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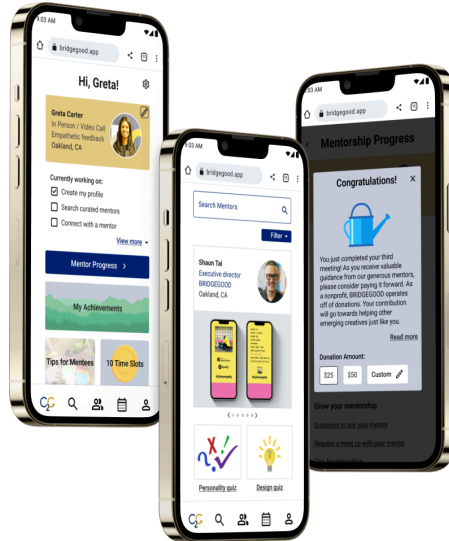
Connect2Grow

Image above: three phones displaying different screens of Connect2Grow.

A web-application that fosters guided growth through mentorship.

An extension of the non-profit organization, BRIDGEGOOD, Connect2Grow is the bridge between non-traditional student designers with working professionals. We streamline the process of finding the right mentor or mentee for you through clear expectations and showing a two-way mentorship.

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Overview

Connect2Grow is a mentoring web-application that creates inclusive, efficient, and intentional guidance through 30 minute mentoring with industry professionals.

Who needs this?

Mentees use Connect2Grow in order to find a mentor, and vice versa.

This is for emerging creatives: people that are looking to break into the design world who may not have the resources that students studying in a college or university might.

This is also for industry professionals who are looking to help educate the next generations of designers!

Why Connect2Grow?

Mentorship is a relationship, not a service. For emerging creatives, finding the right guidance can be overwhelming and difficult, as it can be daunting to figure out what advice fits their situation best. For industry professionals who are seeking to mentor, the main barrier is a lack of time, as many professionals who mentor are doing so in their free time. Thus, Connect2Grow was created: using a matchmaking style, mentees create their profile based on their needs and goals. Mentors list their areas of expertise and their mentoring style. This allows mentees to set their expectations at the forefront—before they connect with a mentor—so that they can match more efficiently.

There is a built-in chat function that allows users to message each other and send files for review. It includes a calendar that helps coordinate time frames to ensure mentees meet with their mentors. It guides mentees to thoughtfully communicate with their mentor. It also makes sure that both parties are putting in effort to grow the relationship!

Installation and requirements

There are no installation requirements, as it is a web-hosted application. However, internet access is a necessity, so make sure that you have a stable network or wifi connection.

Set up

1. Navigate to the webapp: https://bridgegood.app/Connect2Grow
2. Set up your account:
   a. Tap "Sign Up"
   b. In the top text field, enter in your preferred name
   c. Tap the information bubbles and fill in your needs, expectations, and availability. (Communication, Hobbies, Work Experience, and Photo are not necessary, but are helpful for mentors to see.) If you are not sure what you need, do not worry! You can always change these later through the profile.
   d. Review the information and tap "Continue"

Image to the left: the Sign Up screen. There is a required text field for you to enter your name. There is a drawn picture of an avatar, surrounded by seven speech bubbles, to fill out your profile.

*The top three bubbles are required fields: My Needs, Expectations, and My Availability.*

The bottom four bubbles are optional fields: Communication, My Hobbies, Work Experience, and My Photo.

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How to use Connect2Grow

To use Connect2Grow, you must create or already have an account. To create an account, see the [Set up section](#).

1. **Search for a mentor:**
    a. Tap the "Search" icon (the icon that looks like this: 🔍)
    b. There are three ways to search:
        i.   Scroll through the mentors until you see one that you like
        ii. Filter based on topic, availability, communication style,…
        iii. Type in a mentor's name (if you know one)
    c. If you are not sure what you want out of a mentor yet, feel free to try the Personality or Design quizzes! It will suggest mentors based on your answers to help you narrow down your choices.
    d. Tap on the mentor you want to learn more about
        i.   Read through the mentor's profile
        ii. Note any tags that they have added (for example, Shaun Tai's profile has both "virtual" and "in person" tags, which means he is open to both virtual and in-person meetings)
        iii. Check the time slots to see if it matches your availability
        iv. Review the expectations and ensure the mentor matches what you are looking for (for example, Shaun Tai's profile states that he is happy to do case study reviews but he does not have interest in skill instruction. That means that if you are looking for skill instruction, Shaun is probably not the best fit for you.)
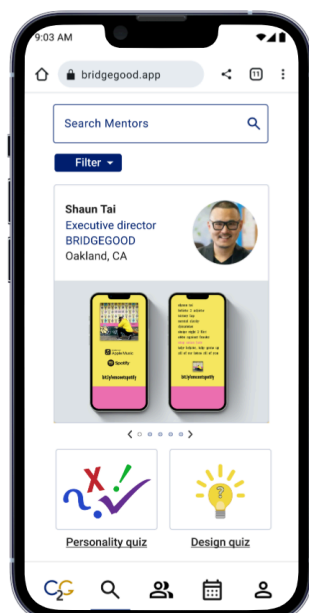
Image to the left: the Search screen. At the top, you can search for mentors by name or select filters based on your preferences. Below that is a carousel of recommended mentors, followed by the personality and design quizzes.

2. **Connecting with a mentor:**
   a. (If you have not already,) Navigate to the mentor's profile
   b. Tap "Connect"
   c. Enter in a message that helps the mentor get to know you or start a conversation (like a LinkedIn connection message!)

