

INVESTOR PITCH · 2026

kern.

Find your direction by doing real work.

Manuel Di Paolo · Founder



THE PROBLEM

Capable people are unsure, and the door in is *narrowing*.

2 in 3

of 18 to 30 year-olds are unsure about their career path

Tallo, May 2025 (US): nearly 2 in 3.

74%

of young people lack access to a mentor

Big Brothers Big Sisters / Harris Poll, 2025.

-35%

entry-level job postings since early 2023

Job-posting data since 2023, secondary summaries.

WHY NOW

Employers want proof of skills. AI lets a beginner *make real work*.

70%

use skills-based hiring
for entry-level roles

NACE 2026. Yet under 1 in 700 new hires at firms that dropped degree rules lacks a degree.

43%

of employed new graduates are underemployed

IBISWorld and secondary summaries. The first rung is harder to reach.

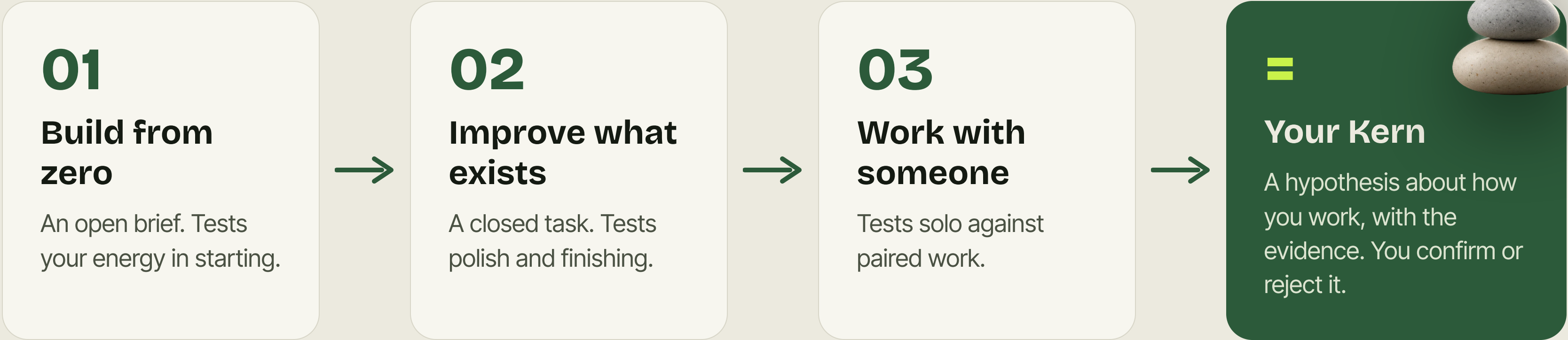
2026

AI changed who can make things

A beginner can now ship a real design, app or video in an afternoon. Doing real work is finally cheap enough to be how you explore.

THE SOLUTION

Three contrasting real missions end in *Your Kern.*



**AI is a smart friend,
not the author.**

You write your idea first. The co-pilot asks, unblocks and suggests next steps; it never hands you the answer. Missions are done twice, alone and with AI, to keep ideas your own.

