

Half-time evaluation

Now that half of the course has gone by, there are a few notable points that come to mind.

During the Lego exercise we realized the importance of planning ahead and estimating how much time is needed for each task. We have definitely taken these important conclusions into account when planning a sprint.

In our experience there are both advantages and disadvantages of using Scrum. It takes a long time to plan and evaluate each sprint, but it's also very rewarding to have a good project structure. It's also helpful to know exactly what each person is supposed to do during the week. We think that Trello works very well for our workflow and that it is an efficient tool to use in a project, especially when using scrum.

We feel that we have managed to implement "vertical slices" of the application pretty well. The application has multiple features, even though they are all very rigid. We have at this point completed quite a large portion of our initial user stories, and we seem to be well on track for completing the project on time, even with a few unexpected problems or extra features.

The paper "dry run" we did of the application with the team over at Lindholmen helped us a great deal in identifying problems and potential bugs that are hard to spot when you yourself have become "blind" by being too familiar with your own product.

When we first met our mentors at Lindholmen we learned that they had come up with their own application ideas. We had come up with a few ideas beforehand, but after listening to these suggestions we settled on our idea for a "matching" application.

Once we had decided on this idea, we had to determine the focus of the application. We felt that our initial idea was too vague and tried to carve out a niche for ourselves. Our mentors agreed that this was a good way to look at it. This process took some time, but after several meetings worth of debating and several rounds of mail correspondence, we decided on a work perspective; helping refugees find a mentor with a specific occupation to make the learning experience focus on the job in question.

The group has worked well together. It's important for us that everyone in the group will learn how to properly write code in Android and feel like they contribute. In the beginning of each sprint we go through the coming user stories, set tasks under each user story and discuss if it's unclear how that user story should be implemented. When dividing the user stories/tasks between the team members, we always make sure that everyone has a task assigned to them and is comfortable working with that task during the upcoming sprint. The number of people working on a user story differs and depends on the given points but we try to divide the workload for the sprint equally.

Getting to know the interface of Android Studio was fairly easy since it's based on IntelliJ IDEA which many members of the group have used previously. Google has an extensive API and Getting started-guides for Android that allowed us to start development of the application quickly. The setup of Android, different resources for code and UI etc, was familiar from previous courses based on creating an interface.

The mentors and workshops have played a great role in our creating process. With their guidance we were able to organize our ideas and choose a more specific direction for our application. We were also able to sketch a simple interface design, which we all agreed on, with their feedback.