

## 1. Findings on conventions

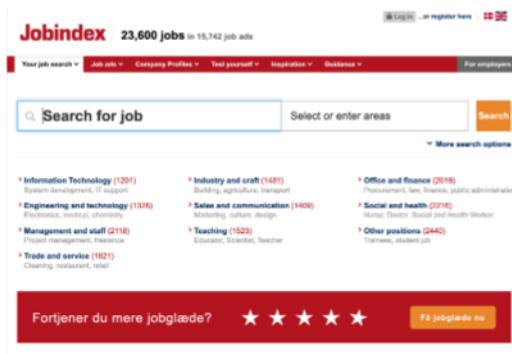
To find conventions regarding design, content, and functionality, we explored two types of websites offering jobs and real estate properties.

### 1.1. Job sites

#### Design

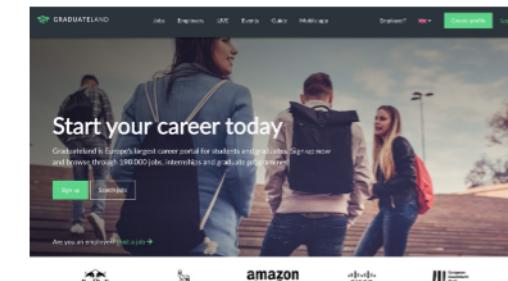
Overall, design-wise it seems that there are two broad categories of websites: one that serves advanced professionals and older audiences, and those focusing on graduates, students, and young professionals.

In the first scenario, a search-based website like e.g. JobIndex has a no-frills approach to design. It is simple, has few colors, places emphasis on the primary purpose—the search. Also, they tend to have few solid dominant colors, such as a combination of red, black and shades of grey. These types of websites would emphasize search box and job categories and would have a simplistic layout that's more of a one-page fixed layout.



Whereas others, pages targeting younger audiences e.g. Graduateland, also have a one-page landing, and yet, it is different in terms of length as it is multi-sectional, requiring long scrolling. Also, these websites have a more contemporary feel to them through selected background imagery, fonts, and colors. In terms of colors, there's a tendency to use a combination of shades of grey and white; being accompanied by a brighter and bolder color like green or orange.

Frequently used fonts are sans-serif, e.g. Deca Sans Medium or Steve Sans regular. The font choice is rather contemporary, simple, and clean, using one or two at the most, and using two colors, maintaining the overall color scheme of a website.



In all cases, the logos are clickable, redirecting to their homepages and are placed in the top left corner. Prevailing icons are used for search bars; arrows that indicate directional clicking, and flags which are used for indicating the chosen language. There are also icons showcasing job categories: software engineering, education, and teaching, accountancy; for ranking, stars were a frequent choice.

A screenshot of the DTU Job Bank website. The header includes a search bar, a login/register button, and language selection. Below the header is a navigation bar with links for 'Jobs', 'Employers', 'IMF', 'Events', and 'Guide'. A main content area features a section titled 'Internships: The Complete Guide' with a subtext about finding the right internship. At the bottom is a footer with 'BROWSE BY CATEGORY' and 'BROWSE BY LOCATION' buttons, followed by icons for various job categories: Education &amp; Teaching, Software Engineering, Sales, Customer Service, Marketing &amp; PR, Admin, Secretarial &amp; HR, and Accountancy.

#### Content

- If the user's sole purpose is to browse job ads and companies, then all of the websites do the job. However, if you're looking for additional resources or information, this is where it gets a little tricky due to lack of commonly used terminology e.g. some label blog-like resources or content hubs as inspiration, some guidance, or they sporadically display articles in a grid or a carousel-type manner. More student-oriented sites call this type of content category as "Guides".
- The overall tone of voice across all websites is serious, casual, respectful and

matter-of-fact.

- Some websites use quotes from users who successfully used the job platform e.g. Graduateland displays students citations as a form of testimonial.



- The application of microcopy is somewhat subtle: trying to be conversational yet formal, for example, a tab posed as a question “Employer?” You get instructions such as worded suggestions in search boxes “keywords, job title, or company name”.

## Functionality

- The global navigation bars are always at the top and centered or slightly on the right side. On more student-oriented sites, the bar is always sticky. The bar typically consists of categories such as “jobs, employer and guides”. Some of the categories are seemingly repetitive e.g. also mentioned within the footer, which is most likely done for the purpose of SEO.

