Business Model Development for Startups (SEED Program)

No: Y3/C6/KO/20
Startup Name: Walia360 Tour
founder Name: Helen Tewodros
1: What is Your Business About?

Briefly describe your startup idea
 Walia360 Tour is a digital tourism platform for Ethiopia that allows travelers to explore destinations using VR/AR previews, create AI-powered personalized itineraries, and securely book hotels, transport, and local guides in one app. The platform ensures trust through verified providers, multilingual support, and integrated digital payments, making travel to Ethiopia seamless and safe.

2: Business Model Canvas (Front Stage – Blocks 1–5)

1. Customer Segments

Who are your most important users or customers?

- International tourists visiting Ethiopia
- Ethiopian diaspora travelers returning for cultural and family visits
- Local travelers seeking curated experiences
- Small & medium tourism service providers (hotels, guides, transport, artisans)

Reflect: What specific problems or needs do they have?

- Lack of trusted, up-to-date information
- Difficulty booking verified services online
- Payment barriers (local vs international methods)
- Need for personalized itineraries and convenience
- Language and cultural navigation challenges

2. Value Propositions

What unique value do you provide?

- AI-powered personalized travel itineraries
- VR/AR previews of destinations and cultural experiences
- One-stop booking for hotels, transport, and guides
- Secure digital payments and verified providers
- Multilingual travel assistance

Reflect: What jobs are you helping them do? What pain are you relieving?

- Reducing uncertainty in planning Ethiopian trips
- Saving time by consolidating fragmented services into one platform
- Enhancing trust by vetting providers and offering secure transactions
- Enabling cultural immersion before and during the trip

3. Channels

How do you reach your customers?

- Mobile app & website
- Social media campaigns (Instagram, TikTok, YouTube – visual travel content)
- Partnerships with airlines, hotels, embassies, and diaspora organizations
- Travel expos, tourism boards, and influencer collaborations

Reflect: Which channels do they already use or prefer?

- Online travel platforms (Booking.com, TripAdvisor – but underrepresented for Ethiopia)
- Social media for inspiration (Instagram, TikTok)
- Word-of-mouth from friends, family, and diaspora groups

4. Customer Relationships

How do you interact with them?

- Self-service platform (AI & app-based interactions)
- 24/7 multilingual chat support (AI + human hybrid)
- Personalized recommendations & loyalty rewards
- Community features (reviews, shared experiences, cultural insights)

Reflect: Do you rely on tech, personal support, or community?

- Primarily tech-driven (AI + app)
- Supported by human verification & customer service
- Community-driven trust (reviews, peer validation)

5. Revenue Streams

How do you make money?

- Commission fees on bookings (hotels, tours, guides, transport)
- Premium subscriptions for enhanced features (personalized AI itineraries, VR/AR extras)
- Advertising & partnerships with local businesses
- Marketplace sales (local artisans, cultural products)

Reflect: What exactly are customers paying for?

- Seamless booking convenience
- Trust and safety of verified providers
- Personalization and immersive travel experiences
- Access to exclusive cultural content & premium services

3: Business Model Canvas (Back Stage – Blocks 6–9)

6. Key Resources

What physical, financial, or intellectual assets do you need?

- Mobile app & website platform (tech infrastructure)
- AI/VR/AR technology & software tools
- Skilled development team (software engineers, UX/UI designers, AI/VR specialists)
- Tourism content database (verified providers, destinations, cultural experiences)
- Brand and intellectual property (Walia360 name, logo, platform design)
- Seed funding or investment capital

Reflect: What is essential to operate?

- Reliable tech infrastructure (servers, cloud, payment systems)
- Financial resources for product development, marketing, and scaling
- Human capital (developers, tourism experts, marketing & customer support team)
- Partnerships for VR/AR content creation and provider verification

7. Key Activities

What must your team do well to deliver value?

- Develop, update, and maintain the digital platform (mobile + web)
- Curate, onboard, and verify tourism service providers
- Build and improve AI/VR/AR features for personalization & immersion
- Marketing and customer acquisition (social media, diaspora networks, travel fairs)
- Customer support & multilingual assistance
- Secure digital payment processing

Reflect: What are your core daily/weekly activities?

- Platform maintenance and feature updates
- Provider onboarding & verification checks
- Content management (VR tours, local guides, cultural insights)
- Running digital ads and managing social channels
- Monitoring user feedback and improving customer experience

8. Key Partnerships

Who do you work with externally?

- Local hotels, tour operators, transport services, and licensed guides
- Ethiopian Airlines and other carriers bringing international travelers
- Government tourism boards (Ministry of Tourism, Ethiopian Investment Commission)
- Payment gateway providers (local & international)
- Tech partners (cloud providers, AI/VR/AR platforms)
- Diaspora organizations and embassies for outreach
- Local artisans & cultural businesses (for marketplace)

Reflect: Who helps you reduce cost, risk, or extend reach?

- Tourism providers reduce platform content costs by bringing in supply
- Airlines and diaspora networks extend customer reach
- Payment & tech partners reduce risk by handling secure infrastructure
- Government endorsement builds trust and credibility

9. Cost Structure

What are your major costs?

- Technology development (software engineers, VR/AR tools, hosting servers)
- Marketing and customer acquisition (ads, influencers, tourism fairs)
- Staff salaries (developers, support, operations)
- Payment processing and platform transaction costs
- Content creation (VR/AR tours, photography, cultural media)
- Partnership & compliance costs (licenses, permits, legal)

Reflect: What costs are fixed vs variable?

- **Fixed Costs:** Salaries, server/hosting fees, licenses, office/admin costs
- **Variable Costs:** Marketing campaigns, VR/AR content production, payment processing fees, partner commissions

4: BMC Pitch Planning Sheet – Walia360 Tour

Hello, my name is Helen Tewodros, and I'm excited to introduce Walia360 Tour, a digital platform transforming tourism in Ethiopia.

Who is our customer?
 Our primary customers are international tourists, the Ethiopian diaspora, and local travelers who want authentic, hassle-free travel experiences. We also serve tourism service providers, including hotels, tour guides, transport operators, and local artisans, who want visibility and access to more customers.

What value do we offer?
 Walia360 Tour solves the major problems travelers face: scattered, outdated information, difficult bookings, and trust issues. Our platform allows users to explore destinations virtually through immersive VR/AR previews, get AI-powered personalized itineraries, and book verified hotels, tours, and transport securely. Additionally, our multilingual support and marketplace for local artisans provide a culturally rich and convenient experience.

How do we deliver this value?
 We deliver through a mobile app and web platform, combining advanced technologies like AI for itinerary planning, VR/AR for immersive previews, and a secure booking engine. We reach users via social media, travel forums, diaspora networks, and partnerships with tourism providers, making it easy for travelers to plan, explore, and book their trips seamlessly.

How do we earn revenue?
Our revenue comes from commissions on bookings, premium subscriptions for enhanced features, marketplace sales of artisan products, and partnerships with hotels and travel providers. This diversified approach ensures a sustainable business model while supporting local businesses.

What's our edge?
Walia360 Tour's edge is its unique integration of personalization, immersive experiences, and verified services in one platform, focused exclusively on Ethiopia. Unlike global platforms, we provide trust, convenience, and cultural authenticity, enabling travelers to plan confidently and helping local businesses thrive.

Walia360 Tour makes Ethiopia's incredible destinations accessible, safe, and unforgettable for travelers, while empowering local tourism businesses and artisans to grow.