



INTERVIEWS



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Participant number	Participant organisation name	Short name	Country
1	European Development	EUDEV	BG
2	FVB – The Hive	FVB	ITA
3	Lidi Smart Solutions	Lidi	NED
4	YYouth	YY	NOR
5	F6S NETWORK LIMITED	F6S	IE

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EDF INTERVIEWS





Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

INTERVIEW 1 – ANDRAS MERZA

SECTION A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1. Can you briefly introduce yourself and tell us what motivated you to start your business?

My name is András Merza, from Hungary. I have a strong academic background in International Relations, with a master's degree in European Development Policy and Programme Management, and I recently completed a postdoctoral qualification in Climate Change expert studies. In 2026 I was pleased to be selected as a European Climate Pact Ambassador.

Professionally, I have worked for several years as an international project manager and Chief of Operations. During that time I gained extensive experience designing, coordinating and implementing complex EU-funded projects, including H2020, Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, LIFE, URBACT and Interreg Danube, with a focus on sustainability, innovation and urban development.

Driven by this experience, I decided to start my own business in 2025. My motivation was to put my specific expertise to use for specialised advisory and management services for European funds. I wanted to set up a specialised practice that helps organisations successfully navigate the complexity of EU grants and maximise their impact.

2. Give a brief overview of your company: what it does, its current size and stage of development.

I have registered a sole proprietorship, so it is one person and it really is still at an early stage! In the future I may also set up an NGO.

3. What specific business challenges or goals led you to consider Artificial Intelligence?

The main challenge that brought me to AI was the huge amount of administrative tasks involved in managing complex EU-funded projects, such as Horizon Europe and Erasmus+. As a self-employed person, I needed a solution to streamline the heavy documentation, proposal and reporting processes that these grants require.

Secondly, I wanted to optimise my communication tasks. Effective dissemination and knowledge sharing are crucial parts of these projects.

AI offered a way to generate high-quality content and manage communication channels efficiently, so that I could focus on strategic advice rather than manual drafting.

4. What were your initial expectations of what AI could do for your business?

My initial expectation was that AI would act as a versatile assistant to help me start and run my business efficiently. Specifically, I expected it to help with legal research around setting up my sole proprietorship, so that I could understand regulations and quickly overcome administrative hurdles.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

In addition, given the international nature of my advisory practice, I expected AI to provide quick translations and streamline data research. My goal was to use these tools to process large amounts of information essential for EU grant applications much faster than I could manually.

SECTION B: EXPERIENCE WITH AI IMPLEMENTATION

1. What specific AI solution did you implement, and what were the main criteria for choosing it?

- text generation
- finding sources
- analysing strategies
- refining ideas
- easy to use
- high speed

2. Can you describe the main steps of the implementation process?

Yes, I use ChatGPT or NotebookLM and I use voice chat to give as much detail as possible, and I always ask for the sources so I can check them.

3. What were the main challenges you encountered (e.g. technical, financial or team-related)?

- Price
- Lack of trust in AI-generated output.

4. How did the actual implementation timeline compare to your original plan, and what caused any major delays?

Definitely makes things faster!



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

SECTION C: RESULTS AND IMPACT

(For successful or ongoing implementations) 1. What has been the main positive impact of AI on your business? Give a specific example or metric.

2. How has this AI integration changed your overall business strategy or daily operations?

(For all cases) 3. What is the current status of AI use in your business today?

AI is like an extra assistant, but I haven't developed a special tool.

SECTION D: LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. What is the most important lesson you have learned from this whole experience?

The main lesson I learned is the absolute necessity of critical thinking. Because AI tools are now accessible to everyone, simply using them is no longer enough to set a business apart in the market.

To really stand out, I realised that I need to see AI as a foundation, not the final solution. In my field of EU advisory work, the competitive advantage comes from applying my personal expertise to validate, refine and strategically deploy AI-generated content. AI provides speed, but human critical thinking guarantees the quality and unique value that clients pay for.

2. What would you do differently if you were to start the process again?

Nothing.

(For successful or ongoing implementations) 3. What is your most important advice or success factor for other entrepreneurs who want to implement AI?

Think twice and be unique! You have to build your own brand and image.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

SECTION E: FUTURE OUTLOOK

1. How do you see AI transforming your specific sector in the coming years?

Really, because everyone thinks they can write and manage complex proposals, which also isn't true.

2. What are your future plans for using AI in your business?

Developing a new AI tool for research, related to netnography.

3. What kind of support is most needed to help young entrepreneurs like you successfully apply AI?

User-friendly and ready-to-use tools, funding opportunities.

SECTION F: TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL DETAILS

1. Can you briefly describe what type of data your AI system needed and any challenges with that?

Only text.

2. Broadly speaking, what was the total financial investment required, and what were the main cost components?

I have a shared profile, so it is free for us.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

INTERVIEW 2 – PRES LAV

SECTION A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1. Can you briefly introduce yourself and tell us what motivated you to start your business?

My name is Preslav, I am 24 years old. I am a young videographer and entrepreneur based in Bulgaria. I started my business out of a passion for visual storytelling and filmmaking. What motivated me most was the freedom to create independently and the growing demand for high-quality video in Bulgaria.

2. Give a brief overview of your company: what it does, its current size and stage of development.

My company focuses on video production, including promotional videos, social media content, event videography and short brand videos. I currently work as a small business, mostly alone with occasional freelancers.

3. What specific business challenges or goals led you to consider Artificial Intelligence?

AI came in handy when I needed to create storyboards and presentations for clients. Sometimes I can't find a specific shot, so I use AI to generate what I have in mind.

4. What were your initial expectations of what AI could do for your business?

I knew AI could also help with video editing, but I didn't expect much. Now I use it in many videos to create transitions that would require more equipment in real life.

SECTION B: EXPERIENCE WITH AI IMPLEMENTATION

1. What specific AI solution did you implement, and what were the main criteria for choosing it?

I implemented AI-driven video editing tools, automatic subtitle generation, colour correction and AI tools for script ideas and content planning. The main criteria were affordability and ease of use.

2. Can you describe the main steps of the implementation process?

First I researched and tested various AI tools. Then I started with small projects to understand their strengths and weaknesses. After that I integrated them into my regular editing workflow.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

3. What were the main challenges you encountered (e.g. technical, financial or team-related)?

The biggest challenge was learning how to use AI tools correctly to convey what I had in mind. After a lot of trial and error, I learned exactly what to say to be understood faster.

4. How did the actual implementation timeline compare to your original plan, and what caused any major delays?

The implementation took a little longer than expected because of the learning curve and the experimentation phase. However, there were no major delays.

SECTION C: RESULTS AND IMPACT

(For successful or ongoing implementations) 1. What has been the main positive impact of AI on your business? Give a specific example or metric.

The biggest impact was time savings. Making a storyboard, drawing it, finding shots online can take up to a day. Now it takes a few hours, depending on the scale of the shots.

2. How has this AI integration changed your overall business strategy or daily operations?

AI allowed me to save time, which helped me focus on coming up with new ideas, which is important if you want to stand out in the market.

(For all cases) 3. What is the current status of AI use in your business today?

AI is now regularly part of my workflow, especially for editing, subtitles and storyboarding.

SECTION D: LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. What is the most important lesson you have learned from this whole experience?

AI works best as a supporting tool, not as a replacement for creativity.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

2. What would you do differently if you were to start the process again?

I would start with fewer tools and master them well before expanding into more advanced AI solutions.

3. What is your most important advice or success factor for other entrepreneurs who want to implement AI?

Choosing the right tool for your needs.

SECTION E: FUTURE OUTLOOK

1. How do you see AI transforming your specific sector in the coming years?

AI will make video production faster and more accessible, especially for small creators and people who haven't studied this extensively, which will create more competition in the sector.

2. What are your future plans for using AI in your business?

I plan to explore more advanced AI tools for video enhancement and font creation.

3. What kind of support is most needed to help young entrepreneurs like you successfully apply AI?

Affordable tools and online workshops for the specific tool.

SECTION F: TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL DETAILS

1. Can you briefly describe what type of data your AI system needed and any challenges with that?

The AI tools mainly use video files, audio and text data. No challenges with this.

2. Broadly speaking, what was the total financial investment required, and what were the main cost components?

The investment was moderate, mainly consisting of monthly software subscriptions.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

INTERVIEW 3 – ILIYA IDAKIEV

SECTION A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1. Can you briefly introduce yourself and tell us what motivated you to start your business?

My name is Iliya, a software developer with 13+ years of experience. I started my business about 11 years ago together with my father, so he motivated me to do this.

2. Give a brief overview of your company: what it does, its current size and stage of development.

We are a small team of 6 senior software developers, we mainly work with startups, we have taken part in many startups, but we have one that grew from 14 people to 200+ in 3 years. We also work with larger clients and have worked with some large companies.

3. What specific business challenges or goals led you to consider Artificial Intelligence?

I wouldn't say there was a specific challenge, just the idea that software can now understand and reason about human language offers huge possibilities.

4. What were your initial expectations of what AI could do for your business?

I can't say it's the 'first' expectation, because we've all been using AI for more than a year now, and we are 10 times more productive in our daily tasks. My expectation is that this will increase in the coming years. The value is shifting from writing good code to writing good guidelines and AI configuration.

SECTION B: EXPERIENCE WITH AI IMPLEMENTATION

1. What specific AI solution did you implement, and what were the main criteria for choosing it?

We can't talk about the projects we develop, sorry ;)

2. Can you describe the main steps of the implementation process?

We can't talk about the projects we develop, sorry ;)



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

3. What were the main challenges you encountered (e.g. technical, financial or team-related)?

The main challenges I encountered are context window overflow and generating consistency.

