

ASCENDENCY

by Because She Can

Where African Excellence Ascends.

BUSINESS PLAN & FINANCIAL MODEL

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Date: March 2026

Version: 1.0 | Confidential

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ascendency is a three-sided mentorship ecosystem built by Because She Can (BSC) — Africa's pan-continental tech community — to systematically close the professional guidance gap for African talent. It connects ambitious professionals with world-class mentors through AI-powered matching, structured learning, and a freelance marketplace, served across three distinct business lines: a direct-to-consumer subscription platform (D2C), enterprise B2B solutions, and a free annual cohort programme.

Mission	Democratise access to quality mentorship for African professionals on the continent and in the diaspora.
Platform	bascascend.lovable.app React / Supabase / Lovable stack
Parent Org	Because She Can (BSC) — pan-African tech community
Launch Stage	MVP live; feature-complete build in progress (2026)
Revenue Model	Subscriptions (D2C) + Enterprise SaaS + Marketplace Commission
Primary Markets	Ghana (launch), Nigeria, Kenya, diaspora (expansion)
Funding Sought	Seed / Grant funding for product, marketing & partnerships

Competitive Differentiators

- Built by Africans, for Africans — culturally contextualised mentorship, not adapted Western tooling
- AI-powered matching engine that pairs professionals by goals, sector, and career stage
- Three-tier model: Free cohort (brand/acquisition) → Paid subscriptions → Enterprise contracts
- BSC community trust network as organic distribution and mentor supply channel
- Marketplace creates compounding value: mentors monetise expertise beyond sessions

2. PROBLEM & MARKET OPPORTUNITY

The Problem

African professionals face a compounding disadvantage: limited access to senior mentors, lack of culturally-relevant career guidance, and a fragmented professional development ecosystem. Most global mentorship platforms (ADPList, MentorCruise) are designed for Western markets and do not account for the structural realities of African career paths — family expectations, currency disparities, sector gaps, and diaspora navigation.

The Market

Segment	Metric	Source / Note
African internet users	~600M (2025)	ITU
African professional workforce	~300M+	ILO estimates
Global e-learning market (CAGR ~14%)	\$400B+ by 2026	Research & Markets
Global mentorship platform market	\$7B+ by 2027	Grand View Research
Andela talent pool (Africa-focused)	150,000+ vetted tech professionals	Andela 2024
African diaspora in US/UK/EU	~40M+ professionals	World Bank

Why Now

- Africa's tech workforce grew by 15% YoY (2023–2024); Andela alone trained ~110,000 engineers in 10 years
- Smartphone/data penetration enabling SaaS consumption at scale in Tier 2 African cities
- Diaspora professionals actively seeking structured give-back channels — Ascendancy's mentor supply
- Employers investing in African talent retention: Ascendancy's B2B market is expanding
- BSC's existing community provides immediate user base and validation without cold-start CAC

3. BUSINESS MODEL

Ascendancy operates a multi-sided platform with three interdependent revenue streams. This mirrors and extends the Andela model — which moved from a training-first nonprofit structure to a two-sided talent marketplace generating \$100M+ ARR — adapted for mentorship rather than talent placement.

3.1 Revenue Stream 1 — D2C Subscriptions (Primary)

Tiered monthly subscriptions priced for the African market, offering progressively richer mentorship and marketplace access:

Tier	Price/Month	Target User	Key Inclusions
Curious (L1)	GH¢20 (~\$1.30)	0–5 yrs exp.	AI match, 1 session, resource library, marketplace profile
Mentee (L2)	GH¢50 (~\$3.30)	5–12 yrs exp.	Priority matching, 2 sessions, leadership courses, masterminds
ApprentSis (L3)	GH¢99 (~\$6.50)	Senior / Executive	Unlimited sessions, C-suite network, paid mentor access
One-Off Session	GH¢75+ per session	Any user	Single session, no subscription required

International pricing (USD/GBP) will apply for diaspora users, commanding a 3–5x premium over local GHS pricing — consistent with ADPList's approach of free core access with premium upsell.

3.2 Revenue Stream 2 — Enterprise B2B (High-Value)

Custom mentorship platform licenses and managed programmes for companies investing in African talent. Modelled on Andela's enterprise tier — which charges clients an average of \$75,000 per project — but adapted for internal talent development rather than external placement.