3. **Scheduling time with a mentor:**
   a. From the mentor's profile:
      i. Tap "Time Slots This Week"
      ii. Select a day that works for you that they have available
      iii. Pick the time slot(s) that works for your schedule
      iv. Enter in the purpose of the meeting (for example: "case study review")
      v. Enter in where you want to meet (If virtually, which platform will you use? If in-person, what is the location?)
      vi. Enter in any notes or questions that you may have for the mentor (it can help them better cater to what you want)
      vii. Tap "Confirm Schedule"
   b. From the homepage:
      i. Tap the "Calendar" icon (the icon that looks like this: 🗓)
      ii. Check the availability of the mentor you want to meet with
      iii. Select a day that works for you that they have available
      iv. Pick a time slot that works for your schedule
      v. Enter in the purpose of the meeting (for example: "case study review")
      vi. Enter in where you want to meet (If virtually, which platform will you use? If in-person, what is the location?)
      vii. Enter in any notes or questions that you may have for the mentor (it can help them better cater to what you want)
   viii. Tap "Confirm Schedule"

4. **View your current tasks:**

    a. For the quick, general overview:

        i. Tap the "Profile" icon (the icon that looks like this: 👤)

        ii. There will be 3 tasks with the closest deadlines on the page. If you want to see more, tap the "View more" on the right side underneath the tasks.

    b. For the detailed, mentor-specific view:

        i. Tap the "Mentors" icon (the icon that looks like this: 👥)

        ii. Select the mentor you would like to view the tasks for

        iii. Review the tasks and their deadlines

Image to the right: the Mentorship Progress task list. At the top, a gold card displays the mentor's name, photo, the goal you are working towards with them, and how long you've been their mentee. Under the card is the list of tasks you have planned with them and their due dates. At the bottom, there is a list of the tasks you have already achieved with them.
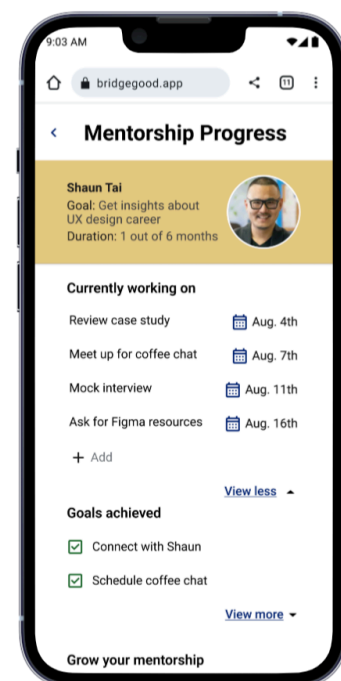
5. **Edit your profile details:**

    a. Tap the "Profile" icon (the icon that looks like this: 👤)

    b. The gold box at the top is your profile. Tap the pencil icon to edit it

    c. Edit anything you want to change (for example, your availability or your communication style)

    d. Tap "Save"

Features

A. Tokens:

The token feature allows non-paying mentees to have 10 free time slots each month. Each token represents one 30 minute time slot. That means mentees are allowed to have a total of 5 hours of dedicated time with a mentor each month! Mentees use the tokens to schedule time with a mentor. Used tokens refresh each month, so mentees will always start the month with 10.

Mentees can buy more tokens if they wish to have more time with a mentor (and the mentor has the time to spare). This goes to support the non-profit organization BRIDGEGOOD!
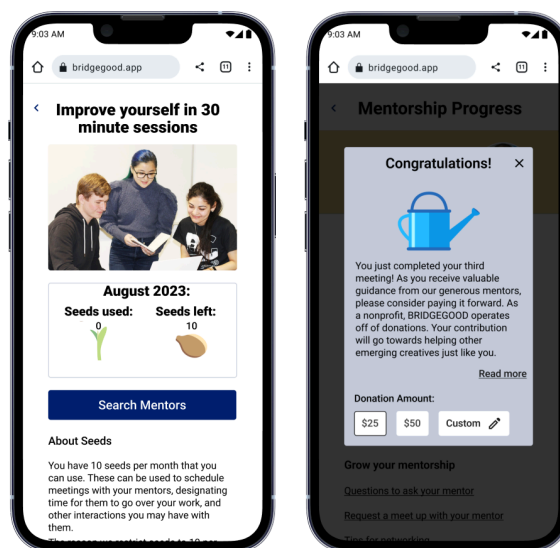
Image above (left): the Tokens screen. Under an image of a mentor working with two mentees, the screen displays how many tokens, called seeds, have been used and how many are left for the month, followed by a button that allows users to search mentors to spend their tokens. Below that is a description about the token system and how it works.

Image above (right): the Goal Complete screen. A modal (or dialogue box) congratulates you for completing your third meeting with a mentor. If you find that Connect2Grow has been useful, you are welcome to support BRIDGEGOOD and pay it forward for others like yourself!

B. **Achievements:**

Connect2Grow tracks the mentor-mentee relationship. For example, if a mentee connects with a mentor and meets with them as scheduled, their Achievements page gets a new sprout added, which represents the new budding relationship. The longer that the mentee and mentor work together, the more the sprout grows into a tree. As a mentee works with more mentors to grow their craft, they can watch their Achievements page turn into a forest!

C. **Matchmaking Quizzes:**

For mentees who might not be confident about what they want yet, Connect2Grow also has matchmaking quizzes based on personality and what part of design they are interested in. The quizzes are created to help mentees think about how they like to learn and what they want to grow towards.

D. **Tips for Mentees:**

There is a series of short blog-style tips for mentees to keep in mind and to grow a strong mentor-mentee relationship which is accessible from the Profile page. These include topics such as questions to ask new mentors, how to request a meet up, and tips for networking.

Image above: the Connect2Grow logo.
If it is animated, a little sprout grows from the G.