (attendance count, revenue, social media engagement, etc.)
- What information about your events would you want to see on a dashboard? (views, clicks, RSVPs, attendee numbers, demographics, feedback, etc.)
- If you could track exactly which students saw your event, clicked, or RSVP'd, how would that change your promotion decisions?
- Would you pay more if the platform provided detailed attendee data and feedback after an event?

VII. Verification & Trust from the Business Side

Goal: Understand whether the platform's trust mechanisms (verification, moderation) would be adopted and valued by Organizers.

- What would make you feel comfortable listing your event on a new platform like this?
- How important is it that the RSVP responses are real students, not spam or fake sign-ups?
- Would you want a verification badge or "trusted Organizer" status on your profile? Why?
- What kind of support or moderation would you expect from the platform team?

VIII. Pricing, Value, & Willingness to Pay

Goal: Validate revenue model assumptions and test willingness to pay at different price points.

- Compared to what you currently spend on promotion (Instagram, flyers, student association partnerships), what would feel like a fair monthly fee for access to verified student audiences?
- What specific results would justify paying €25/month? €50/month? (e.g., guaranteed attendance numbers, demographic targeting, analytics)

- Have you ever spent money on promotion that didn't work out or reach the right audience?
- Would you pay monthly, per event, or prefer a different pricing model?
- At what price point would this platform become "too expensive" for your budget?

IX. Comparison with Existing Tools

Goal: Understand when and why an Organizer would use this platform instead of their current channels.

- For which types of events or promotions would you use this platform instead of Instagram / flyers?
- What would make you switch completely away from your current main promotion channels?
- What can Instagram or flyers do that this platform currently cannot?
- In which situations would you keep using your current tools alongside this platform?

X. Communities & Group Events

Goal: Explore whether community-based targeting and group attendance would create additional value.

- If student communities (sports clubs, cultural groups, study groups, hobby clubs) could RSVP as groups to your event, how valuable would that be?
- Would you prefer reaching individual students or entire interest-based communities?
- Have you ever succeeded by targeting specific student communities or clubs directly?

XI. Business Model & Strategic Questions

Goal: Understand broader business needs and positioning challenges.

- What's the hardest part of promoting your business or events right now?
- Are there any features or capabilities you wish you had for reaching students?
- If this platform had partnerships with universities or student associations, would that increase your trust in it?

XII. Closing Questions

Goal: Surface genuine value perception and identify deal-breakers or enablers.

- After seeing this prototype, what's the biggest benefit you see for your business?
- What would make you say no to using a platform like this?
- When would you realistically be ready to start testing or using a platform like this?
- Is there anything you expected to see but didn't?

- Can we follow up with you in a few weeks to share updates and gather more feedback?

XIII. Questions to Avoid (Never Ask)

- Do you like it?
- Would you use this app?
- Is this a good idea for your business?
- Would you recommend it to other Organizers?
- How much would you pay?(without context about value)

A. 5. Customer Personas

A.5.1. Consumer user feedback

1 Sous-Chef (Name N/A)

Recently arrived, goes frequently to clubs and bars, discovers events via Instagram, Facebook, and friends. Sees highest app value in the first “orientation” phase, usefulness declines as he builds his own network and knowledge. First impression is “TicketMaster-like” transactional tool, but “not a smooth experience” due to usability issues. Attends events based on people and vibe, needs crowd size, music genre, and organizer reputation as trust cues. Immediately looked for social features “Can I talk to people going to this?” and suggested links to artist profiles. Believes exclusivity (exclusive tickets) is key to long-term retention.

2 Bachelor Student (Name N/A)

New student since August, attends house parties and game nights, relies on WhatsApp groups and friends. Core problem is integrating into the local student community, validates the app as ideal when arriving in a new city or country. Sees the app as “communities and parties around your location,” but criticizes content as very drinking and partying centric. Decisions are driven by social fit and demographics like age, student composition, and interests (e.g., “Are many students from UT going?”). Prefers to find a community first (e.g., ESN) and then events. Communities are primary trust anchors. Wants social features but warns against turning it into “one more messaging app.” Would use the app long-term only if it offers exclusive content.

3 Professional from Rome (Name N/A)

Age is 26, a full-time employee, runs a social media business, moved to Rome six months ago, goes out about once a week. Core problem is “missed opportunity,” such as discovering an appealing Hilton EUR event on TikTok only after it happened. Finds the distinction between Events vs Nearby and Home vs Explore confusing, and prefers “few, but clear, spaces.” Sees mandatory ID verification as a strong trust signal that the app is “secure” and “well-built.” Likes Event Chat as a differentiator but worries it can become chaotic and “unreadable” without moderation. Views communities as a “social filter” that sets expectations for the people and atmosphere at events.

4 Expat in Frankfurt (Name N/A)

Age is 26, works at a large bank, an Italian expatriate in Frankfurt for two years. Needs an “urban orientation engine” to reduce cognitive load of deciding “what to do.” Strongly requests an integrated map view, being forced to switch to Google Maps is a deal-breaker. Values communities as social signals but warns that unmoderated Event Chats could become useless or harmful. Critiques a paid-only community model, expects a freemium approach to avoid “community morte (dead communities).” Decision drivers include clear non-negotiable information, especially distance.

5 Master student (Tilak)

About 4.5 months in Enschede, attends events infrequently (every 1–2 weeks). Experiences passive discovery and mild regret when missing events, positioning the app as a “vitamin” rather than a painkiller. Needs explicitly “international-friendly” events to avoid feeling out of place. Trusts events from known entities like university and associations or wants a simple organizer verification mark. Uses social proof for emotional safety, knowing familiar people are going reduces shyness. Sees the app as a utility for “structured discovery,” not as a social network replacement.

6 Bachelor student (Nathan)

A First-year Civil Engineering student, new to Enschede, relies on friends in WhatsApp groups and Instagram stories. Suffers FOMO from learning about events too late. “Who’s going” fully determines attendance decisions, a social proof “decides everything.” Wants concise “just the facts” event information, not long narrative descriptions. Prototype’s failure to show which friends are attending is a critical flaw. Positions the app as a complementary, student-focused event tool alongside WhatsApp/Instagram.

7 University student (Khush)

Arrived at Enschede in September, attends events roughly every two weeks. Core problem is inefficient, unreliable discovery (stumbling on events via Instagram). Expects in-app ticketing, lack of it makes “Join” confusing and devalues the app. Needs ticket prices visible on cards and wants interest counts as social proof. Requires verification of unknown organizers for trust. Finds “Interested,” “Wishlist,” and “Join” overlapping and unclear; suggests renaming toward “Save for later” and “Attend / Get Tickets.”

8 Student (Ihtisham)

Regularly attends music events and raves, a heavy user of competitor app Shotgun. Wants a “complete” application that combines Shotgun-style discovery with community/social features. Considers in-app ticketing as “crucial”, users will be frustrated if they cannot buy tickets directly. Wants to see which friends are interested in coordinating plans. Feels the app is not clearly targeted to international students, suggests a “Student events” filter. For exclusive student events, expects strong verification (student ID). Suggests advanced features like integrated maps and schedules for large festivals.

A.5.2. Organizer user feedback

1 Car Auction Operator

A Male, age is 49, 14 years of experience, runs 2–3 auctions per month. Lacks precision targeting beyond existing networks and cannot separate serious buyers from browsers. Has no performance visibility on ads (e.g., 12,000 rupees on Google Ads with zero conversions). Worries about fake inquiries and unreliable RSVPs causing logistical waste. Wants actionable analytics, verified users, and tools to expand into new relevant segments.

2 Hotel Owner

A Male, age is 42, 19 years of experience, hosts 4–6 social events per month. Promotion is inefficient: manual multi-platform setup takes 50–60 minutes per event and lacks event-specific targeting. Faces large gaps between RSVPs and attendance (70–80 vs 15), which harms operational planning. Tracks inquiries manually without clear attribution to channels. Prefers per-event pricing to align with busy periods. Wants setup time reduced to 10–15 minutes and needs verified RSVPs for reliable planning.

3 NGO Senior Member

A Female, age is 38, 10 years' experience, very tight promotional budget (500–2500 rupees/month). Struggles with niche targeting for social events under budget constraints. Faces manual, time-consuming promotion and high financial risk from low turnout. Favors flexible per-event pricing aligned with limited resources. Needs verified RSVPs and access to student group directories to boost attendance.