Package	Features	Target Client
Starter	Colleague matching, up to 50 pairs, basic analytics	SMEs, NGOs, local tech firms
Growth	Custom programme design, scoring/gamification, progress reports	Mid-size corporates, international NGOs

Package	Features	Target Client
Enterprise	Bespoke platform, real-time analytics dashboard, branded experience, dedicated coordinator	MNCs, development banks, diaspora employers

3.3 Revenue Stream 3 — Marketplace Commission

Ascendancy charges a platform fee on transactions completed through the freelance marketplace. Mentors are paid post-delivery, with Ascendancy retaining a percentage. This mirrors Andela's talent marketplace fee structure.

- Transaction commission: 10–15% on marketplace bookings and freelance contracts
- Featured listing fee: Optional paid placement for mentors/freelancers on the Explore page
- Mentor certification badge: Future revenue from verified mentor badging programme

3.4 Revenue Stream 4 — Grants & Partnerships (Non-Dilutive)

The free Global Cohort Programme is positioned as a social impact vehicle, eligible for grant funding and strategic partnership sponsorships from development finance institutions (DFIs), tech giants, and pan-African foundations.

- Grant targets: MasterCard Foundation, Google.org, Tony Elumelu Foundation, African Development Bank
- Partnership targets: Coursera, LinkedIn Learning, Microsoft CNCF (training integration)
- Sponsorship model: Corporates sponsor named cohorts in exchange for talent pipeline access

4. COMPARABLE ORGANISATIONS & BENCHMARKS

Ascendancy sits at the intersection of three proven market categories. Understanding how these platforms built and scaled informs Ascendancy's own trajectory.

Company	Model	Scale / Revenue	Lesson for Ascendancy
Andela	Two-sided talent marketplace; enterprise-first; AI matching	\$100M+ ARR (2024); \$1.5B valuation; 150K+ talent pool	Monetise B2B enterprise contracts first; use community as supply; invest in AI matching early
ADPList	Freemium mentorship; free-to-use core; premium sub + org partnerships	~4M+ users; Series A funded; B2B partnerships as core revenue	Free cohort as acquisition; convert to paid; sell to orgs as employee benefit
MentorCruise	Subscription mentorship; mentor-led pricing; tech-focused	\$10–\$500/mo; profitable; strong organic growth	Mentor-first payment model builds trust & quality signal
MentorPass	Credits-based subscription (ClassPass model); startup-focused	\$300/mo entry; founder/startup niche	Credit/session bundle model reduces churn vs. flat sub
BSC / Ascendancy	Three-sided: D2C sub + B2B enterprise + free cohort	MVP live; early community traction	Community-led growth + enterprise revenue = capital efficiency

Andela Model — Specific Parallels

- **Andela began with training (free cohort equivalent), built a talent community, then commercialised through a marketplace. Ascendancy replicates this funnel.** Training → Community → Marketplace:
- **Andela curates and vets talent supply (mentors) rigorously — Ascendancy's admin approval workflow mirrors this quality gate.** Two-sided supply:
- **Andela's \$75K average project fee vs. sub fees shows B2B is the value-dense tier. Ascendancy's enterprise B2B should be the priority sales motion.** Enterprise as primary revenue:
- **Andela's AI matching cut time-to-hire by 66% and drove client retention. Ascendancy's AI matching (already built) is its technical moat.** AI matching as moat:
- **Andela raised from CZI, SoftBank, and development-aligned funds by leading with social impact. BSC/Ascendancy's African excellence narrative is a fundraising asset.** Impact narrative unlocks capital:

5. GO-TO-MARKET STRATEGY

Phase 1 — Community Launch (Months 1–6)

- Activate BSC's existing community as Ascendancy's first 500 users (zero CAC)
- Onboard 30–50 approved mentors from BSC network and diaspora for Cohort 1
- Run first free Global Cohort (3 months) — social proof, testimonials, press
- Target: 200 free cohort participants → 10% convert to paid subscription

Phase 2 — Paid Growth (Months 6–18)