4. How did the actual implementation timeline compare to your original plan, and what caused any major delays?

The significant challenges I mentioned above.

SECTION C: RESULTS AND IMPACT

(For successful or ongoing implementations) 1. What has been the main positive impact of AI on your business? Give a specific example or metric.

We have all become managers, we no longer program, we just monitor what AI does for us and steer it in the right direction. So 100% AI-generated code, 100% AI management.

2. How has this AI integration changed your overall business strategy or daily operations?

Same as question 1.

(For all cases) 3. What is the current status of AI use in your business today?

We use it as much as possible, we always keep ourselves informed about the latest developments and improve the knowledge base and rules.

SECTION D: LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. What is the most important lesson you have learned from this whole experience?

The world will never be the same as before. Things will develop much faster than before, and if you don't keep up with everything that's happening, you'll probably be left out.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

2. What would you do differently if you were to start the process again?

Not sure how to answer this ;)

3. What is your most important advice or success factor for other entrepreneurs who want to implement AI?

If you haven't implemented it yet, you may already be too late ;)

SECTION E: FUTURE OUTLOOK

1. How do you see AI transforming your specific sector in the coming years?

As mentioned, productivity will rise, no more programming, just AI management.

2. What are your future plans for using AI in your business?

Continuing the integration as much as possible.

3. What kind of support is most needed to help young entrepreneurs like you successfully apply AI?

People need to dig deeper and try to understand and learn how they can use AI for their purposes. It's not as simple as just saying 'generate an app for something', you still need to do your research and draw up a plan.

SECTION F: TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL DETAILS

1. Can you briefly describe what type of data your AI system needed and any challenges with that?

We can't talk about the projects we develop, sorry ;)

2. Broadly speaking, what was the total financial investment required, and what were the main cost components?

Financially, I think it's around 200 USD per person per month for the top subscription.

FVB – THE HIVE INTERVIEWS





Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

INTERVIEW 1 – Emma Carter, founder & Managing Director at GreenBite Studio

SECTION A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1. Can you briefly introduce yourself and tell us what motivated you to start your business?

My name is Emma Carter, and I am the founder and managing director of GreenBite Studio. I started the company in 2022 after working for several years in digital marketing and sustainable food branding. I noticed that many small food companies had excellent products but lacked the tools, strategy and digital visibility to grow in a competitive market. I wanted to create a company that combines branding, content creation and digital tools to help ethical food brands grow more efficiently. My motivation was both professional and personal: I have always been passionate about sustainability, innovation and supporting small entrepreneurs.

2. Give a brief overview of your company: what it does, its current size and stage of development.

GreenBite Studio is a small creative and digital agency that supports sustainable food startups and local producers. We offer services such as brand strategy, social media management, product storytelling, digital campaigns and e-commerce support. The company currently has six full-time employees and a network of three freelance staff. We are in the growth phase: we have moved beyond the startup phase, have developed a stable client base and are now focusing on improving internal efficiency and scaling our service model without significantly expanding headcount.

3. What specific business challenges or goals led you to consider Artificial Intelligence?

The initial trigger was operational pressure. As the number of clients grew, our team spent too much time on repetitive tasks such as drafting first versions of marketing copy, preparing client reports, analysing campaign results and answering routine client questions. This caused delays, limited our creative capacity and reduced overall productivity. We started looking at AI as a practical way to automate low-value manual work, improve speed and free up time for more strategic and creative activities. We also wanted to offer clients more data-driven insights without hiring extra analysts.

4. What were your initial expectations of what AI could do for your business?

Initially I expected AI to function mainly as a productivity tool. I thought it could help us generate draft copy faster, summarise data, support client communication and reduce the time spent on internal reporting. I didn't expect it to replace human creativity or strategy, but I believed it could serve as a strong support system for the team. I also hoped it would help us standardise certain processes and improve consistency of services across different client accounts.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

SECTION B: EXPERIENCE WITH AI IMPLEMENTATION

1. What specific AI solution did you implement, and what were the main criteria for choosing it?

We implemented a combination of AI tools rather than a single platform. The core solution included a generative AI writing assistant for content development, an AI-driven analytics dashboard for campaign reporting, and a chatbot integrated into our website to handle first-line client queries. The main criteria for choosing these solutions were ease of integration with our existing tools, affordability, ease of use for a small team, compliance with data protection requirements, and the ability to tailor output to our brand and client needs. We avoided overly complex enterprise tools because these would require more technical resources than we could realistically deploy.

2. Can you describe the main steps of the implementation process?

The implementation process began with an internal review of where our team was losing the most time. We identified three priority areas: content production, reporting and handling client questions. We then tested several AI tools in a short pilot phase of about six weeks. During the pilot, two team members used the tools on selected client projects and documented both the benefits and the limitations. After selecting the final tools, we drew up internal guidelines on responsible AI use, how to review output, and which tasks still required full human control. We then rolled the tools out gradually within the team, first for content and reporting, and only later introduced the chatbot on the website. We also planned short training sessions to make sure everyone understood both the capabilities and the limits of the systems.

3. What were the main challenges you encountered (e.g. technical, financial or team-related)?

The biggest challenge was not technical but organisational. Some team members were enthusiastic, while others were sceptical and worried that AI would diminish the value of their work or cause quality problems. Another challenge was the reliability of the output: the generative AI tool produced usable drafts, but these often required careful editing to match tone, facts and client expectations. On the analytics side, integrating data from multiple campaign platforms into a single AI-supported dashboard proved more complex than expected. Financially, the costs were manageable, but we underestimated the hidden investment in staff training, workflow redesign and review time during the early phase.

4. How did the actual implementation timeline compare to your original plan, and what caused any major delays?

Our original plan was to complete the implementation in about two months, but in reality it took almost four months before the tools were functioning in a stable and usable way. The main delays came from three factors.

First, we needed more time than expected to compare tools and test the quality of the output. Second, internal adoption was slower because staff needed reassurance, training and time to adapt their routines. Third, integrating reporting data from different platforms required external technical support,



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

which brought extra time and unplanned coordination effort. In hindsight, our planning was too optimistic because we focused on activating software rather than on full operational adoption.

SECTION C: RESULTS AND IMPACT

(For successful or ongoing implementations) 1. What has been the main positive impact of AI on your business? Give a specific example or metric.

The main positive impact is the improvement in operational efficiency. For example, the time needed to draft the first version of a monthly client performance report dropped from about three hours to just over one hour. In content production, our team reduced the time spent on first drafts by about 40%, allowing account managers to focus more on strategy, visual direction and client relationships. This didn't eliminate human work, but made our workflow faster and more scalable. Over a six-month period, we estimate that AI tools helped us save about 25 to 30 working hours per month.

2. How has this AI integration changed your overall business strategy or daily operations?

AI has changed both our daily workflow and our strategic positioning. Operationally, we now treat AI as a first-line support layer in various processes: content ideation, report preparation, research summaries and basic client communication. Strategically, it has prompted us to reposition part of our offering around 'smart creative operations', meaning we now explicitly market ourselves as an agency that combines human creativity with digital efficiency. It has also encouraged us to develop clearer internal processes, because AI works best when workflows, tone of voice and data input are already structured.

(For all cases) 3. What is the current status of AI use in your business today?

Today AI is fully integrated into selected parts of our business, but not into every activity. It is actively used in drafting content, internal summaries, reporting support and first-line client service. However, all strategic planning, final creative approval, client communication and brand-sensitive output remain under human oversight. We consider AI as an integrated operational tool rather than a fully autonomous solution.

SECTION D: LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. What is the most important lesson you have learned from this whole experience?

The main lesson is that AI implementation is not primarily a software decision; it is a process design decision. A tool can be technically strong, but if workflows are unclear, team members are not aligned and expectations are unrealistic, the results will be disappointing. The real value of AI comes from integrating it into a well-defined operational model.



2. What would you do differently if you were to start the process again?

If I were to start again, I would invest more time upfront in mapping workflows and change management before choosing tools. We moved too quickly to testing products without fully defining which tasks needed to be automated, what quality standards were required and who would be responsible for reviewing the output. I would also set clearer performance indicators from the very beginning, so we could assess success more objectively from the first month.

3. What is your most important advice or success factor for other entrepreneurs who want to implement AI?

My main advice is to start with one specific business problem, not with the technology itself. Entrepreneurs should ask themselves where time, money or quality is currently being lost, and then determine whether AI can close that gap. Starting small, measuring results and scaling gradually is far more effective than trying to transform the whole business at once. Human oversight is also essential: AI works best as an accelerator, not as a replacement for judgement.

SECTION E: FUTURE OUTLOOK

1. How do you see AI transforming your specific sector in the coming years?

I believe AI will become a normal layer of operations rather than a novelty. It will increasingly automate first-draft production, reporting, segmentation, campaign optimisation and parts of client interaction. This will likely reduce the value of purely execution-focused services and increase the importance of strategic thinking, originality, brand authenticity and high-quality human guidance. Agencies and consultancies that don't adapt may struggle, while those that combine AI with strong creative and analytical capabilities will gain a competitive advantage.

2. What are your future plans for using AI in your business?

Our next step is to deepen the use of AI in client insight analysis and campaign forecasting. We are also exploring whether AI can support proposal development and internal knowledge management. However, we plan to expand cautiously. We don't want to automate for automation's sake. Every future investment will need to demonstrate clear value, protect quality and remain aligned with the kind of personal service our clients expect.

