**GEIR Cleveland**

My product is an investment analytics platform tailored for a specific financial instrument: REITs (Real Estate Investment Trusts). While REITs trade like stocks, they operate like real estate funds, meaning their value is tied to their underlying properties, not traditional corporate metrics.

This creates a fundamental flaw in the market for financial analytics tools. Generic platforms like Seeking Alpha or MarketBeat are built for traditional stocks and showcase metrics like P/E ratios or EPS, which are misleading for property-owning portfolios. Meanwhile, the institutional-grade platforms that provide the correct, specialized data, like Bloomberg, are prohibitively expensive for everyday investors.

To bridge this gap, I built **Viserra**, an analytics platform dedicated to U.S. REITs.

You can explore the MVP here: [**https://www.viserra-group.com/**](https://www.viserra-group.com/)

To see its capability, you can type a REIT ticker like “SPG” into the search bar. You will find the complete financial statements, portfolio diversification data, and the key industry metrics an expert would use (FFO, AFFO, NOI, ADR, etc.).

I was uniquely positioned to build this. My career started at a large investment firm in my home country, Taiwan, where my role analyzing REITs taught me exactly how institutional investors evaluate these assets. My current role at a Cleveland-based real estate private equity firm (I am a non-citizen, currently on an H1B visa) has given me firsthand experience in how these real estate companies operate on the ground. As of right now, my H1B visa legally ties me to my corporate employer, which prevents me from engaging in the essential work needed to turn Viserra into a real startup, such as marketing to users, establishing a revenue model, etc.

I am now at the stage where I need a supportive ecosystem to pursue this venture full-time. I already live here in Cleveland, specifically in Ohio City, and I absolutely love it. My sincere hope is that the Global Cleveland EIR program can provide the opportunity for me to transition into a full-time founder, right here in a city I’m deeply connected to.

Interview with Supriya Tamang, Program Training and Development Manager

**Self Intro**

I guess I can start with my professional background that led me to this startup idea. My career began as an equity research analyst in Taiwan for a large investment company, where I was responsible for analyzing international REITs—REITs as in Real Estate Investment Trusts.

That’s where I first saw a major problem in the market for stock analytics software. So there are two options for people wanting to analyze these real estate backed securities, you can go with the generic platform built for retail investor, like Marketbeat or Market watch, which were does not have the relevant real estate data, or you can go with the more sophisticated tools like Bloomberg, which does have these data but were incredibly expensive and most built for large institutions. There just wasn't an affordable option with high-quality REIT data in between.

So, fast forward a couple of years, and I'm now working for a real estate private equity firm here in Cleveland. But my real passion has always been building the solution to that problem I identified back then.

For the past couple of I've spent a lot of my free time teaching myself to code and like you saw on the application, we now have a fully functional live MVP ready to deploy.

I'm now at a point where, to turn this from a project into a real company, I need two things: a supportive ecosystem and, more importantly, a visa that allows me to be a founder. As you know, a corporate-tied H1B doesn't permit that.

That's why I was so excited when I found the GEIR program. The chance to leverage university resources, and transition into being a full-time founder feels like the perfect path forward for me. I’ve always loved my time here in Cleveland, and so I’m genuinely excited about supporting GEIR’s work on promoting entrepreneurship as well. So, here I am.

**Tell me about your idea**

Absolutely. So, the idea for my product all starts with the nature of REIT

Even though REITs trade on the stock market just like Apple or Google, they aren't traditional companies; they're essentially portfolios of real estate. Because of that, you have to value them like you would value real estate, your analysis should be based on things like rental income, occupancy, and operating expenses.

The problem is, all the affordable, mainstream platforms would only show you traditional stock metrics like P/E, P/B, and EPS. For a REIT, that's not just unhelpful, it's actively misleading. Any institutional analyst will tell you that you should be looking at a completely different set of data—metrics like FFO, AFFO, Net Operating Income, and Net Asset Value, these are a bit more technical, but they’re all metrics developed specifically to analyze the underlying real estate.

But that essential data is locked away on platforms like Bloomberg that cost over $30,000 a year, leaving a huge gap in the market for everyone else.

Viserra is the solution to that. It's a platform I built to provide that institutional-grade, real estate-specific data in an accessible and intuitive way. It has all the key metrics an expert would use, and I've also built in an AI feature that summarizes a company's quantitative risks.