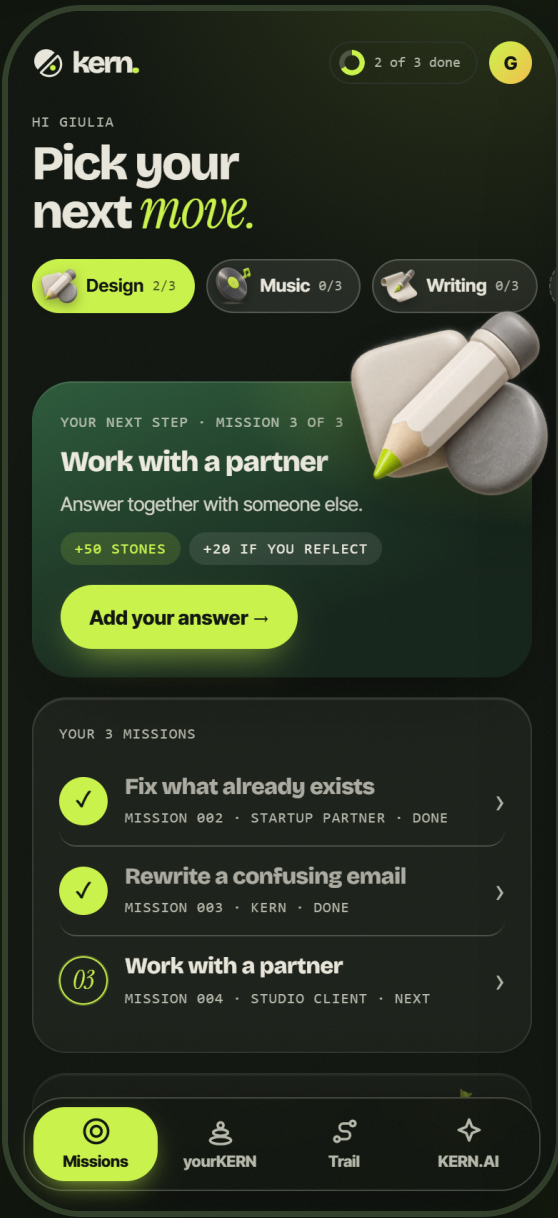
THE PRODUCT

It already *works*.

Designed and built by Manuel with AI tools.

- Installable web app
- English and Italian
- Accounts and sync
- Explore several paths
- Signs from people before you
- Dare a friend
- Shareable Kern card
- Works offline

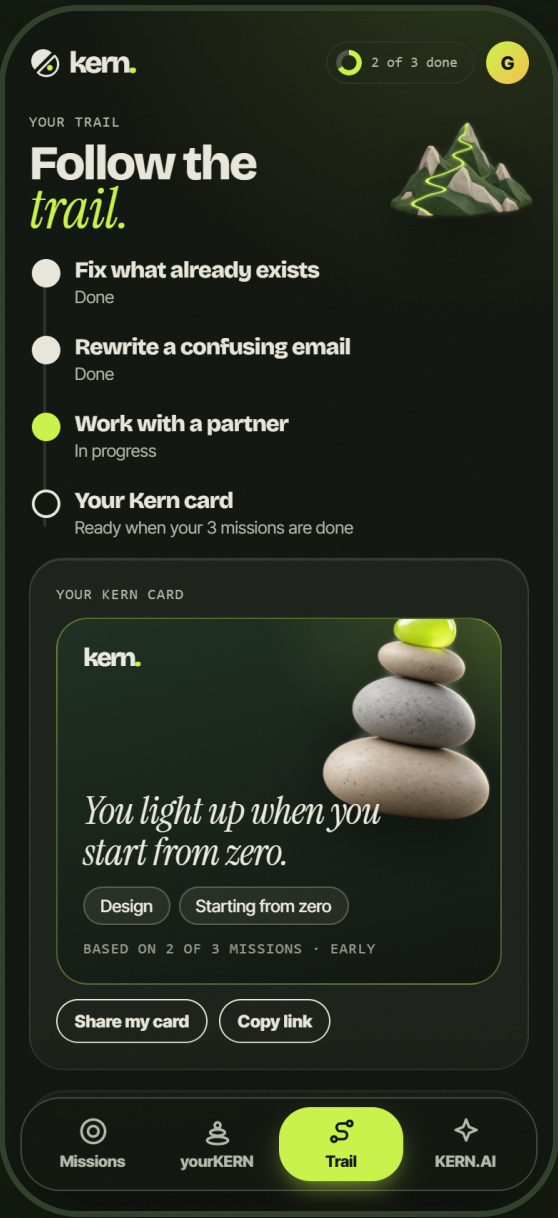
Installable and working, not launched publicly yet.
Missions are samples until partners join.



Missions



yourKERN



Trail

MARKET

Bottom-up, Italy alone is a first market of about *€33M a year.*



ITALIAN FIRMS WITH 10 TO 249 PEOPLE

212k

ISTAT 2023. Plus 100 universities (MUR/ANVUR).

SAM · FIRMS THAT HIRE GRADUATES, AND UNIVERSITIES

≈ €33M / yr

About 10.6k firms × €3k a year for 3 missions, plus 100 universities × €10k. Bottom-up estimate.

SOM · IN 3 YEARS

≈ €550k ARR

150 partner companies and 10 universities.

BUSINESS MODEL

Partners pay. *People are free.*

Partner companies

Post a featured mission, see the best answers and a shortlist by working style.



kern.

Missions, reflection, Your Kern. Every profile is built from real work.



People 18 to 35

Try real work, find their direction, get seen by the companies behind the missions.

Later: schools and programs

A group license with a group board and reports.