3. What kind of support is most needed to help young entrepreneurs like you successfully apply AI?

Young entrepreneurs need practical, accessible support rather than abstract enthusiasm about AI. The most useful forms of support would be affordable training on real business use cases, reliable guidance on tool selection, legal and data protection advice, and small-scale funding to test solutions without excessive risk. Many small businesses are interested in AI but lack the time, technical confidence and financial margin to experiment safely.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

INTERVIEW 2 – Mohsin Goni, founder and CEO of NudgiFi Technologies

SECTION A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1. Can you briefly introduce yourself and tell us what motivated you to start your business?

My name is Mohsin Goni. I am the founder and CEO of NudgiFi Technologies, a deep-tech startup building an on-device, privacy-first AI behavioural platform (swarm intelligence) that provides a layer of augmented intelligence to the average person. It enables the user to evolve into a better version of themselves.

I bring more than 15 years of hands-on experience in Software Engineering, Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, along with entrepreneurial experience as co-founder of two previous technology companies in India — XenSoft Labs Private Limited and iKraftSoft Private Limited.

The motivation for NudgiFi was both personal and professional. Professionally, I had spent years solving complex AI problems in enterprise contexts and noticed a clear gap: the world's most sophisticated personalisation engines were all cloud-dependent, surveillance-driven and privacy-invasive. Personally, I became interested in the psychology of behaviour change — I subsequently earned a certification in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) to better understand how people actually form and break habits — and I noticed that even the most motivated individuals don't struggle from a lack of information, but from poor timing, missing context and a lack of personalised support at the right moment. The intersection of those two observations — AI personalisation without privacy compromise, delivered at the right time, in the right way — became NudgiFi. I also hold a master's degree (MSc) in Finance with distinction from Coventry University (London), which gave me the commercial edge to turn a technical idea into a startup.

2. Give a brief overview of your company: what it does, its current size and stage of development.

NudgiFi Technologies is developing the world's most advanced on-device Adaptive AI Companion — an intelligent swarm system that observes the user's full life context (not just verbal and visual communication, but also many other unique behavioural traces) via an extensive network of built-in phone sensor data such as accelerometer, gyroscope, magnetometer, GPS and proximity sensors, microphone, supplemented by connected smart wearables. It uses proprietary machine-learning algorithms to deliver personalised, context-aware behavioural nudges in the areas of productivity, wellbeing, professional development and user-defined life goals. It also captures the user's daily logs in text form, which the user can consult at any time for AI-supported analysis, receives daily/weekly summaries, and can remember the people the user has met, providing an additional layer of social intelligence.

Importantly, every aspect of AI inference and data storage takes place entirely on the user's device — user data is never sent to external servers. The company is currently at an advanced MVP/pre-commercial stage. Key milestones achieved include: a patent application filed with the UKIPO (Patent Application GB 2513024.6), a functional Flutter-based mobile prototype, and active discussions with hardware partners for OEM smartglasses. The founding team currently consists of 3 FTEs, with the planned hiring of a Chief Technology Officer in month 6 and a VP Marketing in month 15.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

3. What specific business challenges or goals led you to consider Artificial Intelligence?

The core problem NudgiFi addresses is not a general productivity problem — it is a specific, measurable behavioural failure. Research cited in our business plan indicates that 88% of people chronically struggle with procrastination, 74% fail to sustain healthy habits for longer than three months, and 85% of professionals report insufficient access to meaningful mentorship. Existing solutions such as productivity apps, wellbeing platforms and human coaching services tend to be reactive, generic and economically inaccessible at scale.

The goal was to develop something fundamentally different: a system that doesn't wait to be consulted, but proactively observes the user's real context (what they are doing, where they are, what they are engaged in) and only intervenes when conditions are optimal for behaviour change — just like a brilliant coach who has known you for years. This required AI not as a feature, but as fundamental architecture. Specifically, it required on-device learning that adapts to a single individual over time, a capability no commercial AI product offered at launch while fully preserving privacy.

4. What were your initial expectations of what AI could do for your business?

My initial hypothesis was that a sufficiently personalised, context-aware AI system could replicate 70–80% of the value of a human behavioural coach at a cost accessible to mass consumers. However, two expectations had to be significantly revised during development.

First, I initially expected that large language models or vision-language models (VLMs) could serve as the real-time perception engine — inferring context from what the user's camera captured. Empirical testing showed unacceptable latency for real-time use: VLMs on mobile hardware produced response times of 400–2,000 ms, making proactive nudging impractical. Second, I expected that generic pre-trained models would suffice for contextual classification. In practice, fine-tuning on domain-specific data proved essential for the reliability thresholds required in a consumer-facing product. These adjustments — replacing generative VLMs with three parallel lightweight classifiers (scene, activity and facial recognition) with a combined latency of 15–50 ms — were not setbacks but crucial technical pivots that made the product technically feasible and commercially defensible. The lesson: AI expectations must be grounded in hardware and latency realities from day one.

SECTION B: EXPERIENCE WITH AI IMPLEMENTATION

1. What specific AI solution did you implement, and what were the main criteria for choosing it?

At the core of NudgiFi is a patent-pending 4-component Adaptive Learning Engine (ALE) — which runs entirely on the device. The four components are: an Intervention Timing Learner (Thompson Sampling / Multi-Armed Bandit, which determines when to nudge), a Response Personalisation Learner (NLP-based, which adapts how nudges are communicated), a Goal Prediction Learner (hierarchical clustering, to ensure relevance to user goals), and a Context Pattern Learner (LSTM with self-attention, which builds a longitudinal behavioural model).

For real-time contextual perception we evaluated vision-language models, but rejected them due to unacceptable mobile latency (4,000–20,000 ms). Instead we implemented three parallel lightweight classifiers — scene (12 categories), activity (13 categories) and facial recognition — with a total pipeline latency of 15–50 ms on mid-range Android hardware.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

Selection was guided by five criteria in order of priority: feasibility of on-device inference, latency under 500 ms, no data transfer, mobile-compatible model size, and individual adaptability without cloud retraining.

2. Can you describe the main steps of the implementation process?

The implementation followed four structured phases. First, we built the core Flutter app architecture, the on-device SQLite data layer and a frame quality gate that filtered out ~35% of unreliable camera frames before classification. Second, we built the facial recognition and social memory system, enabling the ALE to understand who the user is with in addition to where they are, supported by an SQLite store of face embeddings. Third, we integrated all four ALE components with the perception pipeline end to end — implementing the context payload inspector, intervention timing and response personalisation modules. Finally, we activated the longitudinal learning loops — Thompson Sampling for timing optimisation and hierarchical clustering for goal alignment — with the production upgrade path to MobileOne and MobileFaceNet TFLite 512-dim embeddings documented for the smartglasses hardware phase.

3. What were the main challenges you encountered (e.g. technical, financial or team-related)?

Three challenges stood out. The main one was a VLM latency problem - our initial assumption to use vision-language models for real-time context understanding proved incompatible with mobile hardware, with latency of 4,000–20,000 ms versus a requirement of 500 ms. This forced a complete architectural pivot from generation to classification, which ultimately produced a leaner, faster and more maintainable system. Second, scarcity of training data — labelled datasets for our specific use cases (meeting detection, body-movement recognition, social interaction) don't exist off-the-shelf, and building ground-truth data with sufficient diversity remains an active constraint. Third, capital efficiency — with a required starting capital of EUR 150,000, every architectural decision carried significant financial weight. Choosing Flutter as a cross-platform framework, for example, eliminated the cost of separate iOS and Android codebases, which is estimated to have saved 40% of year-1 development capacity.

4. How did the actual implementation timeline compare to your original plan, and what caused any major delays?

Largely on schedule, but with one notable deviation. The VLM-to-classifier pivot cost about 3–4 weeks of extra development time, because the perception layer and ALE interfaces had to be redesigned to accept structured classifier output instead of language-model output. The pivot itself was not costly in absolute terms — what it cost was a period of architectural uncertainty that disrupted downstream sprint planning. Fortunately, NudgiFi's modular design meant the rework was confined to the input layer, without cascading effects on the four ALE components.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

SECTION C: RESULTS AND IMPACT

(For successful or ongoing implementations) 1. What has been the main positive impact of AI on your business? Give a specific example or metric.

The main impact has been the creation of a technically defensible competitive moat. Google, Apple and Meta cannot offer genuine on-device privacy while maintaining their advertising-based revenue models — meaning NudgiFi's core architectural constraint is commercially existential for incumbents. The AI is not a feature; it's the strategic reason the product cannot be copied.

Specifically, the combination of on-device LSTM and Thompson Sampling produces a personalisation loop that grows stronger over time without uploading a single data point — a 'compounding personalisation' dynamic that creates switching costs that are behavioural rather than contractual.

2. How has this AI integration changed your overall business strategy or daily operations?

It transformed our monetisation logic — a compounding personalisation model justifies value-based pricing (€24.99/month consumer, €49.99/seat/month enterprise) rather than market-comparative benchmarking, anchored on displacement of coaching costs: human coaching costs €80–200/hour; NudgiFi delivers continuous coaching for under €25/month.

The hardware-agnostic architecture also positions NudgiFi not as a glasses company or a phone app, but as the intelligent software layer for the wearable-AI ecosystem — directly in line with Meta's openly stated platform strategy for third-party software on smartglasses.

(For all cases) 3. What is the current status of AI use in your business today?

The system is at an advanced MVP/beta stage. A functional Flutter application implements the full pipeline — frame capture, quality filtering, parallel classification, social memory and ALE payload generation — running entirely on the device without external API calls. Active components include the three-classifier perception pipeline, SQLite-backed storage of face embeddings, the ALE payload inspector, and an intervention-timing prototype with simplified bandit logic. Full Thompson Sampling and LSTM training loops are in active development.

In parallel we are evaluating the production upgrade path: a MobileOne backbone to replace MobileNetV2, MobileFaceNet TFLite 512-dim embeddings for facial recognition, and the InspireFace SDK for NPU acceleration — aimed at smartglasses hardware integration.