This AI feature is a glimpse into the future of the product and a key differentiator. Because even when you have the right data, interpreting it is another huge challenge; not everyone knows how to build an FFO or NAV-based valuation model. I'm still testing and refining the function, but the long-term vision is for the AI to act as a co-pilot that helps users understand what the data actually means. It solves the 'so what?' problem.

**Why are you interested in the GEIR program**

Honestly, when I found the GEIR program, it felt like it was designed to solve every single obstacle I'm facing as an international founder.

So first, GEIR is built for early-stage founders like myself who are at the MVP stage and need a supportive environment to grow. And obviously, for an international founder, the ability to have a legal foundation to actually build a company in the US is a massive hurdle that most other programs don't address, so the cap-exempt H1B support that the program offer is really a game changer.

Additionally, the resources GEIR provide are exactly what I need, Things like university market research, evaluative feedback, these are all huge to me. And frankly, the nature of my SaaS product is that it's very capital-efficient, at least for now, I'm not looking to raise a massive venture round like you might see at the YC or EF or the world; what's truly critical for my success is the exact kind of support and mentorship that GEIR provide.

Finally, and this is really important to me, the program is in Cleveland. As I mentioned in my application, I already live here and have completely fallen in love with the city. Cleveland has this mix of being calm, affordable, while also having some really cool neighborhoods like Tremont, Lakewood, and Ohio City. I'm also a huge Cavs fan, I love being near the lake, visiting the museums, you name it, it just feels like home to me. My goal isn't just to build a startup; it's to build it *here*.

**Visa Situation**

That's a great question, and I want to be completely transparent about my timeline.

My H1B petition has been submitted and is currently pending. The visa is set to activate on October 1st of this year. Because of that, the earliest I could resign from my current company would be during the first or second week of October.

The reason to wait for this corporate H1B to activate is really a strategic move for my long-term future here. By starting that H1B, I become 'cap-exempt' for a for-profit company. This is really important because my ultimate goal, once my startup starts generating revenue, is to sponsor my own visa. So securing the cap-exemption now means I won't have to re-enter the H1B lottery in the future to do that.

So I said all that to say, after this short waiting period, I will be ready to join the program in October with a stable visa path already secured.

**Why Cleveland**

That's a great question, so when I was doing my Master's at Cornell, the program was split between the main campus in Ithaca, upstate NY, and their tech campus in New York City. So I got to experience two very different environments: the remote quiet nature of upstate New York and the incredibly intense pace of NYC. After graduating, I knew I wanted to find a city that was a great 'in-between'—a place with the energy and amenities of a big city, but without being overwhelming.

That's what I've found here in Cleveland.

As I mentioned in my application, I already live in Ohio City and I've really grown to love it here. I appreciate that I can be in a vibrant, walkable neighborhood, but also just minutes away from the lakefront. It has the affordability that allows for focus – incredibly important for a startup founder - but also have cool neighborhoods like Tremont and Lakewood that give it a great energy. And as a big Cavs fan, the sports scene doesn't hurt either. It feels like a very livable city.

So I said all that to say Cleveland is truly a city I enjoy living in, and I think it would be so amazing if I can build and based my business in this city.

**Product – Competitor**

That's a great question. For this specific market, there is one direct, one-to-one competitor, a platform called Alreit Research. I've actually done a lot of research on them because they're a perfect case study.

They started around 2020, and the fact that they are still operating, making lots of marketing post, today is fantastic news for me. Cause It's a clear signal that there is a validated market of people willing to pay for a REIT analytics tool.

I've analyzed their product deeply. Their strategy focuses on broader coverage, so their platform provides data for international REITs, real estate related ETFs, and mortgage REITs. However, in doing so, the depth of their data for any single company is actually much shallower than what my current MVP for Viserra already offers.

And I think that's the opening for me. Viserra provides a more comprehensive data set for U.S. REITs, which really is the main target for most REITs investors, and another key differentiator is the AI co-pilot feature [explain if haven’t]. It's not just about providing the data; it's about helping users interpret it.

So what I see is a pre-validated market with a clear opportunity to outperform the incumbent with a superior product. There are other players in the broader space besides alreit, but they all serve different audiences, Green Street offers similar functions but it’s mostly for institutions, REITsavvy is for the Singaporean REIT market, and Seeking Alpha's REIT analytics tools are just one feature in a much larger, less-focused platform.

**Target Customer**

I see two primary customer segments for Viserra.