Later: sponsored mission of the week

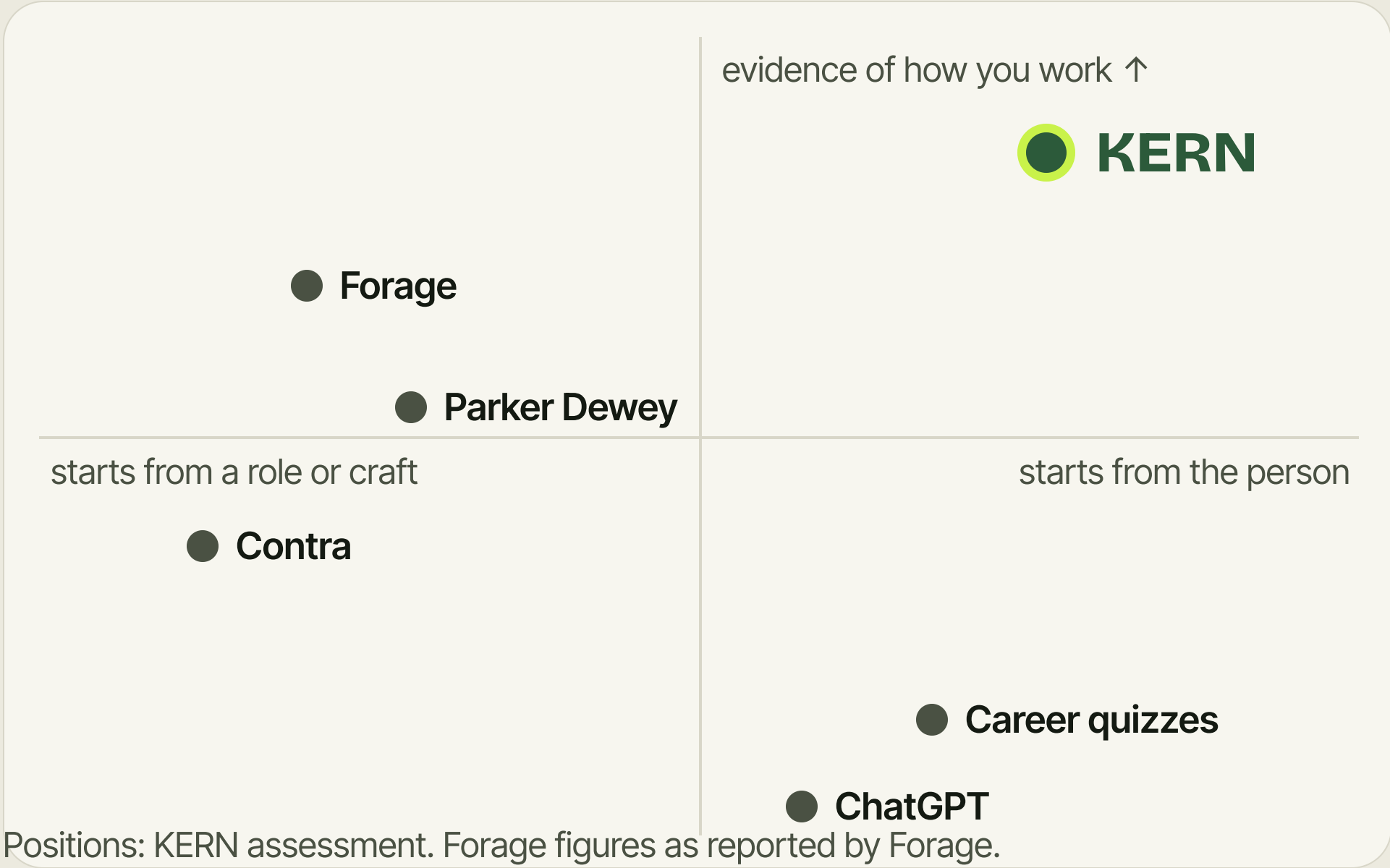
A company sponsors the weekly mission for visibility.

Talent insights

Partners see the profiles and working-style evidence of people who opt in, plus anonymous trends on what young people are drawn to.

COMPETITION

Nobody starts from “*I don’t know what I want.*”



Forage (2M+ learners) and **Parker Dewey** prove companies will supply real tasks. They start from a role you already chose.

Quizzes and chat AI start from you, but you make nothing, so there is no evidence.

KERN is the person-first loop on top of real work.

VALIDATION

We test before *we build more.*



GATE 0 · STARTING SOON

Pilot

People outside the family, co-pilot played by hand.



GATE 1 · NEXT

Instrumented test

About 10 strangers, one link each, all logged.