- D2C: Paid social targeting African professionals in GH, NG, KE and diaspora communities
- B2B: Outbound to 10 target companies (tech firms, NGOs, development organisations)
- Partnership: Coursera / LinkedIn Learning course integration to drive platform stickiness
- Referral programme: Mentor incentives for successful mentee referrals

Phase 3 — Scale & Expansion (Months 18–36)

- Launch USD/GBP pricing for diaspora market — 3–5x GHS revenue per user
- Second enterprise contract target: Pan-African corporate or multilateral organisation
- Marketplace commission revenue begins to compound as mentor/freelancer base grows
- Explore Series A or impact investment round based on B2B contract pipeline

Distribution Channels

Channel	Tactic	Estimated CAC
BSC Community	Direct activation, newsletter, events	~\$0 (organic)
Social Media	Instagram, LinkedIn, X — creator content + paid	~\$5–\$15 per sub
B2B Outbound	Email + LinkedIn prospecting, conferences	~\$200–\$500 per deal
Referral	Mentor-driven referral incentive programme	~\$3–\$8 per sub
Partnerships	Co-marketing with Coursera, ALC, tech communities	Revenue-share model

6. FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS (3-YEAR MODEL)

All figures in USD. GHS figures converted at GHS 15.5 = \$1 (March 2026 approximate rate). International/diaspora pricing assumed at USD rates (\$5–\$30/month depending on tier). Conservative projections; B2B contracts modelled separately.

Assumptions

- D2C mix: 60% Curious (L1) / 30% Mentee (L2) / 10% ApprentSis (L3)
- Local (GHS) vs. International (USD) split: Year 1 = 80/20 → Year 3 = 60/40
- International ARPU: ~\$8/month blended across tiers (vs. ~\$2.50 local blended)
- B2B contract value: Starter \$3K / Growth \$8K / Enterprise \$20K annually
- Marketplace commission: 12% of transaction value; low in Year 1, compounding from Year 2
- Monthly churn: 8% (Year 1) → 5% (Year 3) as retention programmes mature
- One-off sessions: Average \$5 equivalent; excluded from subscription MRR calculations

Revenue Summary

Revenue Stream	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
D2C Subscriptions	\$18,500	\$62,000	\$148,000
Enterprise B2B Contracts	\$24,000	\$80,000	\$200,000
Marketplace Commission	\$1,200	\$8,500	\$28,000
Grants & Sponsorships (Cohort)	\$15,000	\$25,000	\$40,000
TOTAL REVENUE	\$58,700	\$175,500	\$416,000

D2C Subscriber Growth Model

Metric	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
New subscribers/month (avg)	35	120	280
Active subscribers (EOY)	280	950	2,400
Free cohort participants (annual)	200	400	800
Cohort → paid conversion (10%)	20	40	80
Blended ARPU (USD/month)	~\$5.50	~\$5.50	\$6.50

Cost Structure

Cost Line	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Platform / Infrastructure (Supabase, Lovable, email)	\$3,600	\$7,200	\$14,400
Product & Engineering (contractors)	\$18,000	\$36,000	\$60,000
Marketing & Community Growth	\$8,000	\$22,000	\$48,000
Operations & Admin	\$6,000	\$12,000	\$24,000
Cohort Programme Delivery	\$8,000	\$15,000	\$25,000
TOTAL COSTS	\$43,600	\$92,200	\$171,400
NET PROFIT / (LOSS)	\$15,100	\$83,300	\$244,600

Note: Year 1 profitability assumes BSC volunteer contribution and grant funding covering ~25% of costs. Scaling to full commercial operations in Year 2 assumes first B2B enterprise contract closed by Q2.

7. FUNDING REQUIREMENTS & USE OF FUNDS

Ascendency is seeking seed/grant funding of \$80,000 to accelerate product completion, marketing, and first enterprise contracts. This is structured as non-dilutive (grants/sponsorships) in the first instance, with a convertible note or equity round possible from Year 2.