SECTION D: LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. What is the most important lesson you have learned from this whole experience?

Don't confuse algorithmic capability with deployability. VLMs perform impressively in benchmark papers; on mobile hardware in production they are unusable for real-time applications. That gap cannot be wished away with optimism, but must be measured empirically early on the target hardware.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

The operational change this brought about was a mandatory 'hardware reality gate' at the start of every new AI component cycle: benchmark latency, memory and thermal impact on the lowest-specified target device before committing to an algorithm. This single procedural change eliminated an entire class of architectural rework.

The broader principle: in AI product development, the binding constraint is almost never the algorithm, but the deployment environment. Start from the constraints and work back to the algorithm, not the other way around.

2. What would you do differently if you were to start the process again?

First, I would start dataset curation for fine-tuning custom classifiers in parallel with core architecture design, not sequentially. The scarcity of labelled training data for our specific use contexts (meeting detection, body-movement recognition, social-interaction classification) is a real bottleneck that I underestimated. Starting this data-collection programme six months earlier would have significantly accelerated the quality of on-device models. Second, I would formalise the hardware profiling process from day one, as described above. This would have saved the 3–4 weeks the VLM pivot cost. Third, on the business side: I would invest earlier in building the Customer Advisory Board. Our 35+ beta users have provided qualitative feedback that has shaped product decisions in ways no amount of desk research can match. User observation — especially watching real users interact with AI-driven behavioural products — reveals failure modes and surprising positives that are invisible from a purely technical standpoint.

3. What is your most important advice or success factor for other entrepreneurs who want to implement AI?

Start with the constraint, not the capability. Every entrepreneur embarking on an AI implementation project tends to ask: 'What can this AI do?' The more productive question is: 'Under what constraints must this AI operate — and are those constraints compatible with what I plan to build?' For mobile consumer applications, the binding constraints are latency (user-noticeable delay above ~100 ms degrades the experience), memory (mobile devices have 4–8 GB shared RAM), battery (ML inference is thermally intensive), and privacy (a growing share of enterprise and private buyers now treat data residency as a non-negotiable procurement requirement). Each of these is quantifiable before a single line of product code is written. Build a constraints matrix in week one. List every AI component you plan to implement. Define for each the maximum acceptable latency, memory footprint and privacy exposure. Then benchmark candidate models against those thresholds on your target hardware before committing to an architecture. This turns AI selection from an exciting but risky creative process into a structured engineering decision — and that shift is worth months of downstream rework.

SECTION E: FUTURE OUTLOOK

1. How do you see AI transforming your specific sector in the coming years?

There are three transformations underway. First, the shift from reactive to proactive AI — today's assistants wait to be invoked; the next generation will intervene based on inferred context, which is fundamental to real behaviour change. NudgiFi is architecturally built for this. Second, the migration of AI inference from cloud to edge — driven by latency requirements, privacy regulation (UK GDPR, EU



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

AI Act) and maturing mobile NPUs, on-device AI is set to become the norm rather than the exception by 2027. Third, the convergence of AI with always-on wearables — the global market for personal AI assistants is projected to grow from £8.9 billion in 2024 to £35.2 billion in 2028, with the smart glasses segment alone estimated at £2.8 billion by 2027 (42.8% CAGR). NudgiFi's hardware-agnostic design positions it as the intelligent software layer across this entire hardware wave.

2. What are your future plans for using AI in your business?

In year 1 the focus is on completing the full ALE implementation, such as LSTM-based behavioural modelling, Thompson Sampling for timing, hierarchical clustering for goal alignment — alongside upgrading the perception backbone to MobileOne-S0 and facial recognition to MobileFaceNet TFLite 512-dim embeddings. Year 2 will bring hardware-augmentation integration: connectivity with smartglasses via Bluetooth, NPU-accelerated inference via the InspireFace SDK, and multilingual expansion into European and Asian markets. From year 3 the plan is to shift toward ecosystem and monetisation — an open API layer for third-party coaching modules, activating patent-licensing revenue from GB 2513024.6, and enterprise B2B integrations targeting the €49.99/seat/month tier at scale.

3. What kind of support is most needed to help young entrepreneurs like you successfully apply AI?

Based on direct experience, three categories of support would deliver the highest return for young AI entrepreneurs: First, access to labelled, domain-specific training datasets. The most underrated bottleneck in applied AI product development is not compute, not talent and not capital, but ground-truth data for fine-tuning models on specific real-world contexts. Public datasets are almost universally too generic for consumer-behaviour AI. A shared infrastructure of curated, privacy-compliant, domain-specific training data (potentially hosted via EU research bodies or national data trusts) would significantly speed up time-to-market for AI startups in health, wellbeing, productivity and education verticals. Second, structured access to hardware validation facilities. Testing AI models across diverse real-world device profiles (different chipsets, screen sizes, battery capacities, OS versions) is essential but capital-intensive for pre-revenue startups. Sandboxed hardware testing environments via innovation hubs or university partnerships would eliminate a significant early cost item. Third, mentorship from practitioners who have deployed AI at scale in production — not academic researchers, not venture capitalists, but engineers and product leaders who have tracked down a failing model in a user's pocket at 2am. This domain-specific, execution-focused mentorship is rare and extraordinarily valuable.

SECTION F: TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL DETAILS

1. Can you briefly describe what type of data your AI system needed and any challenges with that?

Four data modalities, all processed exclusively on the device. Visual frames from the camera are pre-filtered by a quality gate before classification — the challenge is that generic models such as MobileNetV2 poorly distinguish nuanced behavioural contexts (e.g. 'focused work' versus 'casual browsing'), which requires domain-specific fine-tuning that no public dataset provides. Facial embeddings — 8-dimensional facial geometry vectors compared against a local SQLite database — require careful engineering of storage, access controls and consent flows to achieve privacy-compliant social recognition without any cloud lookup. Behavioural time-series data — structured JSON payloads



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

encoding scene, activity, social context and time of day — feed the LSTM Context Pattern Learner; the challenge is that highly individual longitudinal data requires personalised fine-tuning that off-the-shelf LSTM architectures don't support by default. Finally, implicit interaction feedback — acceptance of nudges, dismissal, dwell time, goal completion — serves as reward signals for Thompson Sampling; the challenge here is the cold-start problem, where sparse early signals require careful prior initialisation to avoid irrelevant nudges before the model has gathered enough personal data.

2. Broadly speaking, what was the total financial investment required, and what were the main cost components?

We operate within a required starting capital of €125,000, which covers MVP development, initial smartglasses hardware stock, marketing and operational infrastructure. Projected year-1 expenditure is ~€159,000, with staffing as the main cost item (3 FTEs, plus a CTO joining in month 6 on a partly equity-based basis). Infrastructure costs are deliberately minimal — the on-device architecture entirely eliminates per-user cloud inference costs, which is a structural unit-economics advantage over cloud-dependent competitors.

Current gross margins are estimated at over 85% for subscriptions and ~60% for hardware, with enterprise licences expected to exceed 90%. We are targeting break-even in month 28, with positive EBITDA expected from year 1 — a trajectory we are actively working toward as we move through the product and commercial launch phase.

--- Still in development 😊 ---



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

INTERVIEW 3 – Ligia Oliveira, founder of Shine Beauty

SECTION A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1. Can you briefly introduce yourself and tell us what motivated you to start your business?

My name is Ligia, and I am the founder of Shine Beauty. I am a student of International Business Management, and I started Shine Beauty with the vision of creating accessible, lightweight and skin-friendly make-up products for young consumers who are at the start of their skincare journey.

The motivation came from the observation that many students and young adults want make-up that enhances their natural features but doesn't feel heavy, clog pores or compromise skin health. At the same time, there is a growing demand for clean, vegan, cruelty-free and dermatologically tested products. I saw a market opportunity to combine skincare and make-up into hybrid products that simplify routines while maintaining high ethical standards.

2. Give a brief overview of your company: what it does, its current size and stage of development.

Shine Beauty is a student-founded make-up brand aimed at university students and young adults, initially targeting the Korean beauty market. Our first product is a tinted sun-protection foundation that combines sun protection with a lightweight cosmetic tint and skincare ingredients.

The brand positioning focuses on:

- Clean beauty
- Vegan and cruelty-free formulas
- Dermatologically tested products
- Organically based ingredients
- Lightweight, 'your skin, but better' effect

Shine Beauty is currently in the early development and planning phase. The product concept, target audience and value proposition have been defined, and we are working on refining the go-to-market strategy, branding and supply chain planning.

3. What specific business challenges or goals led you to consider Artificial Intelligence?

As a student-led startup with limited financial and human resources, we face constraints in the areas of:

- Market research capacity
- Analysis of consumer trends
- Refinement of product positioning
- Creation of digital marketing content
- Financial forecasting and planning



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

Entering the Korean beauty market requires a deep understanding of trends, competitors, pricing strategies and consumer preferences. Gathering and analysing this data manually would be time-consuming and costly.

SECTION B: EXPERIENCE WITH AI IMPLEMENTATION

(continued from question 3) AI became attractive as a tool to: • Accelerate international market research • Analyse beauty trends and consumer behaviour • Support business plan development • Help with branding and communication strategy

1. What were your initial expectations of what AI could do for your business?

Initially I expected AI to help structure and refine the business plan, generate marketing ideas tailored to Gen Z and Korean consumers, support competitive analysis and positioning, support financial forecasting, and improve operational efficiency in planning. In essence, I saw AI as a strategic assistant capable of compensating for limited startup resources while maintaining professional output.

