STARTUP TOOLKIT FOR BELARUSIAN AND UKRAINIAN FOUNDERS

This toolkit was created by students of the BA in Business Economics program at BISEB School of Economics and Business (Vilnius, Lithuania) during the Spring 2026 semester as part of the pilot Business Clinic course.

Created by: Darya N. (Team Lead), Anna Lissovskaya, and project team students

Supervised by: Kiryl Valoshyn

STARTUP TOOLKIT FOR BELARUSIAN AND UKRAINIAN FOUNDERS

VALIDATE YOUR IDEA

Identify the real problem your customers face.
Make sure your idea addresses a genuine market need.

BUILD YOUR MVP

Create a simple version of your product.
Test your solution with real users.

FIND YOUR FIRST USERS

Reach your first users.
Collect feedback and improve your product.

GROW

Plan your growth.
Set priorities and develop your startup step by step.

USE SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Explore support programs and opportunities available to startups in Lithuania and Poland.

INTRODUCTION

A practical roadmap for launching a startup in Lithuania & Poland as a migrant founder.

Starting a startup is exciting — and, if you're honest, a little overwhelming. Countless guides and success stories exist online, yet very few explain what to actually do first, what can wait, and which mistakes cost founders the most time and energy. That challenge gets harder when you're building something new while also adapting to life in a new country. If you're from Belarus or Ukraine and thinking about launching a startup in Lithuania or Poland — whether you already have an idea or don't know where to begin — this toolkit was made for you.

> **What you will get:** It won't give you abstract theory or recycled startup wisdom. Instead, it offers a practical roadmap with clear step-by-step logic, ready-to-use tools and templates, and honest advice from founders who have already gone through this. It's not legal, financial, or migration advice — but it will help you know which questions to ask, where to find reliable information, and which communities, programs, and local resources are actually worth your time.

The Toolkit Structure

- Block 1. Startup or small business: what are you actually building? — Starts with understanding the problem: identifying the right customer segment, finding respondents, conducting meaningful conversations, and determining whether the problem you want to solve is real, recurring, and worth paying for.
- Block 2. MVP and First Users— Once you have evidence the problem exists, the focus shifts to testing a solution — exploring MVP formats, finding your first users, collecting feedback, measuring real demand, and deciding whether to continue, pivot, or stop based on evidence rather than assumptions.
- Block 3. Team, Roles and Agreements— Focuses on the people behind the project: defining roles, identifying missing skills, understanding when you need a co-founder, contractor, mentor, or local specialist, and putting agreements in place before misunderstandings happen.
- Block 4. LT/PL Infrastructure, Money, and Administrative Matters— Only then do you move to legal structure, taxation, banking, and funding — topics founders often rush into too early, but which become far easier once you understand what you're building, who it's for, and who you're building it with.

One more thing before you dive in: the toolkit has an appendix with everything from Картка ідэіs and pipeline tracker to MVP planning sheet, founder agreement table, and budget calculator — so you don't have to build these frameworks from scratch. The appendix also includes an ecosystem map for Lithuania and Poland — startup communities, accelerators, hackathons, coworking spaces, founder networks, migrant support organizations, legal resources, and more — with direct links so you spend less time searching and more time building.

Remember: The goal is not to build faster or sell sooner, but to build something people genuinely need

MENTAL MAP

BLOCK 1. Is There a Real Problem and Market Demand?

- Startup or Small Business?
- Customer, Problem & Solution
- Founder–Market Fit
- Customer Discovery
- Competitors & Alternatives
- Finding Respondents
- Demand Signals4
- Good Progress

↓

BLOCK 2. MVP & FIRST USERS

- MVP Planning
- MVP Formats
- First Users
- Acquisition Channels
- Pipeline & Metrics
- Budget & Pitch Deck
- Continue / змена напрамку/ Stop
- Good Progress

↓

BLOCK 3. Team, Roles and Agreements

- Roles & Responsibilities
- Co-founder or Specialist?
- Local Context
- Finding People
- Agreements & Ownership
- Personal Data
- Good Progress

↓

BLOCK 4. LT/PL Infrastructure, Money, and Administrative Matters

- Startup Visa & Residence
- Company Registration
- Taxes & Accounting
- Banking & KYC
- Payments & Compliance
- Funding Opportunities
- Good Progress

↓

📄 APPENDIX

(Ready-to-use worksheets, templates and practical tools)

↓

🌍 ECOSYSTEM

(External support, resources and useful platforms)

1.Idea Validation: Is There a Real Problem and Market Demand?

1. 1 Startup or small business: what are you actually building?

Before testing your idea, be honest about what you're building: a local service, a small business, or a scalable startup. The answer changes what you need to validate and where you look for customers.

A small business operates in a known market – a café, agency, local service, or consultancy. A startup searches for a scalable, repeatable model under uncertainty – software, marketplace, platform, or a new way to solve an existing problem that can grow beyond your direct time and effort.

For a founder in migration, this distinction matters immediately. If you're building a local service in Poland or Lithuania, validate language, location, pricing, and trust early. If you're building a SaaS or marketplace, Lithuania or Poland may be your operating base – not your market. In that case, your respondents aren't in diaspora chats; they're wherever your future customers actually are.

> **Common mistake:** calling any new project a startup because it sounds more serious.

> **Better approach:** decide early whether you're building a local business or searching for a scalable model. The validation questions are different, the channels are different, and the risks are different.

> **Artifact:** a one-sentence description of what you are building – local business, diaspora product, scalable startup, or global B2B – and why this shapes how you will validate it.

1.2 Formulating your idea: customer, problem, solution, payer

Once you've decided you're building a startup – not just a local service – the next step is to make the idea specific enough to test.

Most early founders describe their idea through the solution – an app, a platform, an AI tool, but that's too early.

Before building anything, describe the idea through four elements: *who might have the problem, what that problem is, what solution you want to test, and who might pay.*

A vague idea produces vague interviews. People will say it sounds interesting, but that tells you nothing about whether the problem is real, whether there's a budget, or whether anyone would actually change their behaviour.

Keep each part concrete. *Customer* means a specific person or segment – narrow by situation or behaviour, not just demographics. *Problem* means a real friction, cost, or repeated difficulty – not the absence of your product. *Solution* is your first guess, not a fixed product. *Payer* is a$ hypothesis: the user, the person with the pain, the decision-maker, and the budget holder are often different people.

Before moving to interviews, check how Lithuania or Poland relates to your idea. Are your first customers here, in the diaspora, or somewhere else? Do you need Polish, Lithuanian, or English to reach them? And if someone is ready to pay, can you legally accept payment with your current status? If your test involves payment, invoicing, or handling customer data, check the relevant legal and migration questions before treating interest as real demand.

Your immediate network is a useful starting point – but it's not a market. Use it to practice and refine your questions, then get outside it as quickly as possible.

What founders say: Local language is not a detail to handle later. Founders who tested marketing on local markets without native-level content reported poor results – low conversion, wasted budget, and lost trust. If your customer is local, have your landing page, ads, and customer-facing copy reviewed by a native speaker before spending money on distribution.

Common mistake: assuming the user and the payer are the same person.

Better approach: map the roles separately before your first interviews. Use *Appendix 1.3* – Role Map to identify who uses the product, who feels the pain, who decides, and who controls the budget.

Artifact: a completed Картка ідэі (Appendix 1.1) with customer, problem, solution, and at least two payer hypotheses filled in.

1.3 Адпаведнасць заснавальніка рынку: is this the right problem for you?

A startup idea needs to be tested against the market – but also against yourself. Four things are worth checking honestly before you go deep into validation.

Do you understand the problem? Direct experience, professional background, or close contact with people who face it regularly – any of these works. Personal pain is a valid starting point, but it's not enough on its own. The question is whether other people have the same problem, often enough and strongly enough to create demand.

Can you reach the right people? If you can't access respondents, you can't validate the idea. You need a realistic route to the right people – not just the people who are easy to reach.

Will they take you seriously? In B2B, healthcare, education, finance, or legal services, trust can be a real barrier from the start. Think early about where your credibility comes from – expertise, lived experience, shared community, local language, or a warm introduction.

Do you have the capacity to do this? Weak Адпаведнасць заснавальніка рынку is often not about talent – it's about time, financial pressure, unstable legal status, or dependence on a full-time job. If you can only work on this irregularly, design a smaller and more focused validation plan.

For founders in Lithuania and Poland, relocation changes your access to markets. You may know a problem well from Belarus or Ukraine, but the same problem can work very differently here. Ask yourself honestly: *are you testing the real market, or just the people who are socially close to you?*

If you see major gaps, narrow the segment, find a local partner, or choose a market you can actually access. The goal is not to prove you're the perfect founder – it's to be honest about where you're strong and where you need help.

Common mistake: starting validation before checking whether your legal or migration status allows you to accept payment or run a paid pilot.

Better approach: go through Appendix 1.4 – Адпаведнасць заснавальніка рынку self-assessment before your first interviews. If you find gaps in access, language, or legal status, decide how to close them before they block you.

Artifact: a completed Адпаведнасць заснавальніка рынку self-assessment (Appendix 1.4) with gaps identified and a short note on how you will close them.

1.4 Hypotheses and customer discovery

Before building anything or registering a company, turn your idea into hypotheses and test them with real people.

A hypothesis is something you believe to be true but haven't proven yet. Customer discovery is the process of checking hypotheses through direct conversations – not to ask whether people like your idea, but to understand how they actually solve the problem today.

Start with the assumptions that can break the idea if they're wrong: does this customer actually have the problem, and does it repeat? Is it painful enough that they spend time or money on it? How are they solving it now? Is there someone with a budget to pay? If your idea depends on the Lithuanian or Polish market, add one more: do local language, trust, or regulation make the idea realistic here?

Don't rely only on friends or people who want to support you. Build your respondent list from several circles: your immediate network for a quick first check, diaspora communities if the problem is migrant-related, local Polish or Lithuanian respondents if the market is local, professional communities if the idea is B2B. If all your interviews come from the same social circle, you're testing politeness, not demand.

Start with problem interviews – don't pitch, don't explain the product. Ask about their current process, recent experience, existing alternatives, and what the problem costs them. Focus on past behaviour, not future promises. Solution interviews come later, after you have evidence that the problem is real.

The stronger signal is not politeness – it's action: a second conversation, a referral, a discussion of budget, or a comparison with something the customer already pays for.

What founders say: Founders who skipped validation and moved straight to building often spent months on products that didn't find buyers. Talking to real people before writing code or registering a company is not a preliminary step. It is the work.

Common mistake: jumping straight to solution interviews and pitching the idea before confirming the problem exists.

Better approach: start with problem interviews. Show the solution only after you have evidence that the pain is real. Appendix 1.5 provides links to external resources on interview structure and assumption testing.

Artifact: a list of 5–10 respondents to contact in the next two weeks, and notes from the first three interviews.

1.5 Competitors and alternatives

A competitor is not only another startup with a similar product. A competitor is whatever the customer uses today instead of you: a spreadsheet, a freelancer, a Telegram chat, or just doing nothing. The most important question is not "who has the same product?" – it's *"how does the customer solve this problem today?"*

"We have no competitors" is usually a warning sign, not a strength. If customers face a real problem, they already have a way of dealing with it. Understanding their current solution helps you identify what they trust and what would motivate them to switch.

For founders in Lithuania and Poland, this step prevents a specific mistake: assuming that a solution missing from your migrant circle is missing from the local market. Just because you have not seen a solution does not mean one does not exist. You might just be looking in the wrong place.

Start from customer behaviour, not startup databases. Ask in interviews: how do you solve this today? What would be hard to replace? Then check the market yourself – Google in the language your customer uses, Google Maps for local ideas, LinkedIn for B2B, App Store and Google Play for digital products. If your target customer is local, searching only in English or Russian will miss most real alternatives.

The appendix has a competitors and alternatives table to work through this systematically.

Common mistake: searching for competitors only in English or only in startup databases.

Better approach: search in the language your customer uses. Google Maps, local directories, Facebook groups, and industry associations will surface alternatives that English-language search misses entirely. Use Appendix 1.6 – Competitive Analysis Template to map what you find.

Artifact: a filled-in competitors and alternatives map showing what the customer uses today, what they pay for it, and what switching would require.

1.6 Where to find respondents in Lithuania and Poland

Once you know which customer segment you want to test, look for respondents who already spend time in that segment. Don't start with a random survey – start with targeted conversations.

Your immediate network is only for the first quick check. Friends, colleagues, and diaspora contacts help you understand the language of the problem, but they're not enough to validate demand.

Diaspora and migrant communities are useful if the problem is migrant-related or if you need warm introductions. In Lithuania, the Belarusian community counts around 57,500 people and the Ukrainian community around 77,000 as of early 2025. In Poland, Ukrainians represent the largest migrant entrepreneurial group, having registered tens of thousands of businesses since 2022. These communities give real access to first interviews – but people may be supportive because they know your context, not because they would pay.

Professional and industry communities matter for B2B, HR, education, real estate, HoReCa, healthcare, fintech, and legal ideas. Look for sector-specific groups, LinkedIn communities, industry events, and associations. This is where you find people close to the problem, not just people who are easy to reach.

Startup and founder infrastructure helps you reach founders, operators, mentors, and early adopters. In Lithuania, Startup Lithuania is the central starting point. In Poland, the ecosystem is distributed across Warsaw, Kraków, Wrocław, Gdańsk, and Poznań. Google for Startups Campus Warsaw, CIC Warsaw, and Venture Café Warsaw are useful entry points, mainly through public events. The full map is in the appendix.

Local institutions matter when your idea touches relocation, work, or business registration. In Vilnius, International House Vilnius covers migration, employment, taxes, and business setup in one place. In Poland, Ukrainian House Warsaw and Polish-Ukrainian Startup Bridge are relevant depending on your focus.