- All have search bars at the center or beginning and listed job categories as suggestions right below the bars. The vast majority of websites operate as a search engine for jobs, rather than, for example, job ad boards or listicles.
- Most have two options of CTAs at the start: to create a profile or start the search right away.
- Users are presented with a choice to filter out job preferences, most commonly through check-boxes.

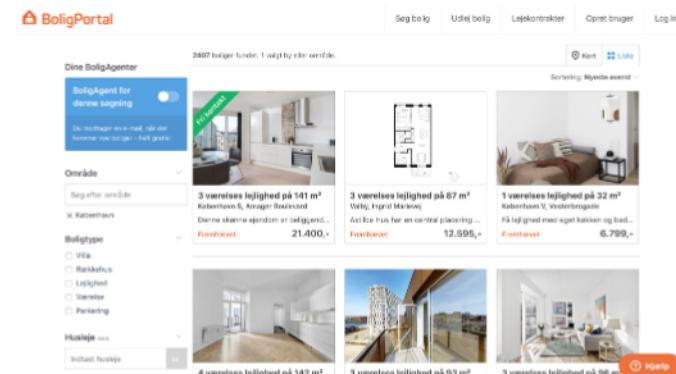
## Websites:

<https://www.jobindex.dk/?lang=en>  
<https://jobbank.dtu.dk/>  
<https://graduateland.com/da/>  
<https://www.thelocal.dk/jobs/>  
<https://www.ofir.dk/>  
<https://careerland.dk/en/>

## 1.2. Real estate

### Design

Within the real estate, there are also two prevailing types of websites in terms of layout and overall design. One type is more of a centered grid-based gallery of apartments and search preferences located on the left side of a page e.g. [Boligportalen](#).



And the second type is more interactive and modern, including either a clickable map or a video in the background e.g. [Boligpanda](#), together with a search bar for the desired location as being the focal point.

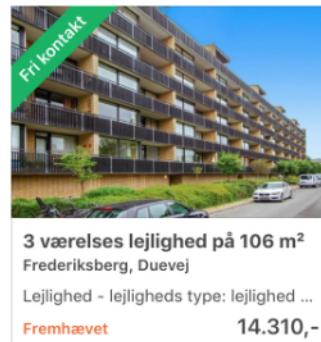


The header features the Boligpanda logo with a panda icon, followed by the text "Boligpanda" and "Find bolig". To the right are navigation links for "Lejer", "Udlejer", "Log ind", and "Opret bruger". A large, bold headline "På udkig efter et nyt hjem?" is centered over the image. Below it is a subtext "Søg mellem mere end 5531 lejeboliger i hele Danmark." A white search bar contains the placeholder text "Hvor vil du gerne bo?".

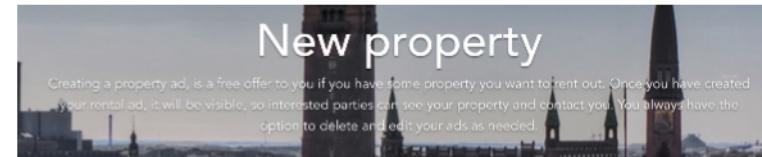
In both cases, the layouts are simple yet modern, displaying the items either more vertically or horizontally. Like, say, an order from left to right: filters for search preferences, a gallery of apartments, and sometimes a map. Or all these components showcased at length in a multi-category format from top to bottom, requiring more scrolling on the user's part.

Icons were widely applied and some of the most repetitive ones are 1) pins to indicate either maps or specific locations; 2) coins to indicate budget and price; 3) hearts are used for liked ads 4) dog icons for pets 5) for menus there were either grid and list icons, and hamburger menu icon has indicated filters; 6) there were also icons for emails, help, and verification checkmarks.

There's a tendency to have a clickable logo at the top left corner that takes users back to the homepage. The dominant colors are typically these: white used for background, with grey or black, as well as a green, light-red or orange elements to catch users' attention.



Fonts are sans-serif type, like e.g. Gerlach Sans 400 Regular, so the content appears casual, modern, easy on the eye and it enhances on-screen legibility.

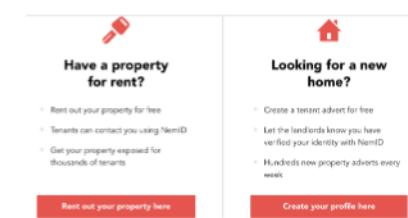


## Content

- A lot of visually appealing and high-resolution imagery of either the desired location e.g. major cities, or listed apartments, but generally, there isn't a lot of text. It's used to only indicate locations, describe categories, or provide more detailed information on the specifications of apartments.