Use of Funds	Amount (USD)	Outcome
Product completion & feature build	\$25,000	Full-featured platform: payments, AI match, marketplace
Marketing & community activation	\$20,000	500+ paid users in Year 1, Cohort 1 execution
Enterprise B2B sales & partnerships	\$15,000	2–3 enterprise contracts signed in Year 1
Operations & platform infrastructure	\$12,000	18 months of stable, scalable platform ops
Legal, compliance & contracts	\$8,000	B2B contract templates, data privacy, IP
TOTAL	\$80,000	

Funding Targets

- **MasterCard Foundation, Tony Elumelu Foundation, Google.org Africa, African Development Bank** Grants:
- **YC for Good, Echoing Green, Cartier Women's Initiative** Fellowships / Accelerators:
- **Pan-African tech companies, diaspora employer networks** Corporate sponsorships:
- **African angel networks, diaspora HNW individuals with BSC affiliation** Angel / Impact investors:

8. RISK ANALYSIS & MITIGATION

Risk	Description	Likelihood	Mitigation
Willingness-to-pay	African users price-sensitive; GHS tiers may underperform	Medium	Diaspora USD pricing + enterprise B2B as revenue anchor
Mentor supply	Insufficient quality mentors to match demand	Medium	BSC network + incentivised ApprentSis tier as mentor supply
Competition	ADPList, MentorCruise enter African market	Low–Medium	Cultural specificity, BSC brand, and cohort model as moats
Currency risk	GHS depreciation vs USD costs	High	USD pricing for international users; USD-denominated contracts
B2B sales cycle	Enterprise deals take 3–6+ months to close	High	Pipeline > 3 deals simultaneously; grants bridge gap
Platform/tech	Lovable/Supabase scaling constraints at growth	Low	Architecture review at 5K users; migration plan prepared

9. TEAM & OPERATIONS

Leadership

- **Kweyakie** — IT auditor, data scientist, open source contributor, lecturer, and community builder. Founder-level ownership of Ascendancy's product roadmap, technical decisions, and partnerships. Project Lead / Product Owner:
- **Because She Can (BSC)** — pan-African tech community providing mentor supply, user network, and brand credibility. Community Organisation:
- **Volunteer engineering contributors via BSC; Lovable-assisted build. Technical advisory from BSC community.** Development:

Operational Model

- Platform hosted on Supabase (Lovable Cloud) — low fixed infrastructure cost
- Admin coordination via BSC Coordinator messaging and admin panel workflows
- Mentor vetting handled by admin approval workflow; no dedicated recruiter required at seed stage
- Enterprise B2B partnerships managed directly by project lead in Year 1

Key Milestones

Timeline	Milestone	KPI
Q2 2026	Platform feature-complete (payments, AI match, marketplace)	Launch-ready product
Q3 2026	Cohort 1 launched: 200 participants	200 cohort sign-ups; 20+ paid conversions
Q4 2026	First enterprise B2B contract signed	\$8K–\$20K contract closed
Q1 2027	280 active paid subscribers; \$58K ARR	MRR breakeven with grant support
Q3 2027	International (diaspora) tier launched	USD pricing live; ARPU increases
Q4 2027	950 paid subscribers; 3 B2B contracts	\$175K total revenue
2028	2,400 subscribers; marketplace commission meaningful	\$416K revenue; self-sustaining

10. APPENDIX

A. Platform Summary

- **bscascend.lovable.app** Platform URL:
- **React 18 / TypeScript / Supabase / Lovable Cloud / Tailwind CSS** Stack:
- **AI matching, tiered subscriptions, access codes, admin panel, messaging, course LMS, session logs, goals, mentor approval workflow, email infrastructure** Key features built:
- **PostgreSQL (Supabase) with Row-Level Security on all tables** Database:

B. Subscription Pricing (Full Detail)

- GHS pricing targets local professionals in Ghana and English-speaking West Africa
- USD/GBP pricing (\$5/\$3 L1 — \$15/\$10 L2 — \$30/\$20 L3) targets diaspora users
- Access code system enables partner organisations to sponsor free 6-month access for cohort participants

C. Competitive Landscape Summary

- **ADPList (free-first, global), MentorCruise (subscription, tech-focused), MentorPass (credits model)** Direct competitors:
- **Andela (talent marketplace, enterprise), LinkedIn Learning (courses), Coursera (learning)** Adjacent comparables:
- **African cultural specificity + BSC community supply + three-tier model (free → paid → enterprise)** Ascendancy's moat:

D. Contact

- **bscascend.lovable.app** Platform:
- **Because She Can (BSC)** Organisation:
- **github.com/timtimma-1** GitHub: