**Team RHL**

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A125-PART 2

## **Project Description**

**Design Alternative**

Our proposed application, **SparkBoard**, is grounded in a collaboration-focused model that encourages idea generation, participation, and project execution, particularly in academic and team settings. The guiding principle of this concept is the belief that **collective creativity**, when supported by the right digital tools and a user-friendly experience, can lead to meaningful innovation.

By leveraging simple but impactful features such as idea posting, voting, commenting, and progress tracking, SparkBoard creates a dynamic environment where thoughts are not just shared but **nurtured into action**. This system empowers students, teams, and organizations to turn raw ideas into real-world outcomes through a process of feedback, refinement, and collaboration.

SparkBoard doesn’t just serve as a storage space for thoughts—it actively supports the **evolution of ideas** by making innovation visible and interactive. The goal is to inspire users to engage more with creative processes, encourage teamwork, and build an accessible innovation ecosystem on their mobile devices.

Requirements Summary

#### **Functional Requirements**

* School-verified login and profile creation
* Idea posting with title, category, and description
* Voting system (upvote/downvote)
* Comment section for collaborative feedback
* Status tracking: New → In Progress → Implemented
* Optional user profiles showing participation history
* Moderator tools for reporting and content management

#### **Non-Functional Requirements**

* Clean, intuitive UI for quick navigation
* Data security and login restricted to school accounts
* Accessible on mobile and desktop browsers
* Lightweight performance for low-spec devices
* Feedback loops to improve system usability
* Support for both group and solo ideation flows

### **Design Space**

#### **Challenging Requirements**

* Designing a fair matching and voting system to avoid bias
* Preventing idea theft while fostering open contribution
* Balancing visual appeal with performance across devices

#### **Tradeoffs Considered**

* Rich, image-based posts vs. text-first minimalism
* Gamification features vs. academic tone
* Freedom of interaction vs. content moderation necessity

#### **Easiest Tasks**

* Creating an idea post
* Voting on an idea
* Adding a comment or reaction

#### **Hardest Tasks**

* Ensuring fair feedback moderation
* Preventing vote manipulation or duplicate accounts
* Making idea categories meaningful but not limiting

### **4. Design Summary**

#### **Explored Alternatives:**

* **Swipe-Based Interface:** Discarded due to being too casual and social-media-like.
* **Comment-First Feed:** Overwhelming in busy groups; harder to prioritize ideas.
* **Static Idea Wall:** Not dynamic enough to support growth or engagement.

#### **Selected for Exploration:**

* **Dashboard Interface:** All functions visible in one screen (posts, votes, comments).
* **Category Tabs:** Breaks ideas down into sections like Tech, Campus, Health, Business.
* **Gamified Contribution Tracker:** XP points, badges for milestones (optional toggle).

**Design goals:** Encourage easy idea sharing, provide clear status tracking, and maintain an engaging yet purpose-driven environment.

### **5. The Designs**

#### **Design 1: Dashboard-Centric Interface**

**Overview:**  
 A centralized interface showing idea submissions, voting, comment threads, and project status—all in one glance.

**Illustrations Include:**

* Idea creation form
* Feed with upvote buttons and idea categories
* Comment sidebar
* Status progress tracker (e.g., badge icons for “In Progress”)

**User Scene:**  
 Jude logs in, views the “Campus” idea tab, and upvotes a project about building a composting system. He adds a comment suggestion and marks his own idea as "Implemented" after receiving support.

**Assessment:**

* **Pros:** Centralized layout promotes fast interaction
* **Cons:** Can feel dense to first-time users
* **Feedback:** “Having everything on one screen helped me stay focused.” – 3rd-year InfoTech student

#### **Design 2: Category-First Grid View**

**Overview:**  
 A homepage with categorized cards (e.g., Tech, Community, Health) displaying popular or new ideas by type.

**Illustrations Include:**

* Color-coded category tiles
* Expandable previews of top-voted posts
* Filter bar for sorting by “Most Recent” or “Trending”

**User Scene:**  
 Janella clicks on the “Community” tile, browses three trending posts, and joins a comment thread about a campus recycling initiative.

**Assessment:**

* **Pros:** Encourages topic-based exploration
* **Cons:** Less holistic than dashboard view
* **Feedback:** “I liked jumping straight to what interests me most.” – 2nd-year Business student

#### **Design 3: Gamified Contribution Tracker**

**Overview:**  
 Introduces a system of points and badges to reward engagement—like “Top Contributor” or “Idea Champion.”

**Illustrations Include:**

* User profiles with XP meters
* Badges earned after milestones (e.g., 10 ideas posted)
* Leaderboard showing top collaborators weekly

**User Scene:**  
 Kurt earns a badge for reaching 5 upvoted ideas. He shares his profile in class to encourage others to participate.

**Assessment:**

* **Pros:** Encourages consistent involvement
* **Cons:** May feel unnecessary to highly academic users
* **Feedback:** “It pushed me to contribute more!” – 1st-year CS student

### **6. Requirements Changes**

#### **Modifications Based on Testing Feedback:**

* ✅ **Added:** Badge and streak system for optional motivation
* 🔁 **Refined:** Matching algorithm now suggests collaborators based on recent activity and shared categories
* ❌ **Removed:** Anonymous posting option due to concerns over moderation and accountability

These changes were informed by **initial interviews with 8 university students**, along with informal feedback collected from test users interacting with early Figma mockups.

### **Storyboard Scenarios (Based on Users)**

#### **Scenario 1 – Franco and the Idea Overload**

Franco, a 2nd-year marketing student, wants to start a campaign project but is overwhelmed by disorganized idea lists in his group chat. SparkBoard lets him post a campaign idea, receive quick votes, and get meaningful feedback in a clean interface—no more endless scrolls or missed replies.

#### **Scenario 2 – Althea and the Class Collaboration Gap**

Althea just transferred to her new program. She struggles to connect with students working on similar research. SparkBoard lets her filter by topic, not course code, and soon she’s collaborating on a “Financial Literacy Toolkit” idea with other students outside her section.

#### **Scenario 3 – RJ and the Motivation Drop**

RJ used to be very active in student orgs but lately feels unmotivated. After seeing the “Top 5 Contributors” leaderboard in SparkBoard, he gets inspired to share his event idea. A few upvotes and comments later, he’s back on track and leads the planning committee.

### **Application Icon Size Comparison**

📱 **36x36 | 48x48 | 72x72 | 96x96**  
 These scaled versions help ensure the icon stays sharp and consistent across Android devices and screen sizes.

### **Design**

SparkBoard adopts a bold yet minimal design philosophy centered on **clarity, inspiration, and engagement**. Its interface is clean and intuitive, helping students focus on contribution rather than navigation. Core features are emphasized through vibrant button highlights and intuitive iconography.

### **Color Palettes (Preliminary)**

* 🔴 **Red** – Energy and urgency
* 🟣 **Dark Purple** – Innovation and depth
* 🔵 **Light Blue** – Focus and clarity

These colors are currently under refinement and will be finalized during prototyping.

### **Font Style**

The app uses modern, sans-serif fonts for readability and professional tone. Visual hierarchy is maintained with clean headers and well-padded body text to reduce mental fatigue.

### **GUI**

The team will utilize **Android-native GUI components** via Figma to keep the interface consistent and adaptable for mobile use. This ensures performance and compatibility while maintaining a clean, modular structure.

### **Sample Feature Flows**

* **Posting an Idea → Selecting Category → Submitting → Viewing Feedback**
* **Voting on an Idea → Upvote → See Updated Rank → Leave a Comment**
* **Tracking Progress → Status Update to “In Progress” → Notify Collaborators**

Features and flows are subject to refinement based on survey and usability test feedback.