- Microcopy is engaging and motivating to proceed e.g. search box “Where do you want to live?”, “Are you looking for a place to call home?”
  - The tone of voice: serious, casual, respectful and matter-of-fact.
  - Content is oriented towards audiences renting out their homes or looking for one, so it provides with short and to the point instructions or unique selling points for either case.



- It is common to use press endorsements by displaying logos of famous media outlets, this way they enhance credibility and strengthen the brand and its awareness.

## Functionality

- An integral part of all sites was having an interactive map, including location-based pinning, which often corresponded to your preselected option. Having the map with clickable pins where apartments are is very useful for sorting out apartments based on your preferred location. Also, there are buttons at the top of the page allowing you to set filters for your search preferences.
- Not all, yet the majority of websites had some form of a two-fold navigation menu. consisting of one located at the top and the other one as a hamburger menu. They navigate in different places, or navigation menu consists of a two-option setup: landlord and tenant.
- Generally speaking, the usability feels simple and straightforward, as there are only one or several steps users can take, and they typically revolve around the primary action of search (as well as sign-ups, adjusting preferences, and the like).
- Typically navigation at the top and often non-sticky, unless the sites are aimed at young demographics, then they are sticky.

## Websites:

<https://www.boligportal.dk/>  
<https://boligpanda.dk/>  
<https://en.lejebolig.dk/>  
<https://www.boligsurf.dk>  
<https://cityapartment.dk/>

## 2. Findings on digital communication targeted towards an international audience

To get more insights on what would be some effective ways to approach an audience consisting of international students (age: 18-30), we reviewed websites that target similar groups of users.

For this purpose, we've examined social networking websites, combining online and offline experiences: Meetups—join a local group to try out a new activity or something that's already your hobby; Showaround—explore a city with a local or get introduced to it as a newcomer. It's not only tours, you can also hang out with people. Citysocialized—find new local friends to go out and have fun.

## Tone of voice

Across all websites the tone is serious, casual, respectful and enthusiastic. Also, the receiver is either approached as 'you' or referred to as a group of people, creating a sense that you are about to become part of a community.

## Copy

- Headlines and subheadlines not only describe the purpose of the website but also have an aspirational connotation to them e.g. on Meetup they have used a headline phrase stating "The real world is calling". It encourages real-life interactions, followed by a sub-headline "Join a local group to meet people, try something new, or do more of what you love."
- Every website has a dedicated "How it works" section, which combines simplified step-by-step instructions consisting of illustrations and essential text e.g. Citysozializer presents it as an action-based timeline.
- Another frequent choice is to either have a press or a user testimonial section in the form of a quote, so that users know what to expect. Also,
- Showaround allows to leave a review once the tour is completed and they are displayed on the homepage together with member profiles.
- All three websites have pages dedicated to provide more information about the company "About Us", blogs, and help pages, as well as various resources complementing the purpose of every website e.g. Citysozializer has a page called "Why host?"



## Microcopy

The texts used for microcopy, especially before taking an action, are suggestive, instructive and motivational, e.g. Showaround search box for discovering locals depending on your preferred destination. For example, "Where next?" a simple phrase that makes the user feel adventurous as it assumes that it's not his or her first trip.

**FIND A LOCAL TO SHOW YOU AROUND**

Where next? BROWSE LOCALS

Top Destinations: Paris, İstanbul, Barcelona, Tbilisi, Kyiv, Lisbon

Groups near you

Find groups that get together to do the things they love.

See all

Category	Group Name	Upcoming Events	Members
TECH	Copenhagen .Net User Group	3,407 DotNetters	3,407
CAREER & BUSINESS	ProductTank Copenhagen	2,210 Product People	2,210
LANGUAGE & CULTURE	Copenhagen Swap Language with....	1,217 Swappers	1,217
SOCIAL	Malmö Internationals	3 upcoming events	3,781 Internationals

Another observation is that once a substantial action is taken e.g. the location is changed, and on Meetup location is how they sort and provide event suggestions to users, so then the user is affirmed with some post-action feedback.

Your location has been changed successfully.