The first, and my initial focus, is the sophisticated retail investor that uses actual data to make investment decisions. And I want to be clear, this isn't just a hypothetical customer profile—I see them every day. If you go on the REIT subreddit, for example, you'll find countless discussions with people actively debating specific metrics like FFO payout ratios and NAV discounts. These are serious investors who are hungry for the exact kind of deep, reliable data that Viserra provides, but are currently trying to piece it together themselves from scattered sources. They're my core audience.

The second segment is the B2B market, specifically smaller, emerging investment funds. This could be smaller hedge funds, family offices, or even student-managed investment funds at universities. They have the sophistication to need institutional-grade data, but often lack the budget for the top-tier platforms like a Bloomberg or Capital IQ. Viserra provides the critical data they need at a much more accessible price point.

**Revenue Model**

That's a great question. The plan is a subscription-based, freemium revenue model.

I’ve done a lot of research in the stock analytics software space, the key is that certain surface level data, like financial statements and stock prices, really needs to be free to attract users. So the strategy is to use the aggregation of that public data as the 'hook' to build a large user base.

And the actual revenue will come from a premium subscription tier. This is where we'll charge for true 'insight' that we’re able to provide based on those aggregated data, and the more advanced functionality that serious investors need. For example, features like the AI co-pilot that interprets financial trends, and advanced portfolio tools that show how your holdings correlate with the real estate market, the interest rate trajectory, inflations, and what not. The premium plan could also include operational features like creating a watchlist, exporting data to Excel, and eventually, building valuation models right on the platform.

Further down the road, once we've built a significant user base, we can explore additional revenue streams. This could include targeted on-site advertising or strategic partnerships with other stock platforms, for example, seeking alpha have this the affiliate promotions you with Alreit research. But for the first few years, the primary focus will be entirely on creating an premium subscription product that users love.

**How do you plan to find your first customers? or What's your go-to-market strategy?**

My go-to-market strategy is a two-pronged approach. I'll focus on the B2C channel first, to build initial traction, and then layer in a second B2B channel.

For the B2C segment, my strategy is all about organic, community-led growth. The first step is to go where my target users already are – retails investors spend a lot of times on the financial focus social media. I would be very active on platforms like the REIT and dividend investing subreddits, and on financial Twitter. The plan isn't to spam links, but to genuinely engage in conversations and share the tool as a solution to problems people are actively discussing. In parallel, I would collaborate with personal finance YouTubers that focus on dividend or real estate investing. Once I have some initial traction, I would layer in small, targeted paid ad campaigns on these same social media platforms to accelerate growth.

One thing I wanna say is while this social media based approach might seem less sophisticated from a big SaaS platform launching on a site like TechCrunch, for a niche B2C product like this, earning trust and building a genuine community is far more effective than a top-down press release.

For the B2B segment, which targets smaller investment funds, the approach is more direct. I would use LinkedIn to identify and reach out to decision-makers at smaller, emerging funds, family offices, and student-managed university funds. The goal there is a more consultative sales process, so offering personalized demos and having direct discussions about how Viserra can be integrated into their investment workflow to give them an edge.

So, the overall plan is to build a strong foundation with retail users through authentic community engagement, and then expand into the more targeted B2B market.

**Funding**

One of the biggest advantages of this business is that it's extremely capital-efficient. My plan for the foreseeable future is to bootstrap the company.

Right now, my total monthly operating expense is only about forty dollars, mostly for a few third-party APIs and database hosting. The thing about a saas product is that it does not require a huge upfront investment in things like office space or hiring people.

So I would say my priority right now is not to raise money, but to focus completely on achieving product-market fit and building a user base that genuinely loves the product.

Maybe further down the road, once I've gained significant traction, I would then consider seeking a seed round. But then that funding wouldn't be for survival; it would be to scale what's already working. But for now, that is not my focus

**What if this idea doesn't work? or How do you think about pivoting in the future?**

That's a great question, and I think being adaptable is essential for any early-stage founder.

One of the real strengths of the platform I've built is that the core infrastructure—the workflow for fetching financial data, storing it in a database, and displaying it on the front end—is incredibly flexible and can be reused in a lot of different “context”. This makes pivoting or expanding relatively straightforward. If the initial focus on REITs doesn't get the traction I'm looking for, the same tech stack can easily be repurposed to analyze other financial assets or to provide a different set of data.

But honestly, the expansion path I'm most excited about is with the AI co-pilot feature.

