

# Project Report: Design Project 1

## Mobile App

Link to the Figma prototype:

<https://www.figma.com/proto/LR70xAR4yJJ3dCezL06RZe/MOBILE-APP---Design-Project-1?node-id=118%3A1859&scaling=scale-down&page-id=118%3A1122&starting-point-node-id=118%3A1859>

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## 1. Introduction

As designers we are looking into how we can engage and motivate other students and tenants in student housing to become more social. To do this we have designed an application that lets tenants in the SiA housing buildings get an overview of different possibilities when it comes to extracurricular activities, and to take part in different social and local events. Our goal is to break down the barrier that keeps students from interacting with one another, and with this application make it easier to form relationships with other students or tenants who have similar interests. Because the application is segmented to be used by only the tenants in these housings, it is already a clear target group. The idea to make such an application came because we are interested in integrating as many students as possible, as well as minimizing the possibility that tenants and students feel lonely. There are many students who are lonely, but not from their own will. With this application we wish to make a difference.

Our application uses functions from other apps like Facebook and Messenger, where the users can communicate in a forum and view events or social activities. It also uses elements from the UiA website, regarding positions ("verv") and student organizations (possibilities). But compared to those applications/websites, our application is tailored specifically to the students living in the SiA apartments.

## 2. Development

In the starting phase of the project, we had a discussion where all three participants of the group had to present three different ideas for an application. We landed on this particular idea, as we saw it was a manageable and not too big of a project to start with. We started facilitating a workshop where we discussed what the application needed to contain and how we wanted to present the information. When we had discussed and agreed upon the major components of the application, we started creating a paper prototype.

The paper prototype was done fairly simple, with little design and more focus on the interactivity and layout of the pages (wireframe). When creating the paper prototype, the different solutions and placing of buttons etc. were tested on paper with post-its as the different elements. This made it more obvious what would work and what would not. We also drew prototypes with different layouts and solutions on a whiteboard. All of this was put together in the prototype seen below.



This paper prototype shows all the pages of the application, where the home page is in the top left. From the home page, the user can navigate to three different pages (student housing, events and possibilities). We added three pages for account management (log in, sign up and change password). We also added a profile page, with corresponding pages.

When the paper prototype was completed and we were ready to make a digital prototype, we discussed the different platforms we could do this in. Our main options were Figma and Adobe XD, and even though one group member had previous experience with Adobe XD, we chose to go with Figma. This was because it is considered one of the best digital prototyping tools available at the moment and will most likely be more relevant for future jobs.

We set up a new group project in Figma, which let us collaborate simultaneously. The Figma prototype is interactive in the way that the user can navigate through the different pages with clickable buttons, and view/interact with the prototype in a mobile viewport. The prototype does not allow the user to input text on the different pages because we could not find a good way to implement that function in Figma and we did not think that it was a really necessary function for this prototype.

### 3. Functionality

After the user has made an account, or logged in, there are three main categories that will be presented on the main page. These three categories will be presented in different interactive elements that have unique names and further information.

#### 3.1. Student housing

Within the student housing category, the user will be able to get information from SiA. This area will work as a channel where SiA will be able to post different information for the tenants. Here they can reach out to all the tenants using the app with information regarding the use of the common room.

Within “The meeting room” the user will be presented with different posts where one can like and comment on the posts. This area will then work as a forum in a way, for the tenants, where one can check the interests for making certain events or see if anyone wants to create or join social events. For a user to make a new post, one can simply click the “+” icon and the user will be presented with boxes to supply information.

In all the housing complexes there are common rooms and lounges the tenants can book. The tenants can book these rooms through this application. To be able to book a room, they need to provide a date, time, and agenda for the event.

#### 3.2. Events

This page will present different events in Grimstad. The user can filter between local events, which are events happening in their student house, or social events which take place in Grimstad.

#### 3.3. Possibilities

The third main category is the “possibilities” section. Here the user will be presented with the different possibilities that the student life can offer. The first elements will be placed in regards to the user’s interests and study. When all the possibilities connected to the user’s preferences have been presented, the following elements will be on a general basis.

## 4. Profile area

To be able to quickly navigate to the profile area, we have placed the users profile picture in the top right corner. This is a fixed position that will be in the same place all the time.