## Visuals

As the content of these websites is targeted at young audiences, they are visually-appealing and filled with illustrations, icons, images and videos, or a mix of several options. Also, the use of bright colors is much more frequent choice, providing a more playful feel, but still leaving a credible, clean and modern impression of the website. Some brands used illustration to also enhance the brand awareness through repetition e.g. Meetup has part of the website for event categories, and each is illustrated. For that the company

has seamlessly integrated illustrations.



Furthermore, the vast majority of members have profile images e.g. on Showaround, your profile doesn't even appear if you don't have one. And on Meetups, there's more attention paid to the main image of an event, to complement the description of it. In both cases, imagery plays a big role in setting user expectations.

Colors schemes used are repetitive to the ones used in logos, as well as helping to set a contrast in terms of content elements or stress important parts by using bright colours e.g. Showaround emphasizes the rating of a local and the hourly rate.



## Websites:

[www.meetup.com](http://www.meetup.com)  
[www.showaround.com/](http://www.showaround.com/)  
[www.citysocializer.com/](http://www.citysocializer.com/)

## 3. Description of argumentation on how the findings were applied

The newly-created website combines job and apartment searching platforms, as well as it combines online and offline experiences through social networking. The latter part is focused on events—so that the communication between international students doesn't remain solely online. For this reason, there are some real interaction opportunities created. Since students would take part in activities and events, it would also not feel as intimidating as meeting someone one-on-one. Therefore, students would become part of an activity-bonded group from the start.

With the website, our priority was to make the user to feel welcomed, and the page itself to appear engaging, uncomplicated, straightforward and informative. For the design, we aimed to remain consistent with the Ministry of Higher Education and Science brand, so the dominant color scheme and typography has heavily influenced our design decisions.

With that said, we also added some distinctive touches to make the website more modern and slightly less institutionalised. This way we hope to bridge the gap and be more appealing to the 18-30 age group, also having in mind that they come from different cultures.

During our convention research, two primary observations have been made that there is a tendency for either more conservative, simplistic and no-frills websites oriented towards mature audiences or those focused on students and young professionals.

From more elaborate, intuitive navigation and visually-appealing design decisions to the whole content structure, the latter type of websites have laid the foundation for our website. The applications will be discussed in more detail in the sections below.

## Design

### Layout

- Broadly speaking, the layout remains consistent throughout the website, whether you're looking for a job or to rent a room. The page is divided into a map, helping you to indicate the location of your findings; personalised and tailored information based on e.g. events near you and your current location; and then also a field with detailed search preferences, for example, for your room criteria. The layout idea has been strongly inspired these two websites: Boligsurf and Meetup.

- To distinguish three categories and separate elements on each of them, we relied heavily on the Gestalt's principles such as grouping, common region and proximity e.g. search preferences. And we wanted to emphasise a split-screen effect as well as have the website more horizontally-oriented so that it doesn't require too much scrolling.

### Colors

- The primary color scheme (including solid purple, a lighter version of it, white shade, and so on) is based on applied by the Ministry of Higher Education and Science. The secondary scheme consists of bolder and brighter colors (purple, green and yellow) helping us distinguish the three sections: job, event and networking sections. Each section has an allocated color.
- The brighter colors have also been used for elements that are meant to be attention-grabbing. For example, adding a heart icon to event you like and want to save or adding a tiny bright green arrow next to an offered apartment if its rent has been reduced. The arrow icon would direct downwards with an amount it has been reduced e.g. -12%.
- On a website we would locate icons that are related in theme, similar in groups based on size, color, etc. e.g. social media and contact details.

### Typography

- The chosen font is sans-serif called Ageo. It was a close replica of a font used by the Ministry, it is also a suitable alternative option to achieve the purpose mentioned earlier. Ageo seems approachable, clean and simple. It also creates a feeling of being modern, casual and friendly.
- This particular shape of sans-serif increases legibility for users. And through increased color contrast between the background and the text, it was aimed at improved readability.
- The selected font is youthful and relatable, so it will help us be more effective when reaching and communicating our key messages to a young multicultural audience. Finally, sans-serif has been used by the vast majority of our researched websites.

### Content

- The web form used for a user to sign-up has applied Gestalt's principle of grouping as the fields themselves are arranged closely and are center-aligned. This reinforces the relationship between the elements and indicates their hierarchical importance.
- Based on our research findings, we also wanted to avoid the content structure being confusing and repetitive. Therefore, the three categories are primarily seen. There would also be a supportive content hub like "Guide" or "Blog", contact details, support page and a page about the sender.
- Having in mind that the sender is the ministry, the tone of voice would be serious, casual, respectful but instead of matter-of-fact, it would be more enthusiastic. This way we want to sound appealing to the international audience without sounding too much like a governmental establishment.
- In terms of copy, we would keep the wording plain without being too

eloquent because the language proficiency level of our target audience is varied.

e.g. What is your reason for joining today? This will help us prepare good recommendations for you. Then the job, flat or event search can be tailored accordingly.