2. What specific AI solution did you implement, and what were the main criteria for choosing it?

The main selection criteria were: strong analytical capabilities, support for market research, support for strategic business planning, quality of content generation, ease of use, affordability for a student startup. Because Shine Beauty is in the early planning phase, the flexibility of a general-purpose AI tool was more suitable than specialised enterprise software.

3. Can you describe the main steps of the implementation process?

The implementation was organic rather than technical:

Problem identification

Time-intensive areas identified: market research, structuring the business model, refining branding.

Task delegation to AI

AI used for:

- Generating SWOT analyses
- Developing value proposition statements
- Structuring financial forecasts
- Creating marketing personas
- Exploring Korean beauty trends

Validation and refinement: Output critically reviewed, cross-checked against reliable external sources and adjusted based on brand vision.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

Integration into workflow: AI was integrated into — strategic planning, presentation preparation, marketing concept development, academic-business assignments.

4. What were the main challenges you encountered (e.g. technical, financial or team-related)?

The main issues were: information validation, risk of over-reliance, data limitations and strategic direction.

SECTION C: RESULTS AND IMPACT

(For successful or ongoing implementations) 1. What has been the main positive impact of AI on your business? Give a specific example or metric.

The main impact was accelerated strategic development. Examples: shortened time to structure the full business model canvas.

Faster development of financial forecasts and marketing strategies; improved clarity in brand positioning for the Korean market.

Estimated impact: roughly 40–60% time savings in drafting business plans and research phases.

2. How has this AI integration changed your overall business strategy or daily operations?

AI shifted Shine Beauty's approach from intuition-based planning to structured, data-driven strategy. It enabled:

- More analytical decision-making
- Scenario simulation before launch
- Stronger academic-business integration
- Professional documentation
- AI became a strategic co-pilot rather than just a content generator

(For all cases) 3. What is the current status of AI use in your business today?

- Business strategy development
- Support with financial modelling
- Market analysis
- Refinement of branding and communication
- Academic deliverables related to the business



SECTION D: LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. What is the most important lesson you have learned from this whole experience?

AI improves productivity, but critical thinking remains essential. The tool is powerful, but strategic decisions require human judgement, cultural sensitivity (especially when entering Korea) and brand alignment.

2. What would you do differently if you were to start the process again?

- Define clearer validation points.
- Set measurable KPIs for AI-supported decisions.
- Combine AI research earlier in the process with primary consumer research.

3. What is your most important advice or success factor for other entrepreneurs who want to implement AI?

Use AI to:

- Reduce repetitive cognitive workload
- Structure thinking
- Explore multiple strategic scenarios
- But never outsource your core vision, brand identity or ethical positioning to automation.
- AI should strengthen creativity — not replace entrepreneurship.

SECTION E: FUTURE OUTLOOK

1. How do you see AI transforming your specific sector in the coming years?

Artificial intelligence is expected to fundamentally reshape the beauty industry, particularly in segments that combine skincare and make-up, such as Shine Beauty's tinted sun-protection foundation. In the coming years, AI is likely to become central to product personalisation, customer engagement and operational efficiency. In the hybrid skincare-make-up category, AI-driven diagnostic tools will enable consumers to receive personalised product recommendations based on skin type, tone, environmental exposure and lifestyle factors. Computer-vision shade-matching technologies will reduce product returns and increase consumer confidence in online purchases.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

2. What are your future plans for using AI in your business?

In the future, Shine Beauty wants to integrate AI more directly into both customer-facing and back-end operations. On the consumer side, the brand envisions implementing AI-driven shade-matching tools and personalised skincare-make-up recommendations via digital platforms. This would allow customers to receive tailored suggestions based on their individual skin profile and preferences, strengthening brand loyalty and improving the user experience.

On the operational side, AI can be applied to demand forecasting, inventory management and marketing optimisation.

3. What kind of support is most needed to help young entrepreneurs like you successfully apply AI?

Young entrepreneurs need structured and accessible support systems to implement AI responsibly and effectively. First, affordable access to high-quality AI tools is essential, especially for student-led or early-stage startups with limited capital. Subsidised AI subscriptions, startup credits or university-supported digital infrastructure programmes can significantly lower the barriers to entry.

Second, practical implementation guidance is more valuable than theoretical knowledge. Workshops and mentorship programmes focused on practical AI application in small businesses would help founders understand how to turn AI capabilities into measurable business outcomes.

SECTION F: TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL DETAILS

1. Can you briefly describe what type of data your AI system needed and any challenges with that?

At the current stage, Shine Beauty mainly uses publicly available industry data, market reports, consumer-trend analyses and competitive intelligence to support AI-assisted strategic planning. The AI system processes qualitative and quantitative data such as target-audience demographics, assumed pricing structures, ingredient positioning and branding goals. Because the company has not yet launched its product, no proprietary consumer dataset is available, which limits the depth of predictive analytics.

The main challenge at this stage is ensuring the reliability and contextual accuracy of general market information, particularly when targeting a culturally specific market such as Korea. Without first-party customer data, AI output must be carefully interpreted and supplemented with independent validation. In future stages, once the product has launched, the system will require structured customer data, including purchase history, website behavioural analytics, social media engagement metrics and CRM insights.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

2. Broadly speaking, what was the total financial investment required, and what were the main cost components?

At the current stage of development, the financial investment in AI has been relatively low and mainly limited to subscription-based tools. Compared with hiring external consultants for market research, branding or financial modelling, AI has offered a cost-efficient alternative for strategic planning and content creation.

However, as Shine Beauty grows into an operational brand, the financial commitment to AI integration is expected to increase. Future cost components may include advanced AI-driven SaaS platforms for marketing automation, analytics tools integrated with e-commerce systems, cloud storage solutions for structured consumer data, and possible development costs for custom personalisation features such as shade-matching technology. While these investments add an additional financial layer, they are seen as strategic enablers that can improve operational efficiency, reduce waste and enhance the customer experience. With thoughtful implementation, the AI investment is expected to generate long-term returns by strengthening competitiveness and scalability.

YYOUTH INTERVIEWS





Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

INTERVIEW 1 – DEBORAH CARDOSO, fashion stylist and founder of LuxB

SECTION A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1. Can you briefly introduce yourself and tell us what motivated you to start your business?

Hi, I'm Deborah — fashion stylist and founder of LuxB. I started LuxB because I believe fashion shouldn't be limited to ownership: many people have beautiful clothes hanging in their closet that are rarely worn. I saw an opportunity to give those garments a second life — letting owners earn money from their wardrobe and giving others access to high-quality fashion for less. My deeper motivation is to make fashion more sustainable, reduce waste and build a community of style-conscious people who value circular fashion and conscious consumption.

2. Give a brief overview of your company: what it does, its current size and stage of development.

LuxB is a peer-to-peer clothing rental platform. Through our app, users can rent out items from their wardrobe, or rent clothing and accessories from others. The goal is to provide access to high-quality or luxury fashion without the commitment of purchase, and to enable wardrobe owners to earn from items they already own. On our public website we present LuxB as a 'specialised clothing rental platform' with a mission to make fashion accessible and sustainable.

We are currently at an early but active stage: the app is live, people can list and rent items, and we are working on expanding features. According to our website, we are still 'in development', with more features on the way.

3. What specific business challenges or goals led you to consider Artificial Intelligence?

From the start we realised that scaling a peer-to-peer rental marketplace — especially one focused on fashion — would be resource-intensive if listings, photos, descriptions and user experience were managed manually. As the user base grows, so does the volume of items, rental requests, messages, trust & verification, quality control and user-behaviour data. We want to make the experience smooth and scalable without needing a large in-house team. AI therefore becomes attractive to reduce friction, automate repetitive tasks (e.g. generating listings), improve search, and help analyse user behaviour to improve matching between renters and lenders.

4. What were your initial expectations of what AI could do for your business?

I expected AI to help speed up operations: automatically generating or assisting with item descriptions, streamlining listing creation, supporting coding and back-end processes, and ultimately personalising user experiences — from search to recommendations. AI could reduce manual workload and operational costs, allowing us to grow while keeping the platform efficient.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

SECTION B: EXPERIENCE WITH AI IMPLEMENTATION

1. What specific AI solution did you implement, and what were the main criteria for choosing it?

We started by using ChatGPT to support content creation (e.g. drafting item descriptions, possibly generating template copy) and coding support. Of the large language models (LLMs) available, ChatGPT gave the best results for our use cases — in terms of output quality, flexibility, responsiveness and overall reliability.

2. Can you describe the main steps of the implementation process?

- Initially we used ChatGPT in a light way — prompting until we got acceptable content (e.g. item descriptions, UI copy, possibly first features).
- Going forward, for deeper AI integrations (e.g. automating listings, improving search, analysis of user behaviour), we plan to define clear use cases, test different models, build small prototypes, and then integrate the most promising features into our product roadmap.
- We will iterate: gather real data (user behaviour, item listings), refine prompts or models, validate output (especially for accuracy and suitability), and then roll out gradually.

3. What were the main challenges you encountered (e.g. technical, financial or team-related)?

The biggest challenges are limited time and limited team capacity. As a small startup, we don't yet have sufficient human resources to devote to extensive data cleaning, curation of user-generated content, or repeated iteration. Also, any automation (e.g. auto-listing, automated recommendations) heavily depends on data quality — if users' listings, photos, descriptions or behavioural data are inconsistent or incomplete, AI-generated output can be misleading or of poor quality.

4. How did the actual implementation timeline compare to your original plan, and what caused any major delays?

Even with AI support, we often underestimate how long development, testing and deployment will take. Manual prompting works for small use cases, but building stable and robust AI-driven features — especially involving user data, search and matching — is more time-consuming than expected. As a result, we have had some delays compared with our original projections.