What founders say: Lithuania or Poland is often where founders live – but not where their customers are. For products with a global market, the local ecosystem works best as an operating base: a place for the legal entity, the team, and the infrastructure. Treating it as the primary market when customers are elsewhere is one of the most common early mistakes.

Local business networks and professional clubs consistently proved more useful than diaspora communities for building trust with local customers. In a referral-based environment, a warm introduction carries more weight than a cold approach – regardless of where you are from.

1.7 Signals of demand and willingness to pay

Positive feedback is not the same as demand. People may say your idea is useful, interesting, or that they'd try it "when it exists." These are weak signals unless they lead to a concrete action.

Think of signals in three levels.

Weak signals show interest, not commitment: compliments, likes, vague promises, free testing without follow-up, "keep me updated." Not useless, but not validation.

Medium signals suggest the problem may be real: the person describes it in detail, explains how they solve it now, shares numbers, gives a second interview, or refers you to someone else.

Strong signals show movement toward action: discussion of price, budget, pilot conditions, timing, invoice details, or decision-makers. In B2B, this usually means someone with actual authority and budget is in the room. In B2C, it means pre-order, deposit, repeated return, or payment for an existing alternative.

When reviewing your interviews, focus on a few key questions. Does the person describe the problem with specificity and recent examples? Does it happen repeatedly? What does it cost them in time, money, or effort? What do they use instead – and do they pay for it? And critically: can this person actually decide, or do they need someone else?

The key question is not "do they like it?" – it's *"what are they ready to do next?"*

In Lithuania and Poland, add a local layer. If the product is for the local market, is the customer comfortable with the language you offer? If it's B2B, do they need a local company, invoice, VAT number, or contract? If your first respondents are from your diaspora network, are they signalling real demand or personal support? And if people say they'd pay, can you actually accept payment with your current status?

Founders interviewed for this toolkit described the same pattern: a demo gets praise, a community reacts warmly, potential customers agree the problem exists – and then nothing moves. Several repeated signals from the same type of customer are more useful than many vague compliments from different people.

What founders say: Positive reactions from potential customers – including from large, well-known companies – do not always lead anywhere. Decision-makers change, priorities shift, and procurement takes months. A strong signal is not applause. It is a concrete next step with someone who has authority and budget. The same applies to your immediate network: people who know you may say the idea is great and they would use it – but support from friends, colleagues, or diaspora contacts is not the same as willingness to pay.

Common mistake: treating a second conversation or a positive demo reaction as a strong signal.

Better approach: track signal strength systematically across all your interviews using Appendix 1.7 – Demand signals table. One enthusiastic conversation is not a pattern. Three similar responses from the same type of customer are.

Artifact: A completed Demand Signals Table (Appendix 1.7) summarizing interview findings, signal strength, supporting evidence, agreed next steps, and key local blockers.

1.8 What good progress looks like

By the end of this part, you do not need a validated business. You need clarity about whether the problem is real and whether it is worth continuing.

You are moving in the right direction if you can describe who your first customer is and where they are, explain the problem in their words rather than yours, name at least two or three current alternatives they use, identify who might pay and who makes the decision, and point to at least one concrete signal – not just encouragement – that suggests real demand.

You should also be able to say whether Lithuania or Poland is your market or your operating base, and what local language, trust, or legal questions need to be resolved before a paid test.

A good result is not a perfect pitch deck or a registered company. A good result: you can back up what you say with real answers from real people, not guesses.

Use the appendix tools as working documents, not as homework:

Appendix 1.1 – Картка ідэі helps you describe the idea in a testable way before your first interviews.

Appendix 1.2 – Канва каштоўнаснай прапановы helps you map what gains and pains your solution addresses for a specific customer segment.

Appendix 1.3 – Role Map helps you separate the user, the person with the pain, the decision-maker, and the budget holder – especially useful in B2B.

Appendix 1.4 – Адпаведнасць заснавальніка рынку self-assessment helps you identify your access, language, and local knowledge gaps before going deep into validation.

Appendix 1.5 points to free external resources on hypothesis mapping, customer interviews, and competitive analysis.

Appendix 1.6 – competitor overview table, feature comparison matrix, positioning map, and SWOT summary.

Appendix 1.7 – Demand signals table helps you track signal strength across respondents and avoid mistaking politeness for demand.

The ecosystem map in the appendix gives you a practical starting point for finding respondents, communities, accelerators, and events in Lithuania and Poland.

2. MVP and First Users

This block focuses on testing an idea in practice: how to determine whether users need the product, how to test a solution without expensive development, and where to find the first customers. At an early stage, the founders' task is not to create a "perfect product," but to obtain real signals of demand as early as possible and understand whether there is a problem for which people are willing to pay for a solution.

One of the most common misconceptions among early-stage founders is the belief that a product must first be fully developed and only then introduced to the market. In practice, this often leads to wasted time and resources: the product may turn out to be unnecessary, and the hypotheses may remain unvalidated. For this reason, MVPs, customer interviews, and initial tests become the primary tools for early-stage idea validation.

2.1 MVP as a Fast Solution Test

An MVP (Minimum Viable Product) is the simplest way to test a proposed solution before investing significant time and resources into development. The purpose of an MVP is not to build a complete product, but to learn as quickly as possible whether users are willing to engage with the solution and whether it addresses a real problem. An MVP can take many forms, including a landing page, a demo prototype, a manual service, a no-code solution, or a pilot project. The format should be selected based on the hypothesis being tested and the resources available to the founder.

Before building an MVP, founders should already have a validated problem, a defined target user, and an initial understanding of customer needs. These topics are covered in **Block 1: Formulating Your Idea; Founder–Market Fit; Signals of Demand & Willingness to Pay.** At this stage, the goal is no longer to understand the problem but to test whether a proposed solution creates value for potential users.

> **What founders say:** Many people build first and think about users or monetization later. A simple MVP helps test assumptions early and avoid costly mistakes.

Common mistake: Building too many features before launching, instead of testing one core hypothesis with the simplest possible version.

Better approach: Use the MVP to collect evidence before making larger investments. The goal is not to prove that the idea is perfect, but to gather enough information to make informed decisions and reduce uncertainty before committing significant time and resources.

Artifact: Completed MVP Plan (Appendix 2.1) with a clear hypothesis, testing method, success metric, and timeline.

2.2 MVP Formats: Landing Page, Mockup, No-Code, Manual Service, Demo, and Pilot

Once entrepreneurs have confirmed that a problem genuinely exists, the next step is to test a solution. At this stage, it is important to choose an MVP format that allows the hypothesis to be tested quickly and user feedback to be collected without significant development costs.

The simplest MVP format is a landing page: a one-page website with a brief description of the problem, the solution, and the product's value proposition. Its purpose is to determine whether users are willing to leave their contact information, join a waitlist, or request early access. A landing page typically includes a short offer, key product benefits, and a sign-up form.

For more complex products, mockups and demo prototypes created in Figma or other design tools can be used without full-scale development. This format is particularly useful for SaaS, fintech, and marketplace projects. Users can test the main product flows, while the project team can assess whether the solution is understandable and generates interest. A stronger signal of demand is not a positive reaction to the demo itself, but a willingness to test the product, discuss a pilot project, or arrange a follow-up meeting.

In many cases, entrepreneurs use no-code, low-code, and AI tools instead of full product development. Their purpose is to test hypotheses as quickly as possible and collect user feedback. Such solutions make it possible to build an initial product version within a few days without a technical team. Examples of popular tools and their applications are presented in the table below.

For many startups, an effective format is the manual MVP, where entrepreneurs personally perform processes that are intended to be automated later. This approach helps validate hypotheses more quickly and provides a deeper understanding of customer needs. Early versions of Airbnb and Zappos operated using this model.

In the B2B segment, the pilot project is often the most important MVP format. A pilot involves limited testing of the product with a real client and allows entrepreneurs to evaluate not only interest in the product, but also its applicability within the client's actual business processes.

A list of tools for creating landing pages, prototypes, no-code MVPs, automation workflows, and AI-powered solutions is provided in **Appendix 2.2: MVP Tools & Resources**. When selecting a tool, it is recommended to consider the type of product, available budget, and the technical capabilities of the team.

An example of a short proposal for a paid pilot project, together with success conditions, is provided in **Appendix 2.3: Pilot Proposal template.** To illustrate how an application page for collecting leads within an MVP can be structured, **Appendix 2.5** contains an example template that can be adapted to a specific project.

What founders say: No-code and AI tools frequently allow startups to launch MVPs much faster and at a significantly lower cost than traditional development.

Better approach: The CTA (call-to-action) should be specific. Instead of “Learn More,” it is better to use phrases such as “Get Early Access,” “Join the Waitlist,” or “Submit an Application.” Some entrepreneurs also use fake door tests, such as a “Buy Now” or “Start Subscription” button, even when the product is not yet available. This helps measure not just interest in the idea, but the user’s willingness to take action. A pilot project should ideally be paid or have clearly defined success criteria established in advance. For example: “If our tool reduces operating costs by 15% within 30 days, the company agrees to sign a one-year contract.”

Artifact: A selected MVP format supported by relevant resources from Appendix 2.2 and a completed pilot or lead-generation template adapted to the project (Appendices 2.3 and 2.5).

2.3 First Users and Acquisition Channels in Lithuania and Poland

At the MVP stage, the goal is not scaling but finding the first 10–50 users who are willing to test the product and provide honest feedback. In most cases, the first customers come through manual outreach, networking, and local communities rather than paid advertising.

Before searching for users, it is useful to prepare a short project description (2–3 sentences), a simple landing page or demo, a feedback form, and a clear offer for testers. For B2B projects, this may involve a free pilot or early access. For B2C products, it can be free use of the product in exchange for feedback.

🇱🇹 **Lithuania**

B2B Segment:
For finding first B2B users, LinkedIn and personalized outreach are the most commonly used channels. Rekvizitai.lt and Paslaugos.lt can help identify companies and potential clients. Additional opportunities for finding pilot users and collecting feedback are available through Startup Lithuania events and local startup meetups.

B2C Segment:
For acquiring first users, founders often rely on Facebook communities, local neighborhood groups in Vilnius and Kaunas, recommendation groups, and Skelbiu.lt. For digital, AI, and technology products, r/lithuania and specialized IT communities can also be valuable sources of early adopters. University students frequently become effective testers for mobile applications, EdTech solutions, and consumer services.

For products targeting the broader Lithuanian market, high-quality localization into the Lithuanian language is strongly recommended.

🇵🇱 **Poland**

B2B Segment:
For finding first B2B users, founders most commonly use LinkedIn, DMSales, and personalized email

outreach. DMSales and KRS help identify companies and obtain contact information for potential clients. Additional opportunities for networking and user discovery can be found through startup events, industry communities, and professional conferences.

B2C Segment:
For acquiring first users, Facebook groups, local communities, and OLX.pl are often the most effective channels. Communities such as *Spotted Warszawa*, *Warszawa Lokalnie*, and *Spotted Kraków* can be useful for customer interviews, MVP testing, and collecting feedback. For digital, AI, and technology products, Wykop.pl and communities such as *AI Tinkerers Warsaw* can help attract early adopters and gather valuable insights.

For a more detailed search of companies, professional communities, startup programs, and local contacts, it is recommended to use the resources provided in the Local Ecosystem: First Users & Outreach section.

What founders say: Founders described their first 10–20 users as the moment the idea stopped feeling theoretical - without them, no amount of product polish or marketing budget changes whether the startup actually survives.

Common mistake: Skipping local translation for the Lithuanian or Polish market and relying on mass-spamming cold messages instead of personalized networking.

Better approach: Localize your offer before outreach, and open each conversation with a question about the user's current process, not a pitch — invite them to a short chat or MVP test, not a sale.

Artifact: a shortlist of relevant acquisition channels, a prepared outreach message, and an initial group of potential users identified for MVP testing and feedback.

2.4 Pipeline and Simple Metrics

At the MVP stage, entrepreneurs simultaneously conduct customer interviews, demonstrate prototypes, and search for their first users. To avoid losing track of contacts and agreements, it is useful to maintain a simple pipeline—a structured table used to monitor contacts and the status of ongoing conversations.

For early-stage projects, Google Sheets, Notion, or Airtable are usually sufficient. A typical pipeline includes the contact name or company, source of the lead, current status, date of the last interaction, next step, and notes about the customer. In particular, it is important to define a clear next action—a specific activity and deadline for follow-up.

Most entrepreneurs begin with their “warm network,” including friends, former colleagues, professional communities, and accelerator programs. Once the value proposition has been validated, they can move on to cold outreach. At an early stage, it is generally more effective to manage 10–20 high-quality contacts than to send hundreds of generic messages.

For simplicity, entrepreneurs often use basic pipeline stages such as **o**utreach, interview, demo, pilot/test, success, and archive. If a contact does not respond after several follow-up attempts, it can be moved to the archive stage.

Alongside the pipeline, it is useful to track a small number of key metrics, including the number of interviews conducted, demos presented, pilot projects launched, follow-up conversations scheduled, and users who agreed to participate in testing. More meaningful indicators include repeat meetings, participation in pilot programs, and discussions about budgets or purchasing decisions, rather than views, likes, or comments.

What founders say: If a user is willing to repeatedly invest their time in a product, it is one of the strongest signals that the underlying problem genuinely exists and is important to solve.

Common mistake: Tracking vanity metrics like views and likes, and spreading effort across too many leads instead of focusing on 10–20 high-quality contacts.

Better approach: Track engagement that actually predicts demand — repeat meetings, willingness to discuss budget — and keep the pipeline lean, with a clear next action and deadline for every active contact.

Artifact: Completed Pipeline (Appendices 2.4), providing a structured overview of potential users, outreach activities, and final decisions.

2.5 Startup Budget and Pitch Deck

At an early stage, the purpose of a startup budget is not to build a complex financial model, but to understand how many resources are required to validate key hypotheses and how long the team can continue operating before generating revenue or securing investment. Therefore, an MVP budget should be simple and practical, covering product development, digital tools, marketing, legal and accounting services, pilot projects, testing activities, and founders' personal expenses.