- With the use of micro copy, the idea is to be motivational rather than instructional and somewhat dull, so that students feel inspired to take action and feel more positive about the overall process of finding a job or a new home.

e.g. Where would you like your next home to be located?

### **Functionality**

- At the top right, there will be a horizontal navigation bar that's sticky, so the user doesn't have to scroll all the way back. And the bar remains in the same position on every page of the website. Having a standardized navigation system across all pages enhances usability.

- Once the user has started his search e.g. apartment hunting, so when he clicks one the item and want to go back, the page is located right where he left off his search.

- Based on our findings and for the sake of SEO, we wanted to have conventionally named top-level page tabs like "Jobs", "Events" and "Housing" and avoid drop down menu, at least for the web version. We want to avoid users having too many unclearly labelled options due to the paradox of choice and the feeling of being overwhelmed.

- Since the website for the most part would be composed of three parts, functionality wise there would be an interactive map, indicating either the selected apartment, job or event. Search preferences would help narrow down and customise the search that would appear in the middle. In some instances, you could change the formats of how you'd like your search result to appear e.g. events, whether they are distance or date specific so that, say, the latest events appear at the top.

## **4. Think Aloud test results and summary of future improvements**

### **4.1. Introduction**

To test and validate our website prototype, we recruited 6 participants for the Think Aloud testing method. With a received consent for audio recording and provided brief on the 5 tasks each user has to accomplish, every recipient was provided with a link to an XD prototype. We asked to

share his or her thoughts throughout the way as well as state outloud any observational or contextual notes.

The recipients were provided with some information about the website such as the purpose of it: to find a job, accommodation or events.

However, purposefully, the specific target audience was not revealed in order to see how well our design choices reflect on users.

### **4.1.1. Goal-oriented tasks**

Create a profile (fact finding)

Explore the user ideas for the events page (uncovering expectations)

Navigate to the page where you can book an event (fact finding)

Which of the three categories seems the most appealing? (compare personal evaluation)

Find a particular event (personal valuation)

### **4.1.2. Recipients**

1. Martynas, 37, back-end developer, a former international student  
2. Marie-Louise, 38, a former teacher and copywriter, experience as an exchange student

3. Mak, 26 year-old male who is very technologically inclined. He uses computers, tablets and phone sties and apps on a regular basis

4. Brece, 24 year old female who does not use technology very much. Is outdoorsy and uses a pen and paper for her notes at work

5. Donna, 44 year-old female who uses computers on a regular basis, but does not use her phone or computer apps much

6. Asta, 32 year-old, coworking space manager.

### **4.1.3. Appendix**

Audio recordings and notes: <http://bit.ly/prototype-audio-and-notes>

## **4.2. Task templates**

### **Task 1:**

Create a profile

Goal:

Go through the sign-up process

Task steps, optimal path:

Click on the "Create a profile" button on the homepage

Fill out the form

Upload a photo or connect with Facebook

Alternative path

Click on the "Sign up" button (top right corner)

Fill out the form

Upload a photo or connect with Facebook

Timeframe: 2 minutes / 4 clicks

Task text: Once you open the website, please create a user profile. If you see more than one option, choose the one that seems the easiest and most intuitive.

Task 2:

Share your expectations about the events page

Goal:

Explore what expectations, ideas and preferences users have

Task steps, optimal path:

Once the profile is created, leave the profile

Click the events page

Alternative path:

Click "Home"

Click on the events (top right corner)

Timeframe: 3 minutes / 1-2 clicks

Task text:

Before clicking on the page, please talk us through what do you think you'll find on the events page?

Task 3:

Find events page

Goal

Find out whether the user intuitively looks for events at the same location as it is placed

Task steps, optimal path:

Click on the event button after creating a profile

Look at set preferences for finding events

Alternative path:

Go back to "Home"

Click on "Events" page (top right corner)

Timeframe: 3 minutes / 2-3 clicks

Task text: Imagine an event page based on your past experiences as well as desired expectations, what would you have on the page?