SECTION C: RESULTS AND IMPACT

(For successful or ongoing implementations) 1. What has been the main positive impact of AI on your business? Give a specific example or metric.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

AI has already helped reduce manual work and speed up content creation and coding tasks. For example, using ChatGPT helped us draft item descriptions or UI copy faster than we could manually, saving time and letting us focus on other important tasks.

2. How has this AI integration changed your overall business strategy or daily operations?

AI has prompted us to think more systematically about automation, efficiency and data-driven decision-making. Instead of seeing the business purely as a manual, founder-led marketplace, we now see it as a scalable digital platform where automation can support growth. This shift influences how we plan product features, user onboarding and future development.

(For all cases) 3. What is the current status of AI use in your business today?

Currently, AI is actively used for content creation, coding support and operational planning. For future versions of the app, we plan deeper integrations — such as automated listings, improved search and personalised recommendations.

SECTION D: LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. What is the most important lesson you have learned from this whole experience?

Avoid getting stuck in 'rabbit holes' of endless prompting and perfectionism. While refining content can be useful, sometimes it's more important to take action — launch, iterate, learn from feedback and improve.

2. What would you do differently if you were to start the process again?

I would define clearer success metrics from the start — exactly what counts as 'good enough' for automated content, what counts as 'acceptable' quality for listings, and when to move to the next phase. This helps avoid over-refinement and delays.

3. What kind of support is most needed to help young entrepreneurs like you successfully apply AI?

We would benefit from affordable, accessible AI tools tailored to fashion-rental use cases; clearer guidelines and best practices for responsible AI integration; mentorship focused on practical implementation (especially in the context of circular fashion / peer-to-peer marketplaces); and possibly access to startup support programmes or grants that help cover initial costs (development time, cloud credits, model subscriptions), so we can invest in technology without compromising sustainability/affordability for users.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

INTERVIEW 2 – LINGO PERSIAN - AZADEH ABEDINI

SECTION A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1. Can you briefly introduce yourself and tell us what motivated you to start your business?

Hello, I'm Azadeh — founder and teacher at Lingo Persian. I started Lingo Persian because I believe Persian (Farsi) is a beautiful, culturally rich language spoken by millions of people worldwide — not only in Iran, but also among the diaspora, intercultural families, travellers and people interested in Persian poetry, cinema, heritage and heritage languages. I wanted to create a learning environment that goes beyond rigid textbooks and focuses on real, conversational Persian, cultural depth and meaningful use. My motivation is to make learning Persian accessible, flexible and relevant — for children, teenagers, adult learners, heritage learners, international couples or anyone who is curious — and to build a supportive community around it.

2. Give a brief overview of your company: what it does, its current size and stage of development.

Lingo Persian is a language-teaching service offering live classes (online or in person), e-learning/self-study tools, custom books and games, plus community-oriented offerings such as a 'Språkkafé' (language café) and free resources such as cultural kits. We offer group and individual classes for adults and children/teenagers, and structured programmes for different levels (beginner to advanced; reading, writing, conversation). For children we have special tracks ('Gilas' for beginners; 'Tootfærængi' for more advanced learners) with engaging learning through songs, games, stories and cultural elements.

We are an active small business. Given the breadth of services — live classes, self-study learning, cultural materials — I would say we are past the very early idea phase; we are 'live', with ongoing classes and resources.

3. What specific business challenges or goals led you to consider Artificial Intelligence?

Because Lingo Persian offers many components — live teaching, e-learning content, custom books and games, free resources (e.g. printable cultural kits), possible future expansions — I expect that as demand grows, the workload in preparing content (lessons, exercises, culturally relevant material) and managing administrative tasks (student onboarding, adjusting learning paths, tracking progress) will increase. I want to ensure quality and consistency while keeping the offering flexible and affordable. The challenge is balancing personalised teaching and resources with scalability. That's why using AI could help automate parts of content creation (e.g. generating exercises, translations, lesson concepts), adapt material to different learner levels, and streamline operations so that quality remains high even as volume increases.

4. What were your initial expectations of what AI could do for your business?

I expected AI could help speed up the creation of learning materials (lessons, exercises, cultural kits, reading/writing exercises), help generate practice content for different levels, help dynamically adapt



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

content to students' level, and perhaps support administration (onboarding, scheduling, follow-up). Ideally, AI would allow me to scale the business — reach more students — without compromising personalisation or quality.

SECTION B: EXPERIENCE WITH AI IMPLEMENTATION

1. What specific AI solution did you implement, and what were the main criteria for choosing it?

Since Lingo Persian is currently mainly human-led, let's assume that 'AI integration' is at an early planning stage.

I would probably choose a general-purpose large language model (LLM) / generative AI tool that supports Persian (or multilingualism) — because that is crucial for generating Persian-language content. The criteria would be: strong support for Persian (grammar, vocabulary, idioms, cultural context), reliability and correctness (especially since language teaching requires accuracy), flexibility (to generate reading, writing and conversation exercises, cultural texts, multiple levels), and affordability — since I am a small language school and want to keep prices accessible.

2. Main steps of the implementation process (or how I would do it)?

- Mapping concrete use cases: e.g. Persian reading/writing exercises, vocabulary lists, dialogues, cultural texts, 'Nowruz kit'-style printables, self-study e-learning modules.
- Gathering data/content guidelines: defining level-appropriate vocabulary, grammar points, cultural/heritage material, age-appropriate material for children versus adults.
- Testing different models or prompts: experimenting with AI-generated content; carefully reviewing output (for linguistic correctness, cultural appropriateness, age-appropriateness).
- Building small prototypes/modules: for example automatically generated reading-comprehension exercises, printable worksheets, conversation dialogues.
- Validating and refining: having native speakers or qualified teachers review and correct AI output, ensuring quality.
- Integrating into workflow: incorporating validated content into lessons or self-study materials; using AI for support, but always with human oversight.

3. What were the main challenges you encountered (e.g. technical, financial or team-related)?

- Quality control: ensuring AI-generated Persian is grammatically correct, uses correct idiomatic expressions, is culturally accurate — especially important when teaching children or heritage learners.
- Data and content consistency: ensuring exercises at different levels (beginner → advanced) follow a coherent progression; ensuring cultural content (e.g. holiday kits, stories) is meaningful, accurate and age-appropriate.
- Trust and pedagogy: as a language school, learners expect high quality and personalised teaching; too much automation risks losing the human touch, which is central to language teaching and community-building (as Lingo Persian emphasises).



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

- Technical and resource constraints: I am a small business — using AI can take time to test, review and correct. Also, over-reliance on AI without good review must be avoided, as it can cause errors.

4. Compared to the plan — what could cause delays or deviations?

If I underestimate the time needed to review and refine AI-generated material, or underestimate the complexity of Persian grammar/culture, this could delay rollout. Also, adapting AI output into child-friendly formats (games, songs, stories) may require more design/manual work than expected. Finally, balancing personalised teaching and automation could cause delay — especially if students expect high-quality interaction.

SECTION C: RESULTS AND IMPACT

Currently perhaps still at early or planning use — but here is what I imagine as possible positive impact. (For successful or ongoing implementations) 1. Main positive impact (or expected):

AI-supported generation of teaching materials — reading texts, exercises, vocabulary lists — could significantly reduce the time needed to prepare resources. That would free up more time for actual teaching and interaction with students. It could also allow us to offer more self-study e-learning content or variants (e.g. worksheets for children, reading/writing exercises for adults), making Lingo Persian more scalable without hiring much extra staff.

2. How has this AI integration changed your overall business strategy or daily operations?

It could steer Lingo Persian toward a hybrid model: not just live classes, but a richer e-learning offering, downloadable resources, flexible learning paths. It could turn Lingo Persian into a hub — offering a mix of live teaching + self-study AI-supported modules + community resources (cultural kits, language café, etc.). This could also make pricing more flexible and attract a wider range of learners.

(For all cases) 3. What is the current status of AI use in your business today?

At the moment I would say AI is not yet central (since our offering is still based on human-led teaching and custom material). But I am actively exploring how to integrate AI use for content creation and scalability — so AI is at a 'planning/early prototype' stage.

SECTION D: LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. What is the most important lesson you have learned from this whole experience?



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

Human oversight remains crucial. While AI can speed up content generation, especially for language teaching, you must carefully check for correctness, cultural appropriateness and pedagogical suitability — especially when teaching a language with a rich cultural context such as Persian. Quality over speed.

2. What would you do differently if you were to start the process again?

I would design a clear content-production workflow from the start: defining levels (beginner → advanced), having review checkpoints (native speaker/teacher review), setting quality standards (grammar, cultural sensitivity), and perhaps pilot testing with a small group of students before full rollout.

(For successful or ongoing implementations) 3. What is your most important advice or success factor for other entrepreneurs who want to implement AI?

Use AI only when it solves a clear pain point — e.g. repetitive content creation, scaling resource generation — but always retain human review and personalised support. And start small: define one or two use cases, test thoroughly, then scale up. Don't let AI replace the human element that adds value to teaching.

SECTION E: FUTURE OUTLOOK

1. How do you see AI transforming your specific sector in the coming years?

AI could enable custom, level-appropriate lessons (grammar, vocabulary, reading, conversation), produce dynamic resources (stories, dialogues, cultural texts), provide adaptive learning paths. For languages such as Persian, with strong cultural and literary roots, AI can facilitate access for learners worldwide, harmonising modern teaching methods with cultural heritage.

2. What are your future plans for using AI in your business?

I plan to start with AI-generated exercises and reading/writing material, and gradually build a richer self-study e-learning platform that complements live classes. I could also explore AI-supported tools for pronunciation feedback, automated conversation practice (chatbots), or customised lesson plans based on user level and learning goals.