To launch quickly, founders can rely on an affordable no-code stack: Google Sheets or Airtable for customer databases and pipeline management, Notion for documentation, Tilda, Webflow, or Framer for landing pages, Make for automation, and various no-code and AI tools for building initial prototypes. At this stage, the goal is not to create a perfect infrastructure, but to minimize fixed costs and preserve resources for validating demand.

The most important budget metrics are burn rate and runway. Burn rate measures how much money the startup spends each month, while runway indicates how many months the available resources will last. For example, if a startup has €12,000 in available funds, monthly expenses of €2,500, and monthly revenue of €500, then the net burn rate equals €2,000 and the runway is 6 months. Such calculations help founders understand how much time they have to acquire customers and achieve product-market fit.

Alongside the budget, founders should prepare a simple pitch deck that clearly communicates the startup idea to mentors, partners, and potential investors. At the MVP stage, the deck should briefly explain the problem, solution, market opportunity, business model, traction (if available), the go-to-market strategy for acquiring the first users, financial assumptions including burn rate and runway, and the funding required together with its intended use.

Common mistake: Failing to include personal runway in the budget, which forces founders to abandon the startup early just to cover personal bills.

Better approach: Plan for three scenarios. In a pessimistic scenario, no revenue is generated for several months. In a realistic scenario, the startup acquires its first paying customers. In an optimistic scenario, sales grow quickly or the company receives a grant or investment. Scenario planning reduces the risk of overly optimistic financial assumptions.

Artifact: A prepared Pitch Deck Outline based on the structure provided in Appendix 2.6, together with a completed Startup Budget calculation using the calculator from Appendix 2.7 to estimate costs, runway, and key financial assumptions.

2.6 Continue / змена напрамку/ Stop

After conducting customer interviews, MVP tests, and pilot projects, entrepreneurs should regularly evaluate the results and make decisions based on real market signals. One of the most common frameworks for this purpose is the continue / змена напрамку/ stop approach.

Continue means that the key hypotheses are being validated. Users return to the product, participate in pilot projects, join the waitlist, place pre-orders, or make their first payments. These signals indicate that the solution is addressing a meaningful problem and deserves further development.

змена напрамкуmeans changing one element of the project, such as the target audience, product features, distribution channel, or monetization model. This option is appropriate when there is evidence of customer interest, but the current version of the solution is not producing the expected results.

Stop means that after several rounds of testing, users do not return to the product, are unwilling to participate in testing, and show no willingness to pay. In such situations, discontinuing the project may be a more rational decision than continuing development without validated demand.

Common mistake: Continuing to invest in a project simply because significant time and resources have already been spent on it. Past effort should be viewed as the cost of learning and gaining experience, not as a reason to ignore market feedback.

Better approach: To avoid making decisions based solely on intuition, it is useful to define clear continue, pivot, and stop criteria in advance and regularly compare them with the project’s actual results.

Artifact: A completed Continue / змена напрамку/ Stop evaluation table (Appendix 2.8) used to assess results and determine the project's next steps.

2.7 What to Do If the Project Does Not Gain Traction

If users do not return to the product, are unwilling to test it, or show no willingness to pay, it is important to revisit customer feedback, customer interviews, and the project's core hypotheses.

In many cases, making a змена напрамкуis more effective than continuing to develop an unvalidated idea. A змена напрамкуmay involve changing the target audience, product functionality, distribution channel, or monetization model.

If, after several iterations of testing, the product still fails to gain traction and available resources are gradually being depleted, closing the project may be a more rational decision than continuing to invest time and money without evidence of demand. At the same time, it is important to preserve the lessons learned and apply them to future projects.

A detailed list of recommended steps for winding down a project can be found in **Appendix 2.9: Project Closure Checklist**, which provides practical guidance for situations in which a project is being discontinued.

2.8 What Good Progress Looks Like

At the early stages of a startup, progress should be measured by learning and validation rather than by the amount of development completed. A startup is making good progress when it consistently gathers evidence that a real customer problem exists and that the proposed solution creates value. Strong indicators include customer interviews that repeatedly confirm the same pain point, users voluntarily returning to the product, participation in pilot projects, referrals, waitlist sign-ups, and discussions about pricing or purchasing decisions.

Good progress also means reducing uncertainty. Founders should gradually develop a clearer understanding of their target users, the most effective acquisition channels, customer behavior, and the competitive landscape. Tracking outreach activities, user feedback, MVP results, and pipeline conversions helps identify which assumptions are supported by evidence and which require adjustment.

Importantly, progress does not always mean moving forward with the original idea. Invalidating an assumption through interviews, MVP tests, or pilot projects is also valuable because it prevents unnecessary investment in a solution that lacks demand. Regular reviews of customer feedback, engagement metrics, pipeline results, and financial indicators such as burn rate and runway allow founders to make informed decisions about whether to continue, pivot, or stop. Ultimately, good progress is demonstrated by increasing evidence that users recognize the problem, engage with the solution, and are willing to invest their time, attention, or money in it.

Use the appendix tools as working documents, not as homework:

Appendix 2.1 – MVP Plan helps you define your hypothesis, testing approach, success metrics, and timeline.
Appendix 2.2 – MVP Tools & Resources provides tools for building landing pages, prototypes, no-code MVPs, and AI-powered solutions.
Appendix 2.3 – Pilot Proposal Template helps structure pilot projects and define success criteria.
Appendix 2.4 – Pipeline helps track contacts, outreach activities, and follow-up actions.
Appendix 2.5 – Application Landing Page Template provides a simple structure for collecting leads and validating demand.
Appendix 2.6 – Pitch Deck Outline provides the key slides typically expected in an early-stage

startup presentation.
Appendix 2.7 – Startup Budget Calculator helps estimate costs, burn rate, runway, and financial scenarios.
Appendix 2.8 – Continue, Pivot, Stop Framework helps evaluate progress and decide on the next steps.
Appendix 2.9 – Project Closure Checklist helps founders close a project in a structured way and capture key lessons learned.

3. Team, Roles and Agreements

What this part is about

At the early stage, your core team may be small: one founder, several co-founders or first employees. But the project also depends on a support network around the team: mentors, advisors, contractors, local specialists, lawyers, accountants, community contacts and other stakeholders. They are not always part of the team, but they can strongly affect whether the project moves forward.

In this part, you will clarify who you are building the project with, who is responsible for what, and which agreements should not be postponed. The goal is not to "find people". It is to see clearly which roles your core team needs now, which skills or support are missing, and how to fill the gap: inside the team, through external support, through the community or with a paid specialist.

In a new country, the team question gets harder. Who speaks the local language? Who do customers trust here? Who owns the code, design or brand if a contractor created them? Can each founder legally work on the project, receive payment or hold ownership? You do not need to answer all of this immediately, but these questions should stay visible as you build the team and decide what to check with a specialist.

By the end of this part, you should understand which roles your project needs, what support is missing, where to look for people in Lithuania and Poland, and which agreements or specialist questions should be clarified early. In the appendix, you will find templates to map roles, identify missing skills, record founder agreements and check who owns the materials created for the project.

3.1 Start with responsibilities, not with people

It is easy to start with the question: "Who do I need to find?" A technical co-founder, a sales person, a local partner, a designer, a lawyer, someone who knows the market. But before looking for people, it is better to ask: what must be done for the project to move forward, and who is responsible for each part?

At the early stage, your team does not need to look like a company department. One person can hold several roles. A founder can talk to customers, test the product, write the first sales messages and manage contractors. This is normal. The risk appears when important work has no owner. If nobody is responsible for customer conversations, they do not happen. If nobody owns sales, the project may stay at the idea stage. If nobody understands the local market, the team may miss language, trust or cultural details that matter in Lithuania or Poland.

The first step is not to hire. The first step is to see the work clearly. Use **Appendix 3.1 – Role Map** when you feel that the project needs "someone else", but you are not yet sure who. The tool helps you separate people from responsibilities: what needs to be done, who owns it now, and what is still uncovered.

> **Common mistake:** saying "we are both working on everything" and treating it as a team structure.

Better approach: keep the structure simple, but name the responsibilities. Someone should own customer discovery. Someone should own product testing. Someone should own sales or first client conversations. Someone should keep the project rhythm: next steps, backlog, decisions and follow-up.

What founders say: early teams often focus on the missing skill: no developer, no sales person, no local expert. But founders' experience shows that time and ownership can be just as important. A first version can sometimes be built with no-code tools, artificial intelligence tools or contractors. What is harder to replace is the person who keeps the project moving every week: follows up on decisions, keeps the next step clear and brings the work back into motion when everyone gets busy.

Artifact: completed Appendix 3.1 – Role Map with the key responsibilities for the next 1–3 months, current owners and uncovered roles.

3.2 Co-founder or another type of help?

It is easy to call someone a co-founder when they are excited about the idea. But excitement is not the same as long-term responsibility.

A co-founder shares risk, decisions and consequences. This person may receive equity, meaning a share in the company. That is a serious decision, even if the company does not exist yet or has no revenue.

You may need a co-founder if the project cannot move without a missing core role: someone who can build the product, sell to a specific market, bring deep industry knowledge, or open access to customers you cannot reach alone. But not every missing skill means you need a co-founder. If you need a website, paid ads, a logo, a first prototype, accounting support, a legal consultation or help with automation, this may be a contractor, mentor, advisor or local specialist.

It is useful to separate the core team from external support early. A co-founder shares long-term responsibility, risk and decision-making. Mentors, advisors, contractors and local specialists can be very important, but they usually support the project from outside. A mentor helps you think. An advisor gives more specific support, such as industry knowledge, introductions or market expertise. A contractor or specialist does a specific task: design, development, legal work, accounting, marketing, content, research, sales support, operations or migration support.

These roles can overlap in real life, but expectations should not be vague. A contractor is not a co-founder just because they built your website. A mentor does not automatically receive equity because they gave advice. An advisor should not have unclear expectations about ownership, payment or decision-making.

Before offering equity or calling someone a co-founder, pause and ask: is this person taking long-term risk with you, making key decisions with you, and bringing something the project truly cannot survive without? If the answer is unclear, start with a smaller test: a few customer interviews, a landing page, a prototype, a sales message or a local market check.

Use **Appendix 3.2 – Skills Gap Matrix** when you are not sure whether you need a co-founder, a contractor, a mentor or a specialist. The point of the tool is to turn “we need someone” into a clear gap: skill, time, access, local knowledge or legal clarity.

Common mistake: giving a co-founder title or equity because someone is interested in the idea.

Better approach: test the working relationship first. If the person does not show responsibility on a small task, they probably should not become a long-term partner.

Artifact: first version of Appendix 3.2 – Skills Gap Matrix showing what kind of support is missing and whether it should be covered by a co-founder, contractor, mentor, advisor, community or specialist.

3.3 Local context is also a skill

For Ukrainian and Belarusian founders in Lithuania and Poland, local context can be one of the most important missing skills. This is especially true when the project touches local language, local advertising, hiring, physical premises, banks, payments, contracts, regulated activities or customer data.

Local context can mean different things: how customers make decisions, which channels they trust, how to communicate in Lithuanian or Polish, where to find reliable contractors, how local institutions work, and which legal, tax or migration questions should be checked before making promises.

Use **Appendix 3.2 – Skills Gap Matrix** here as well. It helps you avoid a wrong shortcut: treating every gap as a co-founder problem. A technical gap, sales gap, local-market gap and legal gap may all need different solutions.

Common mistake: copying the same people, messages and contractors that worked in Ukraine or Belarus and expecting them to work in Lithuania or Poland.

Better approach: if the task touches language, trust, sales, advertising, local customers or local rules, check local experience. Ask for examples of previous work in that market. Start with a small test before giving a large budget or a critical task.

What founders say: founders often rely on familiar people from their home country when they enter a new market. This can work for some tasks, but it becomes risky when the work depends on local language, trust, customer behaviour or local rules.

For marketing, sales, hiring, legal, accounting, tax or migration questions in Lithuania or Poland, check whether the person really understands the local context. Local context is not just translation —

it is knowing how the market, institutions and rules work in practice. This is why local lawyers, accountants, tax advisors and migration specialists can be part of your support network around the project, even if they are not part of the core team.

3.4 Where to look for people and support

There is no single place where “the right people” live. The right channel depends on what kind of support you need. A co-founder, first employee, mentor, advisor, contractor, local accountant, lawyer or first-client introduction will usually come from different places.

In this section, we explain how to choose the right search channel. Concrete links and starting points are collected in the ecosystem map in the appendix: mentor networks, startup communities, legal resources, accountant and tax referrals, contractor platforms and local business networks.

If you are looking for co-founders, startup peers or people who understand early-stage projects, start with startup events, founder meetups, accelerator programs, hackathons, university entrepreneurship centers, LinkedIn and coworking spaces. If you need local specialists, contractors, staff, premises, renovation teams, accountants, lawyers, tax advisors or offline business contacts, referrals and business networks may work better than pitch events.

Lithuania

For startup-oriented contacts in Lithuania, useful entry points include Startup Lithuania events (), Startup Fair (), accelerators, coworking spaces and local founder meetups.

For business and local contacts, BNI Lithuania () can be relevant for networking and referrals. Business communities, local entrepreneurs, accountants, lawyers and diaspora groups can also help you find trusted contacts and people who understand how the market works in practice.

For contractors and service providers, you can check Paslaugos.lt () for practical services and Rekvizitai.lt () to look up Lithuanian companies. Use these platforms as a starting point, not as automatic trust: check reviews, ask for examples and start with a small task.

Poland

For startup-oriented contacts in Poland, useful entry points include Startup Poland (), local founder meetups, coworking spaces, university entrepreneurship centers and acceleration programs. For foreign startups entering Poland, Poland Prize / PARP () is also useful to know because it focuses on foreign startup teams entering the Polish market.