Task 4:

User preferences for one of the three categories: jobs, events, housing

Goal:

Indicate which category seems the most appealing or relevant

Task steps, optimal path:

Navigate to "Home" page

Click through the three expandable sections

Alternative paths:

Choose a category after the profile creation

Timeframe: 1 minute / 1-2 clicks

Task text: Based on the information you have so far and your preferences, which one of the three categories seems the most interesting to you and why?

Task 5:

Find an event organised on the 15th of October in Nørrebro

Goal:

Explore whether the user finds events page easy to use or not

Task steps, optimal path:

Click on the "Events" page on the navigation bar

Explore the page in order to find the specific event

Choose the event

Alternative path:

Go back to "Home page"

Expand category dedicated to events

Click "See all"

Explore the page

Choose the event

Timeframe: 5 minutes / 4-5 clicks

Task text: Review the events page, then locate and choose the event on the 15th of October in Nørrebro

#### 4.3. Summary of future improvements

After examining the findings gathered during our Think Aloud test, some of the feedback was repetitive and will be taken into consideration for future developments. The users mentioned that at first glance, there's too much spacing at the navigation bar area and the Logout and Account area seems to be hanging. Based on the remark, we will align the section and separate the titles more distinctively. Also, the spacing of the navigation bars will be improved by evening out the gaps. We will also be adding more context to the event page to describe the event better.

Furthermore, for some users having three categories that appear as equally important seemed a little overwhelming. The same was for the list of events and related information. So potential improvements would be to hide the search preference area once the selections are made, or create a more clear hierarchy through titles, fonts and white spacing. It was also noted that having search preferences on the left would seem more intuitive, and then have research results displayed in the middle and on the right side.