Right now, it provides a simple quantitative risk summary, but that's just the beginning. I have a lot of ideas for how to use AI to provide insights that are normally inaccessible, while still keeping a human element. Cause I think that nobody is going to trust a 100% AI-generated 'buy' or 'sell' recommendation. But an AI that can read a company's entire 10-K filing in seconds and then summarize the key risks and opportunities in plain English for you? That's a powerful tool that can both serve as a premium feature of this site or a future pivot path, if things don’t work out.

**Question to Ask GEIR**

* I was really excited to see that I’ll be able to contribute to GEIR’s entrepreneurial community, via the 8-10 hour work week. Could you share a bit more about what that work typically involves for an Entrepreneur-in-Residence?
* On the website, you mention access to university resources like 'maker spaces.' That sounds fascinating. Could you tell me a bit more about what those are and how founders in the program have used them?
* I saw on the website that the goal is for founders to transition to an O-1 visa after raising capital. My SaaS business is very capital-efficient, and my plan is to bootstrap it in the early stages rather than raise a large venture round. How does the program support founders who may not need significant outside funding to get started?
* I was watching the seminar recording on your website, and there was a point made about a founder's ability to raise equity from VCs, being one of the selection criteria for global EIR. It's a great point, but my business is very capital-efficient, and my immediate strategy is to bootstrap it to profitability by focusing on the product and the customer.

I'd love to hear the program's perspective on the bootstrapped path, versus a more traditional VC track.

**More detailed educational and professional background**

I'm originally from Taiwan, that’s where I did my undergrad and earn my bechalor’s in urban Economics and Public Finance. After graduation, I joined a large APAC focused financial institution named Fubon Financial Holdings, as an equity research analyst in their overseas investment division. My role there was to cover the research effort of our REIT holdings in the U.S., the U.K., and Australia. My responsibilities included building stock valuation models, writing institutional research reports, and making direct investment recommendations to our CIO.

That experience made me realize I wanted to deepen my expertise, especially in the U.S. market, so as a result I came to the States in 2022 to attend Cornell University for their Master's in Real Estate Finance program. After graduating, I moved here to Cleveland and joined my current firm, a real estate private equity company, as an acquisitions analyst. In this role, I'm again on the front lines of the investment process, but this time for investing in real estate directly instead of buying REIT securities, so I’m currently responsible for underwriting deals, conducting market research, and developing investment recommendations.

So as you can see, my entire career has been focused on how institutional capital analyzes and invests in different real estate related products. It's that experience that gave me a firsthand view of the inefficient data and tools in the industry, which is what ultimately led me to build Viserra.

**Team**

Right now, I am the sole founder and have built everything myself.

I'm absolutely happy bring on a co-founder, I've also met a lot of potential candidates on platforms like YC's co-founder match.

However, I'm being extremely selective for a specific reason. Because this product is for a very niche financial instrument—REITs—deep domain knowledge is critical. It's been challenging to find someone who not only has a complementary skill set, like in marketing or sales, but who also truly understands the nuances of real estate finance. I think that for a product like this, every team member needs to understand the customer and the data inside and out.

So far, I just haven't met the person with that specific combination of expertise that I'd feel comfortable bringing on as a co-founder. But I would say so far, I've been making good progress on my own.

**Innovation and value proposition (use above script)**

**Stage / Traction**

I would say I'm at the post-MVP, pre-product-market fit stage. I have a fully-functional, live MVP that is ready for users right now like you see on the application. The next step for me is to start the marketing process and begin finding product-market fit.

Now, I understand this is a little bit backward for a founder. Normally, you would start with a landing page and test the demand *before* building the full product. But this is where my situation as an international founder on an H1B visa comes in. So I've consulted with immigration lawyers, and they've been very clear that any action to market a product, launching a landing page, running ads, building a waitlist, those are all considered a commercial activity and would be a direct violation of my current corporate H1B visa. Even with no LLC and no revenue, at least that’s why they told me.

Some people might say the chance of getting caught is low, but I really don’t wanna risk my long-term ability to even enter the U.S boarder, especially in the current climate where the Trump administration is scrutinizing every small immigration violation.

So, what I did was I focused on what I *could* legally do: put my head down and just start building the product first, and I've taken the MVP as far as it can go. I'm now at the point where I‘m legally blocked from taking the next steps.

This is why the Global EIR program isn't just a 'nice-to-have' for me; it's really the key to unlock my entire venture.

**Ability to raise (use question above)**