For business and local contacts, BNI Polska () can be useful for networking and referrals. You can also look for local entrepreneur groups, professional communities, diaspora groups, accountants, lawyers and other founders who can recommend trusted people.

For contractors and service providers, ALEO () can help search and check companies, and Useme () can be useful for freelance or remote contractor work. As with any platform, check the person’s experience, ask for examples and test collaboration before giving them a large task.

For a fuller list of specific links, use the ecosystem map in the appendix. It includes places to look for mentors, advisors, legal support, accountants, tax and migration specialists, contractors, business networks and startup communities.

The key is to make your ask specific. “I am looking for people” is §too broad. “I am looking for a Lithuanian-speaking marketing contractor with local retail experience” or “I want to meet founders who have sold to Polish small businesses” is much easier to help with.

When you identify a missing role or skill, add the search channel directly to **Appendix 3.2 – Skills Gap Matrix**. This will help you turn “we need someone” into a concrete next step: where to search, who to ask and what small test to start with.

A community is not the same as a team. It does not replace a co-founder, lawyer or accountant. But it can help you find people, check assumptions, get feedback and avoid working alone for too long. For startup-oriented support, look at founder meetups, accelerators, coworking spaces and ecosystem events. For business-oriented support, look at referral networks, business clubs, professional associations and local entrepreneur groups. For migrant-specific support, Ukrainian and Belarusian communities can be useful because people there may already understand practical questions around language, status, banks, documents, hiring and trusted service providers.

Common mistake: looking only in startup spaces, even when the project needs local business contacts, contractors, premises, staff or practical market knowledge.

Better approach: choose the search channel based on the role. Startup events are good for founders, mentors and ecosystem contacts. Business networks, referrals, diaspora groups and local directories may be better for accountants, contractors, offline business partners, service providers and trusted local contacts.

What founders say: useful people are not always found at startup events. For local or offline projects, founders often rely on business communities, recommendations, diaspora groups, accountants, lawyers, other entrepreneurs and local service providers.

Founders also use LinkedIn and personal networks not only to “hire people”, but to find respondents, early partners and people who understand the market. Sometimes the first useful contact is not a future team member, but someone who helps you understand how the market actually works.

A founder community is useful not only for motivation. It can give you people to test an idea with, contacts to follow up on, feedback on your first version and a better sense of how the local market works.

Artifact: search channels added to Appendix 3.2 – Skills Gap Matrix: where to look, who to ask, which ecosystem map links to use and what small test to start with for each important gap.

3.5 Agreements, ownership and legal documents

Equity means ownership in the company. For a beginner team, it can feel strange to discuss it before there is revenue, investment or even a registered company. But avoiding the conversation does not remove the problem. It only moves the problem into the future.

Most founder conflicts start from things nobody discussed out loud. Who works how many hours? Who put in money? Who decides? Who gets what share? Who owns the work made before the company existed? You do not need to solve all legal details alone, but you should discuss the business logic before going to a lawyer. A lawyer can help document the agreement, but they cannot decide what is fair for your team.

At this stage, clarify the main areas: time, role, contribution, money, decision-making, equity expectations, ownership of work, conflict, leaving the project and closing the project. If someone creates important materials, talks to clients on your behalf, accesses user data, manages accounts, represents the project, or expects equity, the relationship should also be clarified.

Use **Appendix 3.3 – Founder Agreements Table** to write team agreements in simple language. Then use **Appendix 3.4 – Pre-Lawyer Founder Agreement Checklist** to see which topics should be formalised or checked with a specialist. Use **Appendix 3.5 – Intellectual Property and Ownership Checklist** when someone creates something important for the project.

A founder agreement describes how founders work together. Depending on the company structure and country, similar topics may appear in a shareholders' agreement, incorporation documents or other legal documents. Vesting means that a founder or team member earns their shares over time or after agreed conditions are met. The idea is to avoid a situation where someone leaves very early but keeps a large part of the company while others continue working. The exact terms should be discussed with a lawyer.

For Lithuania, Startup Lithuania provides model legal documents for startups, including an agreement of incorporation, articles of association, employment contract, IP assignment and license agreement, non-disclosure agreement, option agreement, privacy policy and shareholders' agreement ().

For Poland, Innovations Hub Foundation provides legal document templates and practical guides for the Polish startup ecosystem ().

Use these templates as a conversation guide, not as a shortcut. A template can show you which topics matter. It cannot decide what is fair for your team or what is correct for your legal situation.

Many beginner founders hear "intellectual property" and think only about patents. At the early stage, it is usually much more practical. Intellectual property means creations and materials that may have value for the project: code, website, design, logo, brand name, domain, texts, pitch deck, photos, customer interview notes, lead database, no-code workflows, artificial intelligence prompts, automations, social media accounts, advertising materials and contractor work.

Common mistake: waiting to discuss hard things until there is conflict, revenue, investment or burnout.

Better approach: discuss hard things while everyone is still calm. It is easier to agree on responsibility, equity logic, exit rules and ownership before the project becomes emotionally or financially heavy.

What founders say: founder agreements often feel like something to handle later, after registration, revenue or investment. But experienced founders treat them as part of building the team, not as paperwork on the side.

The difficult questions are usually very practical: who makes final decisions, who is responsible for what, how money is divided, what happens if someone leaves, and how the team handles losses or conflict. These topics are easier to discuss before the relationship becomes tense.

Artifact: completed Appendix 3.3 – Founder Agreements Table, plus Appendix 3.4 – Pre-Lawyer Founder Agreement Checklist with open questions for a lawyer or specialist. If project materials already exist, also update Appendix 3.5 – Intellectual Property and Ownership Checklist.

3.6 Personal data and migrant-specific questions

Personal data should be noticed early. GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) is the main European Union framework for personal data protection. You do not need to become a data protection expert before starting, but you do need to know when personal data appears in your project and who is responsible for it.

Personal data can include names, emails, phone numbers, CVs, addresses, payment details, user profiles, customer databases, interview notes, photos, messages and sometimes technical identifiers. If contractors, advisors or co-founders have access to this data, the question becomes part of team responsibility too.

For Lithuania, the State Data Protection Inspectorate provides information and guidance (). For Poland, the Personal Data Protection Office provides information on data protection topics ().

For Ukrainian and Belarusian founders in Lithuania and Poland, team decisions can also connect with migration, banking, tax and legal questions. Two founders from the same country can have different statuses, different rights to work, different tax situations, different banking risks and different options for being a shareholder or company director. One co-founder may live in Poland, another in Lithuania, another in Ukraine or Belarus. A contractor may work from another country. A future investor or bank may ask who owns the company and where the people involved are based.

Common mistake: copying a structure from a friend, Telegram chat or another founder without checking your own status and team setup.

Better approach: write down the actual situation of your team: countries, statuses, roles, expected payments, ownership and signing authority. Then take this to a legal, tax or migration specialist before making promises or signing documents.

What founders say: official information is a good starting point, but it often describes a standard case. Migrant founders may have different residence statuses, different paths to legalisation and different questions about company registration, taxes, banks and partnerships.

Do not rely only on a general webpage or someone else's experience. If your team has people with different statuses, countries of residence or ownership roles, write down your exact situation and clarify it with the relevant institution or specialist before making decisions.

Artifact: team setup and risk questions added to Appendix 3.4 – Pre-Lawyer Founder Agreement Checklist: countries, statuses, roles, expected payments, ownership, signing authority and specialist questions.

3.7 What good progress looks like?

By the end of this part, you do not need a perfect team or a full support network. You need clarity.

You are moving in the right direction if you can explain who is in the core team, who is supporting the project from outside, which roles are critical now, and which responsibilities are still uncovered. You should be able to say whether you are looking for a co-founder, contractor, advisor, mentor, local specialist, community or professional support — and why.

You should also have a first version of the uncomfortable conversations: who contributes what, who is responsible for what, what people expect, who owns the materials already created, and which legal, data or migration questions need specialist review.

A good result is not a polished legal package. A good result is that the team is no longer operating only on assumptions.

Use the appendix tools as working documents, not as homework:

Appendix 3.1 – Role Map helps you see who owns each key responsibility.

Appendix 3.2 – Skills Gap Matrix helps you decide what kind of support is missing. When you fill it in, also note where you will search for this support and which links from the ecosystem map can help: mentor network, startup event, BNI-style business network, LinkedIn, diaspora group, local directory, contractor platform, accountant or lawyer referral, accelerator or university network.

Appendix 3.3 – Founder Agreements Table helps you write down early agreements in simple language.

Appendix 3.4 – Pre-Lawyer Founder Agreement Checklist helps you turn team agreements into questions for a lawyer, tax advisor or migration specialist.

Appendix 3.5 – Intellectual Property and Ownership Checklist helps you check who owns the code, design, brand, content, data and other materials created for the project.

Team-building at the early stage is not about creating an ideal company structure. It is about making the invisible visible: who does what, who is responsible for what, who takes which risks, and which agreements are already clear before the project becomes too complex.

4. LT/PL Infrastructure, Money, and Administrative Matters

This block is the most “local” one in the toolkit. By this point, the idea is assumed to be validated, the solution tested at least as an MVP, and the founder has a sense of who they are building the project with. Block 4 is about what needs to be done to move the project out of test mode and into the mode of a legally operating business specifically in Lithuania or Poland: status, business form, taxes, a bank, payments, and money for growth.

It is worth setting the frame right away. This block is not legal, accounting, or migration advice. The rules depend on a person’s citizenship, residence status, team composition, and business model, and they change often. The block’s goal is not to give ready answers, but to show which questions a migrant founder needs to ask, and whom to ask, so as not to make expensive decisions blindly.

Wherever specific figures, rates, and deadlines appear, they must be re-checked against official sources and with specialists — the data in the text is given as a reference point for early 2026.

4.1 Status: Startup Visa and Residence Permit

For a migrant founder, residence status is the foundation. It determines the right to work on your own project, to be a company director or shareholder, to employ yourself, and to open accounts. Registering a company does not create status automatically. The situation differs markedly by citizenship and country.

Lithuania. For non-EU citizens there is a Startup Visa — a residence permit for founders of innovative and scalable projects. The application is assessed by a commission that includes ecosystem representatives. The program targets technology-driven, scalable ideas — a local service with no growth potential will not qualify. As of early 2026, the first residence permit is usually issued for around two years with the possibility of extension; the company must be incorporated within a set period after the permit is granted; there is no rigid fixed investment amount, but you must show sufficient funds for living and for the project's purposes in the first year. Exact requirements and deadlines should be checked with Startup Lithuania and the Migration Department — the program is being adjusted.

Besides the Startup Visa, Lithuania has other grounds for a residence permit: work, study, family reunification. Ukrainian citizens may stay under the temporary protection regime, extended in line with the EU decision. It is important to understand that different grounds give different business-related rights — temporary-protection status or a study residence permit are not equivalent to a startup residence permit.

Poland. There is no separate "startup visa" in the usual sense in Poland. The Poland Business Harbour program, once popular with IT specialists and founders, is suspended as of 2026: new visas and recommendations under it are not being issued, although those issued earlier remain valid. The main route for non-EU citizens is a residence permit for conducting business activity. It requires the company to reach certain indicators: income no lower than a set threshold, or job creation (usually employing at least two people), or a convincing business plan with the potential to reach such indicators. This is not a "permit for an idea" but a status for an already operating business.

For Ukrainian citizens in Poland there is a separate temporary protection regime (UKR status and PESEL UKR number). From March 2026, the simplified rules for opening sole-proprietor activity specifically for Ukrainians have been abolished — a new business is now registered under the general rules for non-EU citizens; activities already opened may continue to operate.

For Belarusian citizens in Poland, sole-proprietor activity is available under certain status conditions — as a rule, full access to the labour market is needed (permanent residence, EU long-term resident status, and similar grounds). Without such grounds, the route is a corporate form, which a non-EU citizen can also establish.

Common mistake: Copying a friend's status-and-registration scheme without checking that you and they have different citizenship, grounds of stay, and entry date — and therefore different applicable rules.

Better approach: Write out your specific case — citizenship, grounds and date of stay, family composition, business plans — and check it with a migration specialist before submitting documents.

What founders say: Surveyed founders described obtaining a startup residence permit in Lithuania as broadly understandable, but noted uncertainty around renewal: the first permitted term felt short for a project, especially in B2B with a long deal cycle. Those who launched in Poland pointed out that government websites describe the “standard case” — a citizen of the country opening a business — and barely cover migrants with different statuses, so information had to be clarified directly with institutions.

Artifact: a description of your own status and legalization route; a completed list of questions for a migration consultant (see Appendix 4.3).

4.2 What to Check Before Registering a Company

A common misconception is that “launching a project” means “opening a company.” In practice, legal setup is the simplest and fastest part of launching: a company in Lithuania can be registered literally in a day, and in Poland in a few days online. The real work is validating demand and finding customers and money. Registering a company is not the first step but a consequence: it makes sense to do it when there is a concrete trigger (a paying customer, hiring, an investment, a status requirement).

Before registering, it is useful to check a few things:

Whether a company is needed right now. While you are validating hypotheses and have no paying customers or an investor requiring a legal entity, much can be tested without registration. A company becomes necessary when regular payments appear, when you need to hire people, sign contracts with corporate clients, accept investment — or when residence status is tied to the business.

Founders’ status and composition. The right to run a business and work on your own project depends on residence status — registering a company by itself does not grant the right to reside. If there are several founders, they may have different citizenship and status, which leads to different tax, banking, and legal consequences. This is better clarified before registration, not after.

Business form and tax regime. These are chosen to fit the business model and plans, not on the principle of “the same as my friend’s.”

Common mistake: Starting with company registration and choosing a tax regime before understanding whether there is demand and who will pay. As a result, accounting costs and mandatory contributions appear before the first revenue.

Better approach: First take idea and solution validation through to demand signals, and plan registration as a step with a concrete trigger: the first paying customer, hiring an employee, an investment, or a status requirement.