GATE 2 · THEN

Co-pilot in the app

Real AI co-pilot, first partner missions.



GATE 3 · LATER

Signals and trails

AI-written signals with evidence.

3/5

finish all three missions

Pass mark for Gate 0.

3/5

say “that feels right”

The signal lands.

2/5

recommend it unprompted

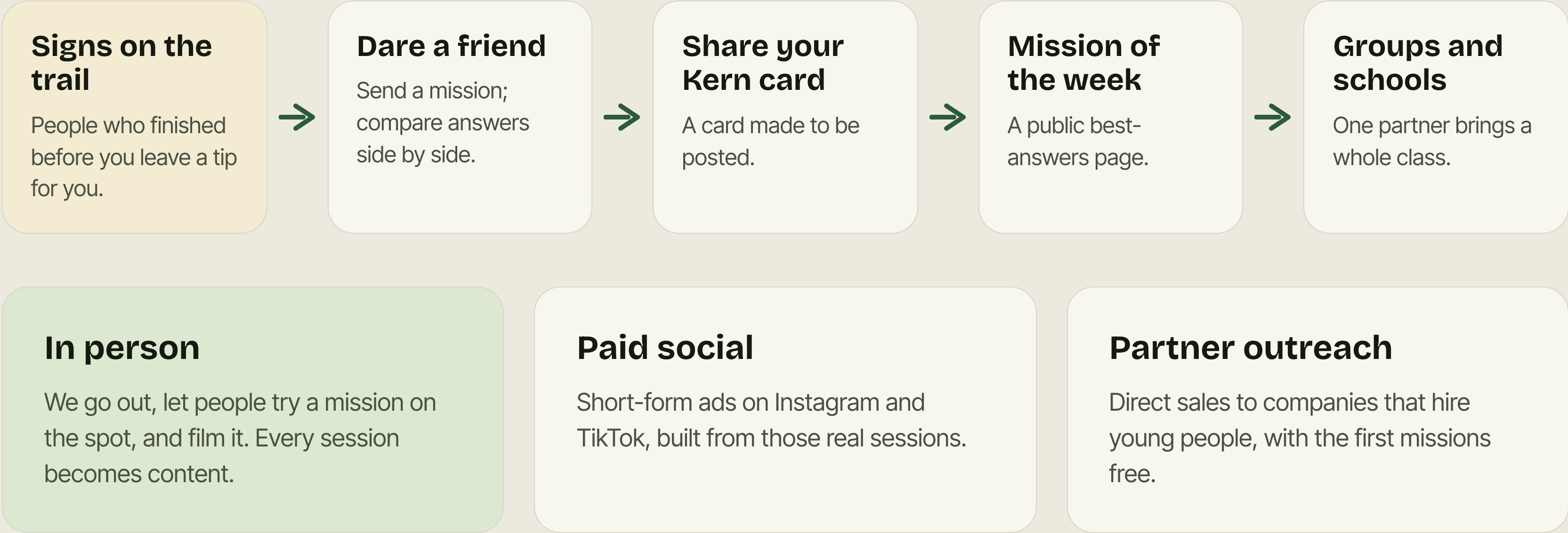
They pass it on.

Pilot results

Starting soon. As soon as it ends, we share finish, fit and referral rates.

GO TO MARKET · AGES 18 TO 35 FIRST

Growth is built into *the product*.



FOUNDER

One founder who ships *fast with AI*.



Manuel Di Paolo

FOUNDER · PRODUCT, DESIGN AND BUILD

Designed and built all of KERN with AI tools. Background in psychology: studies how people decide, then builds for it. Lived the problem first-hand. Works fully remote.

33

GitHub repositories created since 10 Sep 2026

1

working app: KERN, installable, EN and IT, accounts and sync

29/30

average across 110 university credits in psychology

THE ASK

€50k

Pre-seed · 12 months · 15% equity

The product is built. This round proves demand: 45% goes straight into growth. 15% at a €333k post-money is an early-believer price, with a clear step up to the seed round.



USE OF FUNDS

Growth: street sessions, paid social, partner outreach	€22.5k · 45%
Founder at minimal pay, 12 months	€7.5k · 15%
Legal: company, trademark, GDPR, accountant	€7.5k · 15%
Product, hosting and AI	€5k · 10%
Contingency	€7.5k · 15%

WHAT IT BUYS

- 1,000 people finish all three missions
- Half of starters finish; 30% come back within 60 days
- 15 partner companies, 5 of them paying
- 2 university pilots or letters of intent