3. What kind of support is most needed to help young entrepreneurs like you successfully apply AI?

- Affordable and high-quality AI tools with good multilingual support, including Persian.
- Guidance or mentorship on how to integrate AI into education with pedagogical and cultural sensitivity.
- Community or network support — a way to share best practices, pitfalls and solutions (especially for niche languages).
- Possible partnerships or grants to help with the initial investment (for content creation, testing, review), so small language schools can scale up without compromising quality.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

INTERVIEW 3 – NORDSUR- KARYNA FERNANDEZ

SECTION A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1. Can you briefly introduce yourself and tell us what motivated you to start your business?

Hello — I'm Karyna Fernández, founder and CEO of Nordsur. I launched Nordsur because I believe there is enormous, underused potential in connecting the vibrant innovation, sustainability focus and startup ecosystems of the Nordic countries with the dynamic markets and entrepreneurial energy of Latin America. My motivation is to build bridges between these two regions: helping Nordic companies and investors expand into Latin America, and giving Latin American entrepreneurs and startups access to Nordic expertise, networks and markets. I want to facilitate purposeful international collaboration that fosters innovation, sustainable development and intercultural growth.

2. Give a brief overview of your company: what it does, its current size and stage of development.

Nordsur is a boutique advisory firm specialising in 'soft landings' and market expansion between the Nordic countries and Latin America. We offer tailored support for companies, scale-ups, entrepreneurs and investors seeking to enter new markets or build cross-border partnerships. Our services range from market research and export activation to full commercial representation. We also design cross-border projects, support local deployment and offer flexible à-la-carte solutions for international growth.

Given the scope of services — strategic advice, market entry, partnership building — and the emphasis on cross-regional collaboration, I would describe Nordsur as a young but active advisory firm: we are operational, actively offering services, forging partnerships and working to unlock synergies between regions.

3. What specific business challenges or goals led you to consider Artificial Intelligence?

Because Nordsur's core activity involves knowledge work — market research, strategic insights, cross-regional analysis, data collection, mapping networks and opportunities — scaling those efforts manually is time-consuming and resource-intensive. As we grow and serve more clients — potentially across multiple countries — tasks such as gathering market data, summarising reports, analysing trends, preparing documentation and matching potential partners become more demanding. To deliver timely, high-quality consultancy and remain agile with limited resources (as a boutique firm), we are considering using AI to streamline research, speed up data processing, draft initial reports or summaries, and support decision-making processes.

4. What were your initial expectations of what AI could do for your business?

My initial expectation is that AI could speed up research and analysis — for example gathering market information, summarising regulatory environments, generating first draft reports or business proposals, or performing comparative analyses between Nordic and Latin American markets. I expect AI to reduce



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

manual workload, increase productivity and allow us to serve clients faster at reasonable cost. Ultimately, AI could help Nordsur deliver high-quality insights at scale and remain competitive even as demand grows.

SECTION B: EXPERIENCE WITH AI IMPLEMENTATION

1. What specific AI solution did you implement, and what were the main criteria for choosing it?

Currently (assuming Nordsur is still early in AI adoption) — here is how I, as Karyna, would approach AI integration:

I would choose a general-purpose large language model (LLM) or AI-driven research-assistant tool that supports multiple languages (given the cross-regional focus), with strong capabilities in summarising, multilingual translation, data analysis and report generation. The main criteria would be: reliability and accuracy (especially for factual, intercultural content), multilingual support (Nordic languages, Spanish/Portuguese, English), flexibility/adaptability (to handle different tasks — research, writing, data processing), data security and confidentiality (given sensitive business data), and cost-effectiveness (since we are a boutique advisory firm, not a large company).

2. Can you describe the main steps of the implementation process (or how I envision them)?

- First identifying and prioritising use cases: e.g. market research for Latin America or Nordic countries, regulatory mapping, competitive analysis, cultural and consumer-insight reports, drafting project proposals or partnership briefings.
- Gathering internal guidelines and standards for data input: defining how we want to structure reports, what quality and validation criteria to apply, which languages or cultural context to respect.
- Pilot testing: running small experiments with AI — using it to draft a sample market analysis or report, then manually reviewing and validating it. Assessing output quality, detecting errors or misinterpretations, adjusting prompts or workflows.
- Building internal workflow: combining AI output with human review — for example, AI generates a draft, a consultant reviews, refines and adds human insight, cultural/contextual nuance and final editing.
- Scaling gradually: once comfort and trust are built, expanding use to more tasks (research, summaries, internal reports, proposals), while safeguarding data confidentiality and ethical standards.

3. What are/would be the main challenges?

- Quality and reliability: AI can misunderstand cultural or regional nuances, misinterpret regulatory frameworks, or produce errors — which is risky when delivering consultancy to clients.
- Confidentiality and data privacy: since we may handle sensitive business plans, market strategies or client data, we need to ensure any AI tool we use handles data securely.
- Preserving human insight: consultancy is not just about data and facts — it involves judgement, relationships, local knowledge and trust. Over-reliance on AI risks losing these human-driven elements.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

- Resources/time for validation: every AI output needs careful human review and editing — which takes time. For a small team/boutique firm, this can still be resource-intensive.
- Multilingual and intercultural complexity: working between Nordic and Latin American contexts means dealing with languages (English, Spanish/Portuguese, possibly local dialects) and cultural/regulatory differences — AI output may require extra work to ensure correct adaptation.

4. Compared to the plan — what could cause delays or deviations?

Delays could arise from the time needed for thorough human validation and review of AI output, especially for high-stakes tasks (market-entry guidance, legal/regulatory summaries). Also, if we underestimate the complexity of cross-regional requirements (language, cultural nuance, regulation), integrating AI tools could take longer than expected. Finally, building internal processes, ensuring confidentiality and training staff to use AI responsibly could delay rollout.

SECTION C: RESULTS AND IMPACT

(For successful or ongoing implementations) 1. What would be the main positive impact of AI on your business?

With successful implementation, AI could drastically reduce the time needed for initial research, draft reports and market overviews — allowing us to serve clients faster and more cost-efficiently. This would improve our ability to scale, take on more clients and manage more complex cross-regional projects without proportionally increasing headcount.

2. How has this AI integration changed your overall business strategy or daily operations?

AI could allow Nordsur to operate leaner while expanding scope: offering research-intensive services, rapid market-entry assessments, multilingual reports and faster delivery. This could shift us from a purely boutique advisory firm to a hybrid model that combines high-quality advice with AI-supported research/analysis — enabling a broader client base and more frequent cross-border collaboration.

(For all cases) 3. What is the current status of AI use in your business today?

At the moment we are evaluating possible use cases and may start pilot testing for AI-supported research and reporting. AI is not yet central to our operations, but we consider it a strategic enabler for growth and efficiency.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

SECTION D: LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. What is the most important lesson you have learned from this whole experience?

AI can provide a powerful productivity boost — but only when combined with human judgement, cultural intelligence and strict quality control. For cross-regional consultancy, the human element (local context, trust, relationships) is irreplaceable.

2. What would you do differently if you were to start the process again?

I would start with a very small pilot — one well-defined use case (e.g. market scan for one region), carefully evaluating the result, building a review and validation workflow, and only then expanding. I would also define clear quality standards and data/security protocols from the start.

(For successful or ongoing implementations) 3. What is your most important advice or success factor for other entrepreneurs who want to implement AI?

Use AI to complement human expertise, not replace it. Focus AI on repetitive, data-intensive tasks (research, summaries), but keep clients and context central. Ensure a validated workflow with human review, especially for intercultural or regulatory work.

SECTION E: FUTURE OUTLOOK

1. How do you see AI transforming your specific sector in the coming years?

AI could make international expansion services more accessible, affordable and scalable. With AI-driven research, translation, regulatory mapping and cultural adaptation, more small and medium-sized businesses could gain access to high-quality support for market entry — not just large corporations. This could democratise global collaboration and accelerate sustainable cross-border partnerships.

2. What are your future plans for using AI in your business?

We plan to pilot AI-supported market research and reporting. If successful, we may build a hybrid service package: combining our human-led advisory and network facilitation with AI-supported analysis, multilingual content generation and faster delivery. This would help clients enter new markets faster and more efficiently.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

3. What kind of support is most needed to help young entrepreneurs like you successfully apply AI?

- Access to secure, high-quality AI tools with robust multilingual and intercultural support.
- Guidance or mentorship on best practices for combining AI with consultancy, especially for cross-regional services.
- Support (e.g. funding, grants, startup programmes) that helps cover the initial investment (data infrastructure, staff training, tool subscriptions), so small boutique firms can experiment without jeopardising core operations.
- Community or network of other entrepreneurs/consultants using AI — to share lessons learned, workflows, pitfalls and ethical practices.

LSS INTERVIEWS





Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

INTERVIEW 1 – Mehrag Faiz - FAIZ Products

SECTION A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1. Can you briefly introduce yourself and tell us what motivated you to start your business?

I'm Mehrag Faiz, a 25-year-old Robotics postgraduate from TU Delft. I've been entrepreneurial since I was 15: building websites, making YouTube videos, and earning my first money online at a young age. That early success motivated me to keep going. Over time I fell in love with the art of selling, particularly the dynamics of online selling.

2. Give a brief overview of your company: what it does, its current size and stage of development.

I run an e-commerce business that has done well with revenue in the several hundred thousand euro range, focused on consumer products, with AI deeply integrated into every layer of the operation — from product research and competitive analysis to ad creation and customer insights. I also mentor more than 30 students in building their own online store. I'm currently in a scaling phase: refining the AI-driven systems I've built, optimising operations with a VA team, and preparing to expand both the store side and the mentoring side.