What founders say: In the experience of the surveyed founders, legal setup turns out to be the least problematic part of launching. Those who closed or pivoted projects noted that moving to registration and development too early, before validating demand, is a typical mistake that costs time and money. Several stressed that registering a company should not be confused with launching a business: setting up a legal entity is the smaller part of the work.

Artifact: a decision on whether registration is needed now or later, with a concrete trigger; a draft list of founders indicating each one's citizenship and status (status questions: see Appendix 4.3).

4.3 Business Forms, Taxes, and Accounting

The business form is not a formality but a choice that affects taxes, personal liability, the ability to hire people, and the ability to attract investment. The main rule is to choose the form to fit the business model and plans (scaling, investment, hiring), not on the principle of "it's cheaper" or "that's what my friend has."

Lithuania. Main forms: UAB (private limited liability company) — the standard choice for a scalable startup that plans to hire employees, attract investment, and work with corporate clients; the minimum share capital is EUR 1,000, part of which is contributed before registration, and this is not a payment to the state but the company's own funds. MB (small partnership) — a simple limited-liability form whose members can only be individuals (up to ten) and which cannot issue shares; suitable for solo founders and small service teams, but less convenient for the classic entry of investors. Individuali veikla and IĮ — individual activity and individual enterprise, for self-employment and small projects; IĮ carries unlimited personal liability.

Taxes in Lithuania (reference point for 2026): the standard corporate tax is 17%, the reduced rate for small companies (up to 10 employees and turnover up to EUR 300,000) is 7%, and for new small companies a 0% rate applies for the first two tax periods. VAT registration is mandatory once the turnover threshold is reached; separately there are social contributions (Sodra) and payroll taxes. Specific rates and thresholds should be checked with an accountant — tax law changed noticeably in 2026.

Poland. Main forms: sp. z o.o. (limited liability company) — the basic choice for a team and for projects aimed at investment, minimum capital PLN 5,000; the form can also be established by a non-EU citizen. P.S.A. (simple joint-stock company) — a form created specifically for startups: a flexible capital structure, convenient for employee options and the entry of investors. JDG (sole proprietorship) — the analogue of a sole trader: fast and cheap online registration, but full personal liability, and availability depends on status (see the status section).

Taxes in Poland (reference point for 2026): for companies — corporate tax CIT at 19% standard and 9% for "small" taxpayers; there is an "Estonian CIT" regime, where tax is paid on profit distribution. For JDG — a choice of regime: tax scale, flat tax 19%, or ryczałt (turnover tax at a rate depending on the type of activity); on top of the tax there are mandatory ZUS contributions and a health contribution. The threshold for mandatory VAT registration from 2026 is PLN 240,000, but foreigners providing certain types of services must register regardless of turnover. All rates and thresholds are to be checked with an accountant.

Accounting. In Lithuania and Poland, accounting for a company is a regular obligation: reporting, contributions, VAT. Many founders take on a local accountant or a small firm, but do not hand the matter over entirely blindly — they basically understand what is happening and double-check.

Common mistake: Choosing a business form and tax regime on the advice in a chat or by analogy, without a calculation for your own model — and then discovering extra taxes or a structure inconvenient for an investor.

Better approach: Before registration, discuss two or three scenarios with an accountant (solo founder; team; plan for investment) and choose the form deliberately. If the first accountant did not work out in terms of quality, changing them is normal.

What founders say: Founders with internet products noted that for an online business the administrative side turned out to be straightforward, whereas offline lines — catering, manufacturing, renting premises — immediately add regulation: fire codes, sanitary inspections, licenses. Many hired a local accountant precisely because of unfamiliarity with local law, and some had to change accountants until they found one of suitable quality. The general conclusion: skimping on local legal and accounting specialists is risky.

Artifact: the chosen business form with justification; completed lists of questions for a lawyer and an accountant (see Appendix 4.1 and Appendix 4.2).

4.4 Banks, KYC, and Neobanks

A business needs an account — for share capital, settlements, and accepting payments. For a migrant founder this is often an unpredictable stage. There are roughly two types of provider. Classic banks (in Lithuania — e.g., SEB, Swedbank, Luminor; in Poland — PKO BP, mBank, Santander and others) provide a “full-featured” bank but are stricter in their checks and may refuse or close accounts for migrants, especially holders of Belarusian and Russian passports. Fintech services and neobanks (Revolut, Wise, Paysera and others) open faster, often remotely with video identification, and cover settlements, cards, and SEPA payments; Lithuania, moreover, is one of the largest fintech hubs in the EU, and its remote-identification infrastructure is well developed.

KYC (Know Your Customer) is a mandatory procedure: the bank or fintech checks who the founders are, what the project does, where the money comes from, and which countries and clients it works with. For migrants from Belarus, Russia, and in some cases Ukraine, the checks are stricter. A typical risk is not only refusal at the entry point but also the freezing or closing of an already opened account if documents become outdated or questions arise about the source of funds.

What reduces the risk:

prepare the KYC package in advance: founders’ documents and proof of status, project description, origin of the money, contracts, description of markets and clients *(see the checklist in Appendix 4.4)*;

keep documents and status up to date — expired documents are a frequent reason for an account being closed;

do not rely on a single account: a common practice is a main account plus a backup at another provider;

be ready to confirm the source of funds not once but periodically.

Common mistake: Assuming the account is open “forever” and not keeping a backup option; learning about a freeze at the moment when the money is already urgently needed.

Better approach: Open the account with time to spare, prepare the KYC package in advance, keep a backup provider, and watch the validity dates of documents.

What founders say: Surveyed founders described the banking stage as one of the most problematic. There were refusals to open accounts for holders of Belarusian documents, especially after the war began, as well as the closing of already operating accounts with anti-money-laundering wording. Founders called constant requests to confirm the origin of money a regular part of the work. Many ended up relying on fintech services — Revolut, Paysera, Wise, and Stripe for accepting online payments — considering them a workable and sufficient alternative to a classic bank at the early stage.

Artifact: a completed KYC checklist (Appendix 4.4); chosen main and backup account providers.

4.5 CIS Market: Payments, Sanctions, and Banking Risks

Many founders from Belarus and Ukraine retain ties to the CIS market — clients, contractors, relatives, a former business, payments “from there.” These ties are legal but require care — they intersect with the EU sanctions regime and with banks’ policies.

What is important to understand (reference point for early 2026, the regime is constantly expanding):

The EU is introducing expanding packages of sanctions against Russia and Belarus; they affect, in particular, a number of banks (SWIFT restrictions and full transaction bans), crypto-asset operations, and circumvention schemes — for example, netting through payment agents in third countries. The list of affected banks and measures is updated: another package was adopted in spring 2026.

Any incoming and outgoing payments connected with Russia or Belarus are treated by banks and fintechs as a high-risk area; money arriving from the CIS without a clear and verifiable basis is a frequent trigger for queries, blocks, and account closures.

What is worth checking: through which banks and in what currency payments go, and whether counterparties are affected by sanctions; how the basis of a payment is documented (contract, invoice, purpose); whether the settlement structure — “mirror” accounts, payment intermediaries, netting — creates a risk of breaching sanctions; and how to correctly describe ties to the region to the bank during KYC. These questions are not for solving on your own via forums, but for a lawyer and a compliance specialist.

Common mistake: Making CIS-related payments “the way you’re used to” — without checking counterparties and without preparing supporting documents.

Better approach: Before making payments, check counterparties and bases, gather supporting documents, and when in doubt consult a lawyer specializing in sanctions compliance.

What founders say.: Several surveyed founders noted that after the war began it became a matter of principle for them that the money should flow “into peaceful channels” — into the economy of the host country, with transparent tax payment in Lithuania or Poland. In practice, ties to the CIS market most often showed up through bank checks: accounts were opened and closed precisely because of questions about the origin of funds and documents.

Artifact: a map of the project’s money flows — where payments come from and go to, in which currencies and countries — with notes on risk zones for discussion with a lawyer (sanctions-compliance questions: see Appendix 4.1).

4.6 Money: Where to Look for Resources and Investment

At an early stage, money is needed not for “scaling” but to survive until there is confirmed demand and the first revenue. Each source of money has its own price and its own expectations.

Sources, from simple to complex:

Bootstrap — growth on your own funds or early revenue. Gives maximum control and does not dilute shares; the downside is limited speed and personal financial risk. For many early projects this is the baseline scenario.

FFF (friends, family, fools) — money from your close circle. More accessible than institutional money, but it carries relationship risk: agreements — the amount, whether it is a loan or a share, repayment terms — are better fixed in writing.

Grants and support programs — money without dilution of shares. In Lithuania, the starting point is Startup Lithuania and related programs; for Ukrainian founders there are separate initiatives (for example, Ukreate Hub). In Poland — programs of the PARP agency, as well as initiatives oriented toward Ukrainian founders (for example, the Polish-Ukrainian Startup Bridge). Grants usually require reporting and meeting criteria.

Business angels — private investors entering at an early stage; both countries have angel networks and syndicates. Besides money, they provide contacts and expertise.

Venture capital funds (VC) — for scalable projects with proven momentum. In Lithuania and the Baltic region, early-stage funds operate (for example, Practica Capital, FIRSTPICK, Open Circle Capital, Startup Wise Guys); in Poland there are a number of funds, some backed by public capital. VCs expect rapid-growth potential and, as a rule, a share in the company.

Accelerators — provide small funding and/or a development program; some operate equity-free.

The choice of source depends on the type of project. Venture money is usually unsuitable for a sustainable small business — bootstrap, grants, or bank financing are more logical. Raising money is a separate job: before it, it makes sense to have at least early demand signals and a clear request (amount, term, purpose).

Common mistake: Looking for investment before there are demand signals, and treating venture funds as a universal source of money for any project.

Better approach: Match the source to the type of project and stage: for most early projects, start with bootstrap and grants, and approach angels and VCs with proven momentum and a concrete request.

What founders say: Founders who sought funding in 2022–2023 described the market as cautious: investors wanted to see an already working product, contracts, or revenue, and "money for an idea" was hard to get. Some founders deliberately built the project so that it financed itself, without raising external money. Several noted the usefulness of acceleration programs — not so much for the money as for the structure, learning, and contacts.

Artifact: a list of relevant money sources for your type of project and stage; a draft funding request (amount, term, purpose). A useful related tool is a 6-month startup budget (see Appendix 2.8).

4.7 What Good Progress Looks Like in This Block

By the end of the block you should not have a "perfect" legal construction — you should have something else: clarity and a list of checked questions.

Movement is on track if the person can answer: what their status is and what this status allows regarding business; whether company registration is needed now or later and on what trigger; which business form fits their model and why; where the account will be and whether there is a backup option; what the project's money flows are and where the risk zones are within them; and from which sources they can realistically take money for the coming months.

The main thing is that the founder has a gathered list of questions for a lawyer, an accountant, and a migration consultant, rather than an attempt to solve these questions on their own via forums. A good result for the block is understanding exactly what needs to be checked, in what order, and with whom.

Use the appendix tools as working documents, not as homework:

Appendix 4.1 – *Questions for a Lawyer* helps you arrive at the lawyer with prepared topics and your own draft answers.

Appendix 4.2 – *Questions for an Accountant* helps you come in with an understanding of your business model and tax expectations.

Appendix 4.3 – *Questions for a Migration Consultant* helps you break down your own legalization case and connect it with your business plans.

Appendix 4.4 – *KYC Checklist* helps you assemble the package of documents and explanations in advance.

LT/PL Ecosystem Map – Official Resources

Conclusion

Building a startup is not about doing everything at once or launching as quickly as possible. It is about reducing uncertainty through a structured, evidence-based process. Each stage of this toolkit builds on the previous one: first understanding the problem and validating demand, then testing a solution through an MVP, assembling the right team and support network, and only afterwards addressing legal, financial, and administrative matters. Following this sequence helps founders avoid costly mistakes, use their resources more efficiently, and make decisions based on real market feedback rather than assumptions.

For founders in Lithuania and Poland, this process also means understanding the local ecosystem, identifying relevant communities and support organisations, and recognising when professional advice is needed. The templates, checklists, and practical tools included in the appendix are designed to simplify this journey and provide concrete outputs at every stage instead of abstract plans.

Most importantly, building a successful startup is an iterative process. Every customer interview, MVP test, pilot project, or even an unsuccessful experiment provides valuable information that helps founders improve their ideas and make better decisions. The objective is not to avoid failure but to learn quickly, adapt when necessary, and continue moving forward with greater confidence and stronger evidence.

Your next 48 hours:

Describe your idea in one clear sentence.

Write down the key hypotheses you need to validate.

Identify the first people you should talk to.

Conduct your first customer conversations.

Prepare a list of questions for legal, accounting, or migration specialists if they are relevant to your project.

The goal is not to have everything figured out. The goal is to take the first evidence-based steps and begin learning from real customers rather than assumptions.

Appendix

Appendix 1. Idea Validation

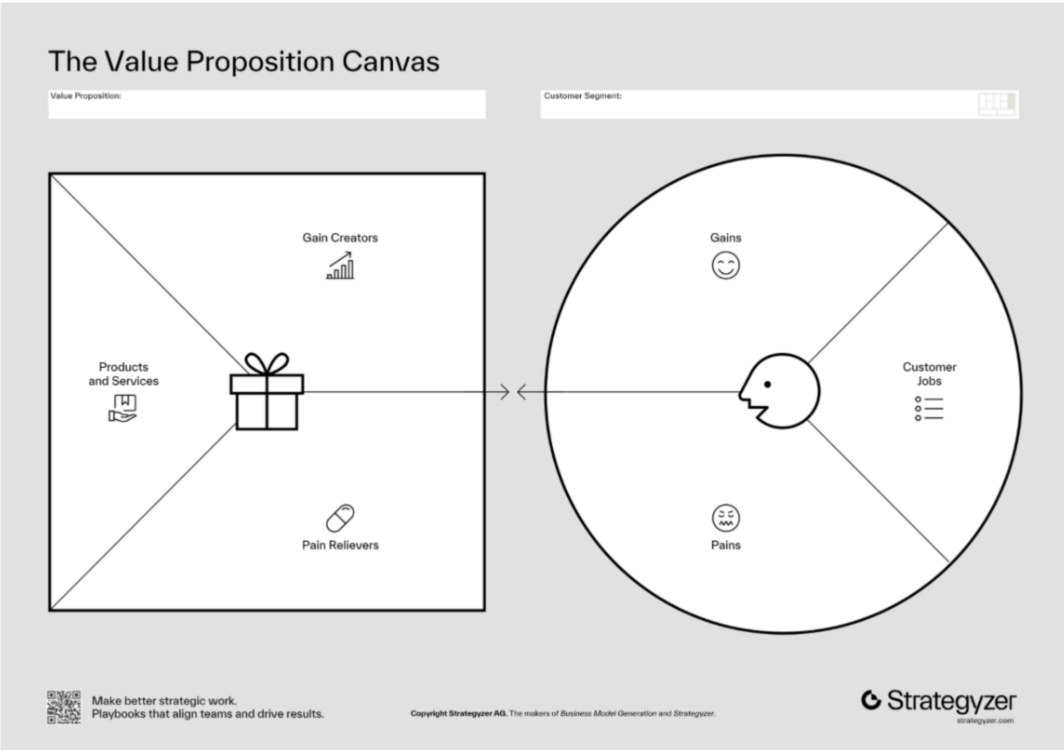
1.1 Картка ідэі

Fill this in before your first interviews.

Customer Who specifically has this problem? Narrow by situation, role, behaviour, or context — not just age or location.	
Problem What is the real friction, cost, delay, or repeated difficulty? Describe it as the customer experiences it — not as the absence of your product.	
Solution Your first guess at how to help. This is a hypothesis, not a fixed product.	
Who pays? List your hypotheses — don't assume the user and the payer are the same. How much do they already spend on this problem? What do they pay now for the current alternative — in money, time, or effort? Rough market size: how many people or companies have this problem?	Hypothesis 1: Hypothesis 2: Hypothesis 3:
Current alternative How does the customer solve this today? What do they use, who do they ask, what do they tolerate?	
One-sentence summary *We believe that [specific customer] has a problem with [specific problem]. We want to test whether [solution] can help, and we still need to figure out who pays.*	

LT/PL check (ICP) Is your first customer in Lithuania, Poland, the diaspora, or somewhere else? What language do you need to reach them? Can you legally accept payment with your current status if someone is ready to pay?	

1.2 <u>Канва каштоўнаснай прапановы</u>
https://www.strategyzer.com/library/the-value-proposition-canvas



1.3 Role Map
Use this when the user and the payer might be different people. Fill it in as you learn — it's normal for several boxes to be empty at the start.

Role	Who is this?	What do they want?	Do you have access to them?
User	Who uses the product day-to-day		
The person with the pain	Who feels the problem most strongly		

Decision-maker	Who says yes or no		
Budget holder	Who controls the money		
Influencer	Who can recommend or block adoption		

Good result: you can name at least one real person for each role, or you know which roles are still unknown and need to be tested.
Common mistake: assuming one person fills all five roles. In B2B, this is rarely true. In B2C, it's more common, but still worth checking.

1.4 Адпаведнасць заснавальніка рынку self-assessment

Go through this before your first interviews. Be honest — gaps are normal. The goal is to know where you need help.

Problem understanding

- ☐ I can describe the problem from direct experience, professional background, or close contact with people who face it
- ☐ I know whether other people have the same problem — not just me
- ☐ I can explain how people solve it today without my product

Access to respondents

- ☐ I can name at least 5–10 specific people to interview in the next two weeks
- ☐ I have at least one channel to reach people outside my immediate network
- ☐ I know what language I need to conduct interviews in

Trust and credibility

- ☐ I can explain why this type of customer would talk to me
- ☐ I know whether trust, credentials, or local language will be a barrier
- ☐ I have at least one warm introduction or community entry point

Local context (LT/PL)

- ☐ I know whether my customer is local, migrant, or global
- ☐ I understand how this problem is currently solved in Lithuania or Poland
- ☐ If I don't know the local context, I have a way to close that gap — through a local partner, advisor, or community insider

Capacity

- ☐ I can realistically spend X hours per week on validation for the next 4–6 weeks
- ☐ My legal and migration status doesn't block me from running interviews or accepting payment if needed
- ☐ I have enough financial runway to test before expecting revenue

What to do with the gaps?
If you answered no to several questions in one area, don't ignore it. Options:

- Narrow the customer segment to one you can actually reach
- Find a local partner or co-founder who closes the gap
- Start with a smaller, more focused test
- Postpone paid tests until legal or migration questions are resolved
- Change the market to one you can access more directly

1.5
If you want to go deeper on hypothesis mapping and customer interviews, these free resources are worth looking at.
Вывучэнне кліентаў і праверка гіпотэз(https://leanpivot.ai/playbook-02-customer-discovery/) — covers assumption mapping, interview techniques, and experiment design.
Customer Discovery Interview Template
(https://www.ideaplan.io/templates/customer-discovery-template) — interview template with pre-call assumptions and notes structure.

Further reading: The Mom Test (https://www.momtestbook.com/) by Rob Fitzpatrick — a practical guide on how to talk to customers without getting misleading feedback.

1.6 Стартап-праект: Competitive Analysis Template
(https://startupproject.org/templates/competitive-analysis/) — free Excel and Google Sheets template with a competitor overview table, feature comparison matrix, positioning map, and SWOT summary.

1.7 Demand signals table
Fill in after each interview. One row per respondent.

	Respondent type	Problem described in detail?	Current alternative	Signal level (weak/ medium/ strong)	Evidence	Can they decide or pay?	Next step agreed	Local blockers (language, VAT, status)
1								
2								
3								

What to look for:

- Same signal level across 3+ similar respondents → pattern worth acting on
- Medium signals only → keep interviewing, don't build yet
- Strong signals from people who can't actually pay or decide → find the right person
- All signals from diaspora network → test with local customers before concluding

Appendix 2. MVP and First Users

Appendix 2.1 MVP Plan

Fill in one row per hypothesis you want to test — be specific about what you're testing, how, and by when, so you can clearly judge the result once the deadline passes.

Hypothesis	What Are We Testing?	MVP Format	Where Do We Find Users?	Success Metric	Deadline	Result

Appendix 2.2 MVP Tools & Resources

This table lists ready-to-use no-code and AI tools for building an MVP quickly — pick the row that matches your product type and use the tool in the "Best For" column as your starting point.

Tool	**Purpose**	**Best For**
Tilda / Webflow	Landing page and simple website	Demand validation
Figma	Mockups and interactive demo	SaaS / marketplace
Notion / Airtable	Customer database, applications, pipeline	Manual MVP
Bubble / Wappler	MVP web platform	Early-stage product
Bolt.new / Lovable	AI-generated interface	Rapid prototype
Supabase / Xano	Backend and databases	More complex product

Appendix 2.3 Pilot Proposal Template

Before using this template, it is recommended to have at least a Medium or Strong demand signal identified in Appendix 1.7 (Demand Signals Table). Pilot projects should be used to validate solutions that have already demonstrated initial user interest rather than to test completely unvalidated ideas.

Section	**What to Include**
Problem	What customer problem are you solving?
What Are We Testing?	Which product, service, or MVP is being tested?
Pilot Duration	Usually 2–8 weeks.
Customer Benefits	What the customer receives (e.g., free access, setup, support).
Founder Benefits	What the founder receives (e.g., feedback, usage data, case study).
Success Criteria	What is considered a successful outcome?

Next Step	What happens after the pilot ends?

Appendix 2.4 Pipeline

Before filling in the pipeline, make sure you have a clear target audience and an initial list of potential users or organizations to contact.

Company / Name	**Source**	**Status**	**Last Contact**	**Next Action**	**Customer's Main Pain Point**	**Result**
Who is this contact?	Where did the contact come from?	Outreach, Interview, Demo, Pilot/Test, Success, Archive	Date of the last message or call.	Example: "Send Figma demo by 28.05".	Example: "No suitable HR software".	Example: "Agreed to a pilot project"

Appendix 2.5 Application Landing Page Template

Use this structure to write the copy for your MVP landing page, filling in one short answer per section so a visitor understands the problem, the solution, and what to do next.

Section	What to Include
Headline	What problem does the product solve?
Subheadline	Who is the product for and what is the main benefit?
Problem	What is currently inconvenient, expensive, or time-consuming?
Solution	How does the product simplify or solve the problem?
CTA Button	"Get Early Access", "Book a Demo".
Application Form	Name, email, company (minimum number of fields).
Social Proof	Testimonials, waitlist, pilot users.
FAQ	3–5 short questions.

Appendix 2.6 Pitch Deck Outline

Use this as a slide-by-slide checklist for your pitch deck, filling in each row with the core message that slide should communicate.

Slide	**What Should Be Included**

Title	Project name and a one-sentence description.
Team	Who the founders are and why they are building this project.
Problem	Main customer problem and why it matters.
Solution	How the product solves the problem.
Product / Demo	Screenshot of the MVP, Figma prototype, or workflow.
Market	Market size and target audience.
Business Model	How the project generates revenue.
Competition	How the product differs from alternatives.
Traction	Customer interviews, waitlist, pilots, pre-orders.
Go-to-Market	Where and how you acquire your first users.
Financials / Runway	Burn rate, runway, MVP budget.
Ask	How much funding is needed and how it will be used.

Appendix 2.7 Startup Budget

StartUp Budget calculator

The Startup Budget Calculator is designed to help early-stage founders estimate the resources required to validate a business idea and assess the financial sustainability of their project. The calculator automatically estimates total expenses, net burn rate, runway, and compares different financial scenarios.

How to Use the Calculator

1. **Enter Available Cash** – specify the amount of money currently available for the project.
2. **Estimate Monthly Revenue** – enter expected monthly income from customers, subscriptions, pilot projects, or other sources.
3. **Complete the Expense Categories** – fill in estimated costs for product development, software and tools, marketing, legal and accounting services, pilot projects, networking activities, founder expenses, and other relevant costs.
4. **Review Financial Metrics** – the calculator automatically computes:
    - **Total Monthly Expenses**
    - **Net Burn Rate** (Monthly Expenses – Monthly Revenue)
    - **Runway** (Available Cash ÷ Net Burn Rate)
5. **Compare Scenarios** – use the pessimistic, realistic, and optimistic sections to evaluate how different revenue assumptions affect the project’s financial sustainability.

Appendix 2.8 Continue / змена напрамку/ Stop

Go through each row and mark which column best matches your current results — if most rows point to the same column, that's your signal for whether to continue, pivot, or stop.

Situation	Continue	Pivot	Stop
User Response	Users return, agree to demos or pilots.	There is interest, but from a different audience or for a different feature.	Users do not return and do not see value.
MVP Usage	The MVP is tested regularly.	Users only use one feature of the product.	Users try the MVP once and stop using it.
Willingness to Pay	There are pre-orders, payments, or pilot discussions.	Users want the product but are not willing to pay under the current model.	No willingness to pay after several iterations.
Customer Interviews	The same problem repeatedly appears across different users.	The problem exists, but for a different segment.	The problem is not important enough for users.
Growth / Traction	Repeat users and referrals appear.	The acquisition channel or ICP need to be changed.	No traction despite outreach and testing.
Runway	There is enough time and resources to continue testing.	A strategy change is required to preserve runway.	Runway is running out without signs of PMF.

Appendix 2.9 Project Closure Checklist

1. Conduct a financial review: calculate available cash (runway), assess remaining funds, debts, and obligations to employees, contractors, customers, and investors.
2. Fulfill obligations to the team and contractors: pay final salaries, compensate completed work, and formally end cooperation agreements.
3. Where possible, refund customer prepayments for unfulfilled services, subscriptions, or pilot projects to reduce reputational and legal risks.
4. Inform investors and partners about the project closure and provide an honest post-mortem update explaining the reasons for closure, results achieved, and key lessons learned.
5. If the project is registered as a legal entity, close bank accounts, terminate contracts, complete accounting procedures, submit final reports, and, if necessary, go through the company liquidation process.
6. Document key takeaways: identify which hypotheses were not validated, what mistakes were made, and which insights can be applied to future projects.

Appendix 3. Team, Roles and Agreements

Appendix 3.1 — Team Role Map

What this tool helps you decide

Use this tool when you feel that your project needs “someone else”, but you are not sure who exactly. It helps you separate people from responsibilities.

Before you fill it in

Think only about the next 1–3 months.
Write responsibilities, not job titles.
One person can own several responsibilities.
“Empty” or “nobody” is a useful answer: it shows a real gap.

Tiny example

Do not write: *“marketing person”.*
Write: *“someone needs to test 2–3 messages with potential customers and see which one works.”*

Your worksheet

What needs to be done?	Why is this important in the next 1–3 months?	Who is responsible now?	Is this covered?	What should happen next?
			Yes/partly/no	
			Yes/partly/no	
			Yes/partly/no	
			Yes/partly/no	
			Yes/partly/no	
			Yes/partly/no	

How to know it worked

You should be able to see which parts of the project depend on nobody, too many people, or the wrong person.

Appendix 3.2 — Skills Gap Matrix

What this tool helps you decide

Use this tool after the Role Map. It helps you understand what kind of help you actually need: a co-founder, contractor, mentor, advisor, community, local specialist or professional support.

The goal is to turn a vague feeling — “we need someone” — into a clear next step: what is missing, what kind of support can cover it, where to search and what to do first.

Before you fill it in

Be specific. Do not write “tech person” or “business person”.
Describe the missing skill, access, knowledge or capacity.
Add where you will search, not only what you need.
Plan a small first step before making a big commitment.

Tiny example

Do not write: *“we need someone local”.*
Write: *“we need someone who understands how Lithuanian small businesses choose service providers.”*

Your worksheet

What is missing?	What problem does this create?	How urgent is it?	What kind of help could cover it?	Where can we look?	First small step
		Now/soon/ later	Co-founder / contractor / mentor / advisor / community / specialist		
		Now/soon/ later	Co-founder / contractor / mentor / advisor / community / specialist		
		Now/soon/ later	Co-founder / contractor / mentor / advisor / community / specialist		
		Now/soon/ later	Co-founder / contractor / mentor / advisor / community / specialist		

		Now/soon/ later	Co-founder / contractor / mentor / advisor / community / specialist		

Search channel ideas

Use the “Where can we look?” column as a mini search plan. For each important gap, write where you will search for this kind of support.

Possible channels:

Startup event, BNI-style business network, LinkedIn, diaspora group, local directory, freelancer platform, accountant or lawyer referral, accelerator, university network, coworking space, professional association, founder community, local business owner recommendation.

Tiny search example

Gap: *local marketing in Lithuania.*
Type of help: *contractor or advisor.*
Where to search: *founder referral, BNI, LinkedIn, Paslaugos.lt.*
First small step: *ask three founders for recommendations and give one person a small test task.*

How to know it worked

You should no longer have a vague answer like “find someone”. You should have a specific next step, for example: “Ask three founders for a local accountant recommendation”, “message five Polish-speaking sales people on LinkedIn” or “find two local contractors and test them with a small task.”

Appendix 3.3 — Founder Agreements Table

What this tool helps you decide

Use this tool to write down early agreements between founders in simple words. This is not a legal document. It helps the team have a serious conversation before going to a lawyer or specialist.

Before you fill it in

Write normal human language.
It is okay to write “not decided yet”.
Do not hide uncomfortable topics.
If you disagree, write the disagreement down.
Focus on what the team thinks and agrees now. Specialist questions come later in **Appendix 3.4**.

Part A — Topics to discuss

Topic	Discussed?	Still unclear or sensitive?

Who is a founder	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no
Roles and responsibilities	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no
Time commitment	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no
Money contribution	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no
Salary expectations	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no
Equity expectations	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no
Decision-making	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no
Founder leaving	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no
Conflict	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no
Project closing	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no
Ownership of work	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no
Contractors	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no

Part B — Agreement notes

Topic	What do we agree on now?	What is still unclear or uncomfortable?	Who will follow up?

Tiny example

Topic: *time commitment.*
Agreement: *"One founder can work 20 hours/week, another can work weekends only for the next two months."*
Unclear: *"We have not decided how this affects equity."*
Follow-up: *"Founder 1 will add this to Appendix 3.4 as a question for the lawyer."*

How to know it worked

You should have fewer hidden assumptions. The goal is not to agree on everything immediately. The goal is to see what is agreed, what is not agreed, and what needs follow-up.

Appendix 3.4 — Pre-Lawyer Founder Agreement Checklist

What this tool helps you decide

Use this tool after **Appendix 3.3**. It helps you see which team agreements should be formalised, which topics are still unclear, and which questions should be taken to a lawyer, accountant, tax advisor or migration specialist.

This is not a contract template. Do not repeat all your team answers here. Use it to prepare for a specialist conversation.

Before you use it

Start from **Appendix 3.3**.
Mark only what needs formalisation, review or specialist input.
If you do not understand a topic, mark it as "ask".
Bring your open questions to the relevant specialist.

Checklist

Topic to formalise or check	Is it discussed in Appendix 3.3?	Needs specialist review?	Question for lawyer / specialist
Founder roles and responsibilities	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no / ask	
Time commitment	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no / ask	
Equity split	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no / ask	
Vesting	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no / ask	
Founder leaves early	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no / ask	
Founder stops contributing	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no / ask	
Decision-making and deadlock	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no / ask	
Money contributions	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no / ask	
Salary or compensation	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no / ask	
Work created before registration	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no / ask	
Contractor work and transfer of rights	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no / ask	
Intellectual property ownership	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no / ask	

Confidentiality	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no / ask	
Personal data responsibility	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no / ask	
Cross-border founders or contractors	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no / ask	
Migration or work-status issues	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no / ask	
Project closing	Yes / no / partly	Yes / no / ask	

Tiny example

Topic: *vesting.*
Discussed in Appendix 3.3: *partly.*
Needs specialist review: *ask.*
Question: *“We want shares to depend on continued contribution. What vesting structure is appropriate for our company and country?”*

Beginner-friendly terms

Equity means ownership in the company.

Vesting means a person earns shares over time or after agreed conditions.

Intellectual property means valuable project materials: code, design, brand, content, domain, data, workflows and other work.

How to know it worked

You should be able to come to a lawyer or specialist with specific questions, not just “we need a founder agreement”.

Appendix 3.5 — Intellectual Property and Ownership Checklist

What this tool helps you decide

Use this tool to check who owns the materials created for the project.

At the early stage, intellectual property is often very practical: who owns the code, design, brand, domain, content, accounts, data and contractor work?

Before you fill it in

Include materials made by founders, friends, contractors and agencies.
Include materials created before company registration.
Include accounts and access, not only files.
If you are not sure, write “unclear”.

Materials to think about

Code, website, design, logo, brand name, domain, social media accounts, texts, pitch deck, photos, customer interview notes, lead list, customer database, no-code workflows, artificial intelligence prompts, automations, advertising materials, contractor work, product data, analytics.

Your inventory

What exists?	Who created it?	Who controls access now?	Is ownership clear?	What should we do next?
			Yes / no / unclear	
			Yes / no / unclear	
			Yes / no / unclear	
			Yes / no / unclear	
			Yes / no / unclear	
			Yes / no / unclear	

Tiny example

Item: *logo.*
Created by: *freelance designer.*
Access: *founder has files.*
Ownership: *unclear.*
Next step: *check whether the agreement transfers ownership, not only final files.*

How to know it worked

You should know what already exists, who controls it, what ownership is unclear, and what should be checked before the project grows.

Appendix 4. LT/PL Infrastructure, Money, and Administrative Matters

Appendix 4.1 — Questions for a Lawyer

How this tool helps

This checklist helps you come to a lawyer with prepared topics and your own draft answers, rather than with a request to "tell me what to do." That way the conversation is faster, cheaper, and more useful, and the lawyer answers specific questions instead of explaining basics.

Before you fill it in

- This is not a consultation or a contract template — it is preparation for a conversation.
- Fill it in plain language, as a note to yourself.
- If you have no understanding of a topic, mark it "ask."
- Topics can be expanded to fit your project.

Checklist

Topic	Status	Notes
Business form for our model and plans	discussed / partly / ask	
Registration: documents, deadlines, costs, local address	discussed / partly / ask	
Agreements between founders	discussed / partly / ask	
Agreements with contractors	discussed / partly / ask	
Agreements with first clients	discussed / partly / ask	
IP: code, design, brand, domain — who owns them	discussed / partly / ask	
Shares, vesting, founder exit	discussed / partly / ask	
GDPR and personal data protection	discussed / partly / ask	
Licenses and special permits	discussed / partly / ask	
Payments and counterparties linked to the CIS market (sanctions compliance)	discussed / partly / ask	
Investment terms (SAFE, loan, equity)	discussed / partly / ask	
Closing the company	discussed / partly / ask	

How to know it worked

You have a document that lets you walk through all the topics with a lawyer in a single conversation. For each topic it is clear whether there is a decision, what is unclear, which documents are needed, and in what order. The lawyer helps you close specific gaps rather than explain basics.

Appendix 4.2 — Questions for an Accountant

How this tool helps

It helps you come to an accountant with an understanding of your business model and tax expectations, rather than choosing a tax regime based on someone else's experience. At an early stage, a mistake with the regime and VAT costs more than an hour of consultation.

Checklist

Topic	Status	Notes
Tax regime for my model and turnover	discussed / partly / ask	
Company taxes and founder taxes	discussed / partly / ask	
Paying yourself: dividends, salary, contract	discussed / partly / ask	
VAT: when it is mandatory, how to operate	discussed / partly / ask	
Accounting for expenses and supporting documents	discussed / partly / ask	
Reporting: what and by when	discussed / partly / ask	
Paying contractors, including from other countries	discussed / partly / ask	
Income from clients in other countries; multi-currency	discussed / partly / ask	
Cost of accounting services and what it includes	discussed / partly / ask	
Benefits for new and small companies	discussed / partly / ask	

Appendix 4.3 — Questions for a Migration Consultant

How this tool helps

It helps you break down your own legalization case and connect it with your business plans. Generic information on government websites often describes the "standard case"; this checklist helps you write down how you differ from the standard and come with a list of specific questions.

Checklist

Topic	Status	Notes
What my current status allows regarding business	discussed / partly / ask	
A suitable residence-permit basis for my situation	discussed / partly / ask	
Documents, deadlines, costs for the chosen route	discussed / partly / ask	
Term of the first permit and renewal conditions	discussed / partly / ask	
Link between status and company registration: which comes first	discussed / partly / ask	
What happens to status if the project changes or stops	discussed / partly / ask	
Effect of my status on family members	discussed / partly / ask	
Different citizenships and statuses among founders	discussed / partly / ask	

Topic	Status	Notes
Official resources and institutions responsible for my question	discussed / partly / ask	

How to know it worked

You have a chosen legalization route with an understanding of timelines, costs, and renewal conditions. Company registration and the project plan are aligned with your status rather than contradicting it.

Appendix 4.4 — KYC Checklist

How this tool helps

A KYC check is a mandatory step when opening an account and a recurring procedure afterwards. This checklist helps you assemble the package of documents and explanations in advance, so you don't get a refusal or a freeze because something was missing. For founders from Belarus and Ukraine, preparation is especially important — the checks are stricter.

Before you fill it in

- Gather documents and explanations in advance, before submitting the application.
- If you don't have an answer yet, that's fine — mark it "to prepare."
- Keep supporting documents for each item (contract, invoice, statement).
- Update the checklist when your status or documents change.

Checklist

What is needed	Have it?	Where to get it / from whom	What to prepare
ID documents for all founders	yes / partly / no		
Proof of founders' residence status	yes / partly / no		
Company registration documents or a registration plan	yes / partly / no		
Project description: what we do, who the clients are, in which markets	yes / partly / no		
Business model: where the money comes from	yes / partly / no		
Origin of funds (share capital, savings, income, loan, investment)	yes / partly / no		
Expected turnover, settlement currencies	yes / partly / no		
Main countries of counterparties	yes / partly / no		
Client and contractor contracts, invoices (if any)	yes / partly / no		
Contact details and local address	yes / partly / no		

What is needed	Have it?	Where to get it / from whom	What to prepare
Explanation of CIS-market ties and supporting documents	yes / partly / no		

Appendix: LT/PL Ecosystem Map

Check current activity before visiting — communities and events change fast.

Lithuania

Accelerators & programmes

Name	What it is	Language	Link
Startup Lithuania	National ecosystem hub: events, Startup Visa, grants, startup database	EN	startuplithuania.com
Startup Wise Guys	B2B SaaS/Fintech accelerator, ~€100k investment, 400+ portfolio	EN	startupwiseguys.com
Baltic Sandbox Ventures	B2B SaaS, fintech, Eastern teams going West	EN	Bsv.venture
FIRSTPICK	Fast VC + accelerator for early Baltic tech startups	EN	firstpick.vc
Ukreate Hub	Specifically for Ukrainian founders and women entrepreneurs in Lithuania	UK/EN	ukreatehub.eu

Coworking

Name	What it is	Language	Link
Tech Zity / Tech Park	Largest startup campus in the Baltics, 5 locations in Vilnius + startup meetups	EN	techzity.com
Rockit Vilnius	Fintech-focused coworking, bootcamps, startup events	EN	rockitvilnius.com
Workland	Premium coworking, 6 locations in Lithuania, day pass from €25	EN	wrkland.com
Talent Garden Vilnius	Digital innovation coworking, 230+ residents, day pass from €25	EN	talentgarden.org

Spaces	International coworking network with flexible offices, meeting rooms, business services, and networking events.	EN	spacesworks.com

Regular events & networking

Name	What it is	Language	Link
Startup Meetup Vilnius	Monthly, Tech Park — 5 Open Mic pitches + networking	EN	startuplithuania.com/even
Startup Fair	Annual flagship conference, 2,000+ people, 430+ investors, Pitch Battle	EN	startupfair.lt

Latvia

Name	What it is	Language	Link
TechChill	Regional conference in Riga, 2,500 attendees, 250+ investors	EN	techchill.co

Hackathons

Name	What it is	Language	Link
Hack4Vilnius	Annual, October, €6,000 prize pool, city challenges	EN/LT	hack4vilnius.lt
European Defense Tech Hackathon – Vilnius	Defence-tech hackathon with mentoring, networking, and investor pitching opportunities.	EN/LT	eurodefense.tech/

Diaspora communities & migrant resources

Name	What it is	Language	Link
Ukreate Hub	Programmes, grants, clusters for Ukrainians in Lithuania	UK/EN	ukreatehub.eu

International House Vilnius	One-stop for migrants: migration, taxes, business setup, communities	EN/RU/UK/LT	ihvilnius.lt
Razam	Belarusian civil support organisation in Lithuania	RU/BY	Razam (Instagram, Telegram, Facebook)

Business networks & referrals

Name	What it is	Language	Link
BNI Lithuania	Business networking and referral network; useful for finding local service providers, entrepreneurs, contractors and trusted recommendations	LT/EN	bni.lt

Contractor & service provider search

Name	What it is	Language	Link
Paslaugos.lt	Marketplace for local services and contractors; useful for practical tasks and service providers	LT	paslaugos.lt
Rekvizitai.lt	Lithuanian company directory; useful for checking companies and service providers	LT/EN	rekvizitai.vz.lt/en

Legal templates & official resources

Name	What it is	Language	Link
Startup Lithuania Legal Documents	Model legal documents for startups: incorporation, shareholders' agreement, IP assignment, NDA, option agreement, privacy policy	EN	startuplithuania.com/legal-documents
State Data Protection Inspectorate	Official data protection authority; GDPR guidance and information	LT/EN	vdai.lrv.lt/en

Resources for Finding First Users

B2B

Name	**What it is**	**Link**

LinkedIn	Professional networking platform for direct outreach to decision-makers	LinkedIn
Rekvizitai.lt	Lithuanian company database for identifying target companies	rekvizitai.vz.lt
Paslaugos.lt	Business services marketplace for finding small business customers	paslaugos.lt
Startup Lithuania Events	Startup meetups and networking events for customer discovery and pilot opportunities	startuplithuania.com/events
LiMA (Lithuanian Marketing Association)	Professional marketing community with access to potential B2B users	lima.lt

B2C

Name	What it is	Link
Skelbiu.lt	Largest Lithuanian classifieds platform for testing demand and MVP offers	skelbiu.lt
Naujamiesčio Revoliucija	Large Vilnius neighbourhood community for testing local products and services	facebook.com
Užupio Bendruomenė	Local community suitable for customer interviews and feedback	facebook.com
Pilaitės Bendruomenė	Active residential community with potential B2C users	facebook.com
Ieškau / Rekomenduoju Vilniuje	Popular recommendation community for finding testers and collecting feedback	facebook.com
r/lithuania	Large Lithuanian online community for feedback and validation	reddit.com

Official Resources

Resource	What you can do or check there	Site
Startup Lithuania / Innovation Agency	Ecosystem, Startup Visa, support programs, learning materials	startuplithuania.com
Migration Department	Residence permits, residence statuses, the MIGRIS system	migracija.lt
Registrų centras	Register of legal entities, company registration	registrucentras.lt
State Tax Inspectorate (VMI)	Taxes, VAT registration	vmi.lt

Resource	What you can do or check there	Site
Sodra	Social contributions	sodra.lt
State Data Protection Inspectorate (VDAI)	GDPR matters	vdai.lrv.lt
International House Vilnius	One-stop for migrants: migration, taxes, opening a business	ihvilnius.lt

Poland

Accelerators & programmes

Name	What it is	City	Language	Link
Polish-Ukrainian Startup Bridge	Up to 100,000 PLN non-equity for UA-founded startups, mentoring	Warsaw	EN/UK	startupbridge.eu
Imaguru Warsaw	BY-founded hub, accelerator, coworking, Google for Startups partner	Warsaw	EN/RU	imaguru.pl
Google for Startups Campus	Founders at Campus programme, up to $25k cloud credits	Warsaw	EN	startup.google.com/campus/warsaw
Google Ukraine Support Fund	$100k grants + up to $350k cloud credits for UA startups	Warsaw	EN	startup.google.com/programs/ukraine-support-fund
ReaktorX	$50K for 5%, U25 CEE first-time founders	Warsaw	EN	reaktorx.com
Huge Thing / Startup Booster	Equity-free pre-acceleration, PARP-funded	Warsaw/Poznań	EN/PL	hugething.vc
Female Startup Pre-accelerator	$10k grants for Polish and Ukrainian women founders	Warsaw	EN	hugething.vc
Founder Institute Warsaw	Pre-seed accelerator, global network, 200+ cities	Warsaw	EN	fi.co

Hubraum Kraków	Deutsche Telekom incubator, 5G/IoT/AI/XR, equity-free	Kraków	EN	hubraum.com
Space3ac Poland Prize	Up to €65k equity-free, 80h mentoring, IoT/AI/PropTech	Gdańsk	EN	polandprize.space3.ac

Ecosystem hubs & organisations

Name	What it is	City	Language	Link
Startup Poland	Startup ecosystem organisation and reference point for Polish startup community, reports and policy work	Poland-wide	EN/PL	startuppoland.org/en

Coworking

Name	What it is	City	Link
Imaguru Warsaw	Coworking + podcast studio + events, main BY hub	Warsaw	imaguru.pl
Google Campus Warsaw	Open café + events during public programmes	Warsaw	startup.google.com/campus/wars aw
WeWork Warsaw	Multiple locations	Warsaw	wework.com
O4 by Olivia Business Centre	Largest coworking in Poland	Gdańsk	oliviacentre.com
Mindspace	Premium coworking with startup events and international community.	Warsaw	mindspace.me
shire	Flexible offices and coworking for startups and small businesses.	Warsaw	shire.pl

Regular events & networking

Name	What it is	City	Language	Link
Venture Café Thursday Gathering	Free, every two weeks, CIC — best open entry point in Warsaw	Warsaw	EN	venturecafewarsaw.org
AI Tinkerers Warsaw	Monthly meetups + hackathons for AI builders	Warsaw	EN	warsaw.aitinkerers.org
Warsaw–Kyiv Tech Hub	Annual, November — UA startups pitch to investors	Warsaw	EN/UK	startupbridge.eu
EU-Ukraine Tech Summit	Annual, April, Google Campus — 200+ participants	Warsaw	EN	eu-ukrainetechsummit.com
Imaguru Demo Day	Annual, December — 10 startups × 10 investors	Warsaw	EN/RU	imaguru.pl

Hackathons

Name	What it is	City	Language	Link
HackYeah	Europe's largest on-site hackathon, 3,000+ participants, 24h	Kraków	EN	hackyeah.pl
EUDIS Defence Hackathon	Spring + Autumn, open to EU and Ukraine residents	Kraków	EN	eudis-hackathon.eu
NATO Innovation Challenge	Annual, open to Ukrainians since 2025		EN	innovationhub-act.org/what-we-do/events/innovation-challenge

Diaspora communities & chats

Name	What it is	Language	Link
Ū Hub	Main Belarusian startup community in Poland, ~2,800 members	RU	t.me/uhub_by
Ū Hub jobs	Job board for BY tech community in Poland	RU	t.me/uhubitjobs
Polish-Ukrainian Startup Bridge	Community + acceleration for UA founders	EN/UK	startupbridge.eu
Ukrainian House Warsaw	Support centre, labour activation, events for Ukrainians	UK/PL	ukrainskidom.pl
Diia.City United	Association of Ukrainian tech companies, 110+ members	UK/EN	diiacityunited.org
Imaguru Warsaw community	Events and network for BY/UA founders	EN/RU	imaguru.pl
Ukrainian IT Communities	Open catalogue of UA IT communities and Telegram groups	UK	github.com/nikit0ns/Ukrainian_IT_Communities

Business networks & referrals

Name	What it is	City	Language	Link
BNI Polska	Business networking and referral network; useful for finding local business contacts, service providers and recommendations	Poland-wide	PL	bnipolska.pl

Contractor & service provider search

Name	What it is	City	Language	Link

ALEO	Polish company database; useful for searching and checking companies and service providers	Poland-wide	PL	aleo.com/pl
Useme	Freelance and remote contractor platform; useful for design, development, marketing, translation and business support	Poland-wide / remote	EN/PL	useme.com/en

Legal templates & official resources

Name	What it is	Language	Link
Innovations Hub Foundation Documents	Legal templates and practical guides for the Polish startup ecosystem	EN/PL	innovationshub.pl/en/documents
Personal Data Protection Office	Official data protection authority; GDPR information and guidance	PL/EN	uodo.gov.pl/en

Resources for finding first users

B2B

Name	What it is	Link
LinkedIn	Professional networking platform for direct outreach to decision-makers and first B2B interviews	LinkedIn
DMSales.	Lead generation platform	dmsales.com
Panorama Firm	Polish business directory; useful for finding target companies and local service providers	panoramafirm.pl
Venture Cafe Warsaw	Open startup networking community; useful for customer discovery and founder networking	venturecafewarsaw.org
Infoshare	Tech and startup conference in Poland; useful for meeting companies, founders and potential partners	infoshare.pl
Wolves Summit	Startup and investor networking event; useful for B2B contacts, pilots and partnerships	wolvessummit.com

B2C

Name	What it is	Link

OLX.pl	Largest Polish marketplace platform; useful for testing demand, pilot offers and local services	olx.pl
Spotted Warszawa	Local Facebook community; useful for finding first users and collecting feedback	facebook.com/
Spotted Kraków	Local Facebook community for testing local services and products	facebook.com
Warszawa Lokalnie	Warsaw local community; useful for MVP testing and customer interviews	facebook.com/
Wykop.pl	Polish online community; useful for feedback on digital, AI and tech products	wykop.pl
AI Tinkerers Warsaw	AI community for MVP testing, feedback and networking	warsaw.aitinkerers.org

official Resources

Resource	What you can do or check there	Site
biznes.gov.pl	Business registration and operation, the CEIDG register	biznes.gov.pl
gov.pl	State portal, general information	gov.pl
KRS	National Court Register (companies)	ekrs.ms.gov.pl
podatki.gov.pl	Tax information and declarations	podatki.gov.pl
ZUS	Social contributions	zus.pl
UODO**ekrs.ms.gov.pl**.	Personal Data Protection Office, GDPR	uodo.gov.pl
PARP	Entrepreneur support programs	parp.gov.pl
UdSC	Office for Foreigners, statuses and residence permits	udsc.gov.pl

External Support: Mentors, Specialists & Professional Services

Lithuania

Type of support	Organisation / Platform	Useful for	Website
Government support	Innovation Agency Lithuania	Grants, startup funding, innovation programmes, mentoring and internationalisation support.	inovacijuagentura.lt
Venture capital	LT VCA	Connections with venture capital funds, mentor-investors and the Lithuanian investment ecosystem.	ltvca.lt

Accelerator	Plug and Play Lithuania	International accelerator with global mentors, corporate partnerships and startup programmes.	plugandplaytechcenter.com
Founder community	Vilnius Founders	Networking events, founder community, peer learning and investor introductions.	vilniusfounders.com
Business mentors	XMentor Pro	Online mentoring sessions with experienced founders and business advisors.	xmentor.pro
Career & business mentors	iDialogue	Mentors in marketing, HR, leadership and business development.	idialogue.lt
Innovation mentors	INNO HUB Lithuania	Product validation, investment readiness and business scaling.	innohub.lt
Executive mentoring	LT Big Brother	Mentorship from senior executives and international business leaders.	ltbigbrother.com
Freelancers	Upwork	Developers, designers, marketers and specialists for MVP development.	upwork.com
Local freelancers	Freelanceriai.lt	Lithuanian developers, designers and digital specialists.	freelanceriai.lt
Legal services	Sorainen	Startup incorporation, contracts, IP and GDPR support.	sorainen.com
Legal services	Ellex Valiunas	Legal support for startups, fundraising and corporate matters.	ellex.legal
Legal services	Cobalt	Legal advice on company formation, investment and intellectual property.	cobalt.legal

Poland

Type of support	**Organisation / Platform**	**Useful for**	**Website**
Mentors & Business Angels	Cobin Angels	Business angels, strategic mentoring (smart money) and investor network.	cobinangels.com
Mentors & Incubator	Startup Hub Poland	Mentoring, market entry support and startup programmes for international founders.	startuphub.pl

Mentorship	Youth Business Poland	Long-term mentoring programmes for entrepreneurs and startups.	bp.org.pl
Startup community	Vestbee	Connect with startups, mentors and investors across Central & Eastern Europe.	vestbee.com
Startup community	Venture Café Warsaw	Networking events, founder community and ecosystem connections.	venturecafewarsaw.org
Business mentors	XMentor Pro	Online mentoring sessions with founders and business advisors.	xmentor.pro
Freelancers	Upwork	Developers, designers, marketers and specialists for MVP development.	upwork.com
Legal services	LAWMORE	VC, IP, GDPR, investment rounds and startup legal support.	lawmore.pl
Legal services	Wardyński & Partners	Corporate, IP and startup legal services.	wardynski.com.pl
Accounting	Grant Thornton Poland	Accounting, tax advisory and startup financial services.	grantthornton.pl
Accounting	BDO Poland	Accounting, audit and tax advisory for startups.	bdo.pl
Accounting	inFakt	Online accounting platform for startups and freelancers.	infakt.pl
Business incubator	Moja Firma	Business incubation and operational support for founders.	moja-firma.org
Business incubator	English Wizards	Business incubator and support for international entrepreneurs.	englishwizards.org
Hiring	No Fluff Jobs	Hiring developers and technology professionals.	nofluffjobs.com
Hiring	Just Join IT	Recruiting software engineers and IT specialists.	justjoin.it
Company verification	KRS	Verify registered companies and legal entities in Poland.	ekrs.ms.gov.pl

BISEB School of Economics & Business

This toolkit was created by students of the BA in Business Economics program at BISEB School of Economics and Business (Vilnius, Lithuania) during the Spring 2026 semester as part of the pilot Business Clinic course. Business Clinic is a practice-based educational initiative where students, under the supervision of experienced mentors and business professionals, work on real entrepreneurial challenges and develop practical resources for entrepreneurs. The BISEB business clinic is primarily aimed at supporting entrepreneurs from Belarus and Ukraine with migration experience in Lithuania and Poland.

The guide provides answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ) relevant to entrepreneurs starting or developing a business in Lithuania and Poland. The information included herein is based on insights obtained through customer development interviews, practical project work, and publicly available sources. All materials were prepared and reviewed under the supervision of experienced mentors.

This toolkit is part of a series developed within the pilot Business Clinic project and includes:

- How to start a business in Poland
- How to start a business in Lithuania
- Startup toolkit for Belarusian and Ukrainian founders
- Fundraising toolkit

All toolkits are available in Belarusian, Ukrainian, and English. To access other toolkits in the series, please visit the Business Clinic project page: https://www.biseb.school/business-clinic.

The implementation of the pilot Business Clinic course was made possible with the support of The German Marshall Fund of the United States and co-funding from the European Union. The views and opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of The German Marshall Fund of the United States, the European Union, or any affiliated institutions. The content is provided for informational purposes only.

Co-funded by the European Union

G | M | F The German Marshall Fund of the United States
STRENGTHENING TRANSATLANTIC COOPERATION