**Ministry of Higher  
Education and Science**

# Headers

## Sub headers

Paragraphs

**Button One**

**Button Two**

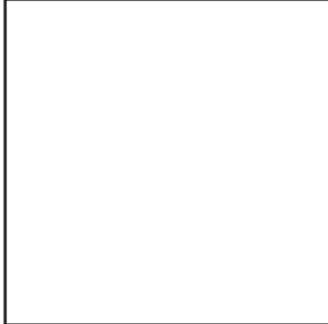
like/love icons



#473387



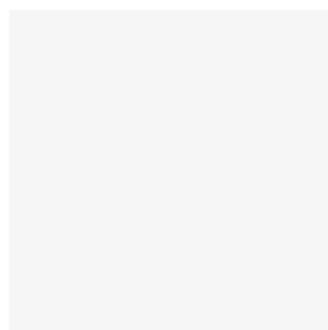
#adaac4



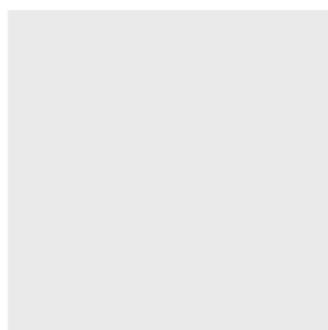
#ffffff



#333333



#f6f6f6



#eaeaea



#1fd02b

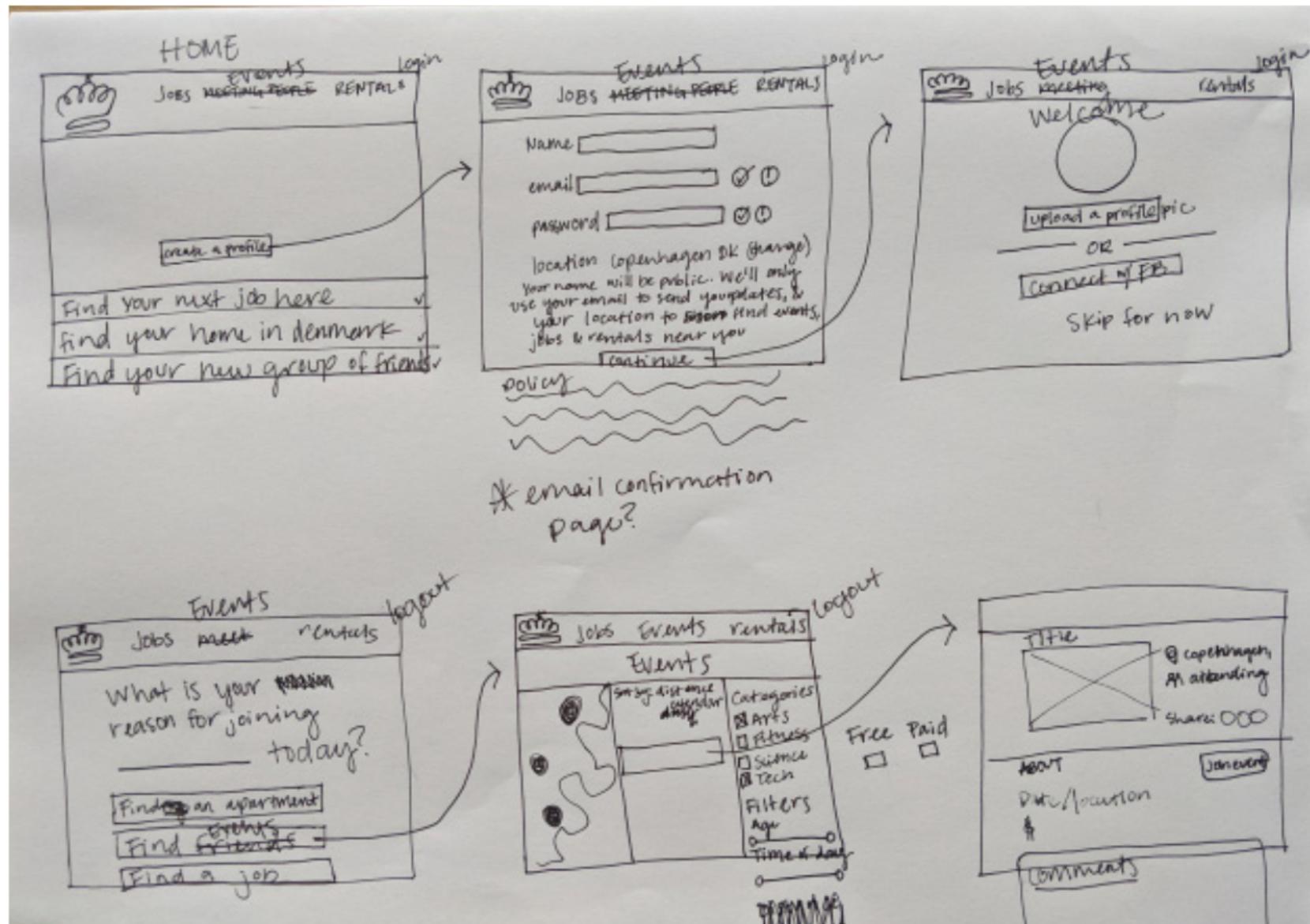


#fb8305

Engaging      Uncomplicated  
Welcoming

Straight Forward      Informative

# Sketch of our Low-fidelity Wire Flow



## Low-fidelity Wire Flow

The image displays six low-fidelity wireframe prototypes (Web 1920 - 1 to Web 1920 - 6) arranged in two rows of three. Each prototype shows a simplified version of a website for the Ministry of Higher Education and Science.

- Web 1920 - 1:** Shows a header with the ministry logo and navigation links for "Jobs", "Events", and "Housing". A large, empty rectangular area below the header is crossed out with a large 'X'.
- Web 1920 - 2:** Shows a header with the ministry logo and navigation links for "Jobs", "Events", and "Housing". Below the header is a form with fields for "Name", "Email", and "Phone", followed by a "Continue" button.
- Web 1920 - 3:** Shows a header with the ministry logo and navigation links for "Jobs", "Events", and "Housing". Below the header is a placeholder for a user profile picture with the text "User profile" and "User".
- Web 1920 - 4:** Shows a header with the ministry logo and navigation links for "Jobs", "Events", and "Housing". Below the header is a success message: "Congrat! You have successfully created a profile." followed by a note: "What you are searching for today?". It includes four buttons: "Pending Job", "Pending Events", and "Pending Housing".
- Web 1920 - 5:** Shows a header with the ministry logo and navigation links for "Jobs", "Events", and "Housing". Below the header is a section titled "Events" with a table for "Event ID", "Title", and "Category". To the right is a sidebar with "Categories" (Art, Fitness, Outdoor, Sports), "Fitness" (Age, Duration), and "Comments".
- Web 1920 - 6:** Shows a header with the ministry logo and navigation links for "Jobs", "Events", and "Housing". Below the header is a post area with a "Title" input field, a "Location" field with "University building" and a location pin icon, and a "Comments" input field with "Share this post! 000".

## High-fidelity Interactive Site

[Click here to see!](#)