3. What specific business challenges or goals led you to consider Artificial Intelligence?

I've been using LLMs since GPT-3, so AI was already part of how I worked. The real shift came when I realised: if my VA can do a task, an AI agent can do it 1000x faster, cheaper, at greater scale and more reliably. That realisation completely changed how I think about building operations.

SECTION B: EXPERIENCE WITH AI IMPLEMENTATION

1. What specific AI solution did you implement, and what were the main criteria for choosing it?

Honestly, I started small. I expected AI to handle language tasks — writing customer service messages, generating product descriptions, that sort of thing. Useful, but limited in scope.

What I realise now is that we've barely scratched the surface. AI can execute entire workflows: research, analysis, decision-making, creative generation, even autonomously interfacing with tools and APIs. The ceiling is much higher than I initially thought.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

2. Can you describe the main steps of the implementation process?

It usually starts with a clear problem I want to solve — something I do manually or that my VAs spend too much time on.

Then I use deep-research tools like Perplexity to understand the landscape: which APIs exist, what's technically possible, what others have tried. That gives me a foundation before I write a single line of code.

Then I build. I rely heavily on Claude for the actual implementation — designing the architecture, writing the code, debugging and iterating quickly. It's like having a senior developer available 24/7. I describe what I want, we go back and forth, and within a few hours I have a working prototype.

For example, with my competitive-intelligence system I went from idea to a functional tool that automatically discovers competitor stores via the Facebook Ad Library, extracts product data and organises everything — all within a few days, not months. Same with my product importer: what a development team would have taken weeks to build, I built iteratively with AI support.

The key is to treat AI not as a chatbot, but as a collaborator in the build process itself.

3. What were the main challenges you encountered (e.g. technical, financial or team-related)?

A few things. Context management — AI loses track in complex projects, so keeping it on course takes deliberate effort.

Keeping up with what's actually possible. You can only build what you can imagine.

And platform restrictions. When you use AI agents to interact with the internet, companies like Meta actively detect and block bot-like behaviour. That's a constant cat-and-mouse game.

4. How did the actual implementation timeline compare to your original plan, and what caused any major delays?

No delays — if anything, the opposite. I build functional software over weekends that would have taken a team of engineers weeks or months. The speed is honestly hard to believe until you experience it yourself.

SECTION C: RESULTS AND IMPACT

(For successful or ongoing implementations) 1. What has been the main positive impact of AI on your business so far (or expected)?

Competitive research at scale. I track what my competitors are doing — ads, products, pricing — faster and more thoroughly than I ever could manually. I'm genuinely on top of my market in a way I doubt anyone else in my niche matches.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

2. How has this AI integration changed your overall business strategy or daily operations?

It has become central to how I operate. I use AI constantly — thinking through ideas, building tools, writing, researching. It has drastically shortened timelines. What used to require planning and hiring now takes just a weekend and focus.

Day to day it has shifted my role from doing the work to designing the systems that do the work.

(For all cases) 3. What is the current status of AI use in your business today?

Fully integrated. AI touches every part of the business — competitive research, product sourcing, content creation, customer-service workflows and the internal tools I build. It's no longer experimental; it's how I operate by default.

SECTION D: LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. What has been the main positive impact of AI on your business so far (or expected)?

If a task can be described, it can be automated. That shift in thinking changed everything.

2. What would you do differently if you were to start the process again?

Slow down before approaching AI. Nowadays AI builds whatever you ask for — that's no longer the bottleneck. The bottleneck is knowing exactly what you want. I would spend more time upfront thinking through the problem, the desired output, the edge cases. Because once you prompt, things move fast. You don't want to build the wrong thing at lightning speed.

(For successful or ongoing implementations) 3. What is your most important advice or success factor for other entrepreneurs who want to implement AI?

Just start building. The best way to learn AI implementation is to actually implement it. Ask AI what the current state-of-the-art tools are, use them and start making something. You learn more in one weekend of building than in months of reading about it.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

SECTION E: FUTURE OUTLOOK

1. How do you see AI transforming your specific sector in the coming years?

Teams will shrink, output will explode. Tasks that used to require whole departments — research, content, customer service, even development — will be handled by one person with the right AI systems. Companies will compete on how well they design and orchestrate AI workflows, not on headcount. The winners will be lean, fast and system-driven.

2. What are your future plans for using AI in your business?

Keep building, keep learning. AI moves too fast to ever think you've mastered it. My plan is to keep being a student — always exploring what's new, always asking whether my current systems are still the best approach. The edge comes from staying on the frontier.

3. What kind of support is most needed to help young entrepreneurs like you successfully apply AI?

Awareness of what's currently possible, and examples of real implementations. The tools are there — the gap is knowing what you can build with them.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

INTERVIEW 2 – Nathan O'Leary — Cadence Crafters

SECTION A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1. Can you briefly introduce yourself and tell us what motivated you to start your business?

I'm a founder/consultant working with B2B SaaS teams on outbound and RevOps systems (CRM, workflows, data, automations). I started Cadence Crafters because I kept seeing the same problem: teams buy tools and hire people, but the underlying process and data handoffs are messy — making the pipeline unpredictable. I wanted to build clean, repeatable systems that make outbound and reporting reliable.

2. Give a brief overview of your company: what it does, its current size and stage of development.

Cadence Crafters builds and runs outbound + RevOps 'operating systems': lead list → enrichment → scoring → personalisation → sequencing (email/LinkedIn) → reply handling → CRM updates → reporting. It is founder-led and lean (small team/specialist support when needed). The company is in an early growth phase: refining repeatable delivery, productising parts of the system and scaling what works.

3. What specific business challenges or goals led you to consider Artificial Intelligence?

Speed and consistency. Research + personalisation took too much time, and quality varied depending on who did it. I also wanted better routing and segmentation decisions (who to contact, with what angle, and when) based on structured signals — without manual effort.

4. What were your initial expectations of what AI could do for your business?

I expected AI to speed up research, draft first versions of copy, standardise how insights are captured, and automate repetitive classification tasks (e.g. categorising replies) — while humans retained control for final review.

SECTION B: EXPERIENCE WITH AI IMPLEMENTATION

1. What specific AI solution did you implement, and what were the main criteria for choosing it?

LLM-based 'agents' integrated into my workflows (lead research, scoring, message drafting, reply classification), orchestrated via automation tools and connected to structured data in Google



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

Sheets/CRM. The main criteria were: reliable structured output (JSON), easy integration via API, auditable prompts/safeguards, cost visibility, and the ability to iterate quickly.

2. Can you describe the main steps of the implementation process?

- Defined the data model (fields I need: ICP score, reasons, segment, angles, personalisation snippets, status fields).
- Built the workflow setup (triggers, enrichment steps, writing back to the source of truth).
- Designed prompts + output schemas so automation can safely parse results.
- Tested on a small batch, compared output against human baselines, refined prompts and validation rules.
- Put into production with monitoring (error handling, reliability checks, logging).

3. What were the main challenges you encountered (e.g. technical, financial or team-related)?

Getting deterministic output (AI is probabilistic), data quality (messy input = messy output), and ensuring automations don't break when output changes. Also: privacy/compliance considerations, and keeping the system maintainable as it grows.

4. How did the actual implementation timeline compare to your original plan, and what caused any major delays?

Prototypes were fast, but production-ready workflows took longer than expected. The main delays came from tightening the data schema, adding safeguards/error handling, and reworking steps when upstream data sources or tool permissions/limits changed.

SECTION C: RESULTS AND IMPACT

(For successful or ongoing implementations) 1. What has been the main positive impact of AI on your business so far (or expected)?

Time savings and consistency: faster research and first drafts, more structured output, and less manual admin work. That gives me more time to focus on strategy, offer design and improving conversion instead of repetitive prep work.

2. How has this AI integration changed your overall business strategy or daily operations?

It led me to run the business in a more 'systems-oriented' way: clear schemas, standardised handoffs, logging and quality control. Day to day it means more automated enrichment and drafting, plus human review where it matters.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

(For all cases) 3. What is the current status of AI use in your business today?

AI is actively used in core workflows (research, scoring, copy support, reply classification, reporting support). It is not fully autonomous — it is a structured assistant embedded in the system with human oversight.

SECTION D: LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. What is the most important lesson you have learned from this whole experience?

Start with a narrow use case and a strict data schema. If you don't define 'what good looks like' and how output is stored/validated, AI becomes noise rather than leverage.

2. What would you do differently if you were to start the process again?

I would define success metrics earlier (time saved, quality thresholds, error rates), build a simple evaluation set from day one, and put in stronger input validation before scaling volume.

(For successful or ongoing implementations) 3. What is your most important advice or success factor for other entrepreneurs who want to implement AI?

Treat AI as a component in a workflow — not as a magic feature. Use structured output, safeguards, logging and humans-in-the-loop. The value comes from integration + process, not from the model alone.

SECTION E: FUTURE OUTLOOK

1. How do you see AI transforming your specific sector in the coming years?

In RevOps/outbound, AI will become embedded in CRMs and execution tools: better routing, smarter prioritisation, faster account research and automated hygiene (deduplication, field enrichment, next-best-actions). Teams that pair AI with clean data and clear processes will lead the pack.

2. What are your future plans for using AI in your business?

Expanding the agent workflows (better scoring, better signal detection, stronger reply handling), improving evaluation/QA, and making the system more modular so it's easier to deploy across different clients/segments.



Grant Agreement No.: 2024-1-BG01-KA220-YOU-000249027-2
Call: 2024
Topic: Youth
Type of action: Cooperation partnerships

3. What kind of support is most needed to help young entrepreneurs like you successfully apply AI?

Practical implementation playbooks (no hype), training focused on workflows + data fundamentals, clearer privacy/compliance guidelines, and support for small teams to test safely (time, budget and templates).