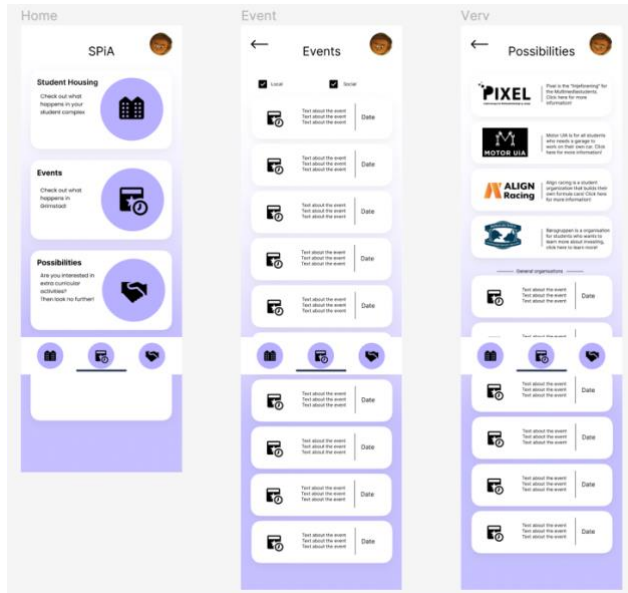
### 4.1. Profile

The profile page can be accessed by clicking the circle icon in the top right of all the main pages and will open an overlay where the user can access different profile settings. To close the overlay, the user can either drag the overlay down or touch any part of the page which is not a link or a button.

In the profile area, the user will be able to supply interests, student courses and student housing. These are the different elements that will make the user experience unique from one another. In the prototype, we have an example of this where the user is studying multimedia technology and -design and also is interested in cars and finance. Therefore, the list will first show the possibilities that relate to the user's interests. The student housing element will register a user to a certain SiA-building in Grimstad, and this will affect the local events list.

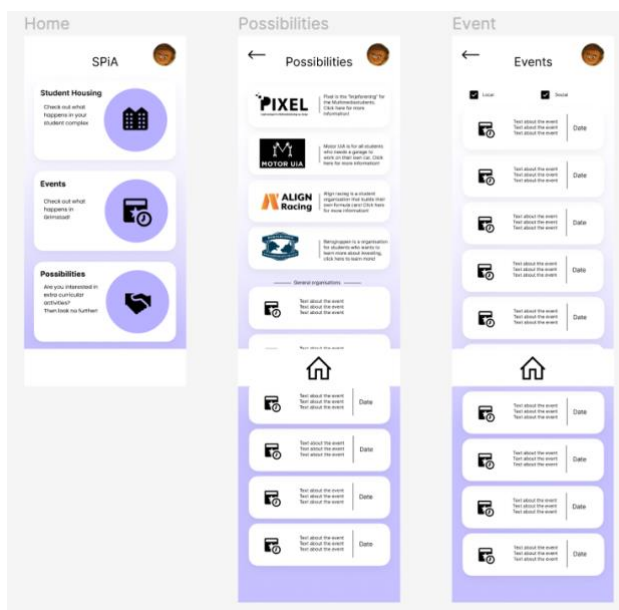
## 5. General functionality

Handheld devices these days have a bigger screen and therefore we decided upon having a fixed navigation bar in the bottom of the application, so that the user can easily use their thumb to navigate through the main pages.



### 5.1 Usability testing

In order for us to test our design, we have shared our project with some of our classmates and friends. By doing so, different findings were then uncovered. It became clear that the three categories we had placed in the fixed nav-bar in the bottom could be confusing, so we removed the three categories and placed a home button instead.



## 6. Principles of Design

To keep the design as consistent as we possibly can, we have chosen to use specific colors and fonts throughout the entire application. The colors have derived directly from SiA's company colors, where the primary color is purple.

To keep a hierarchical structure within the application, we have chosen to use a green color on the booking button. This is because we want to indicate that this has a unique function that clearly shows what it does.

To keep the level of intuitiveness as high as possible, we have decided upon not having too much elements and information, but rather show a selected amount. The users will have the possibility to click on the elements and the user will then be presented more information regarding that specific element. We do also want the users to navigate as they please through the app, and we have implemented the typical shortcuts around the application. Instances of shortcuts are for example the fixed nav-bar in the bottom and the left arrow in the top left corner of most pages.

When it comes to the layout of the different elements, we have decided to have rectangles with smoother edges, and this is a design that follows through the entire application. By having negative space in between our elements, we make them stand out and show that they are unique. Having a contrast further highlights this effect.

Furthermore we have decided to use an understandable and relatable language. As a part of universal design, we have supplemented with icons where there is information given. This is to underline the point and to give users who struggle reading for whatever reason a more understandable application.

## 7. Summary

All in all we are pleased with the design of our prototype, although we have been in situations where we lack the judgment to make decisions based upon knowledge. Because we are new to this area, we have not accumulated enough expertise to make decisions that reflect the syllabus.

Even though we are not experts in this field, we have taken inspiration from other websites/applications and by using this inspiration paired with previous experience of viewing and interacting with online websites, we feel that our application has a logical and intuitive structural architecture and flow.

Figma is quick and intuitive to use, but we could most certainly have spent more time on the story board and paper prototype. We ended up making a lot of changes in Figma, which could have been avoided by planning better from the start.

As a summary we have learned by doing and our workflow has grown exponential. We are eager to learn more about the subject and to take more of the science behind it into consideration and act less on how we think it is to be personally.