

RSOcial

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01 Problem

Problem Statement

“How might we make RSOs more discoverable for UW students to join so students can better experience social and personal growth while at University of Washington?”

Research

Surveys:	User Interviews:	Expert Interviews:
<p>Husky Tennis Club Member:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Club meets 3x/week, but there's no indicator of this on HuskyLink.• Reliance on social media pages for time-sensitive updates, such as weather conditions hindering the use of the UW tennis courts. <p>Husky Coding Project Member:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hard for new members to find meeting/location information and is spread out on many platforms• Main grievance was that the HuskyLink site overwhelmed her with irrelevant and inactive information.	<p>RSO Member:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students demonstrated very low familiarity with HuskyLink, with most students never using heard of the platform.• When asked about discovering RSOs, only one student used HuskyLink, whereas the rest of the students primarily found RSOs through alternative means such as Instagram and other social platforms.	<p>RSO Officer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emphasized the difficulty of reaching potential members due to the inefficiency of existing platforms like HuskyLink.• Learned about the officers' reliance on external tools (e.g., Instagram, Discord)

Kylie



Personal

18 years old

Job

Full time student - Freshman

Studies

Informatics

Hobbies

Coding, travel, shopping, music

From

Portland, OR

Needs

Finding a club they can join and become a full time member to meet friends with similar professional passions

Frustrations

Overwhelmed navigating the HuskyLink platform due to their unfamiliarity to it

Our Personas

Persona #1: Kylie

Kylie is interested in a career in software development, so they hope to join some RSOs to meet some friends going into the same field as them. They are nervous about finding social connections in a new state and school, so with the unfamiliarity of the HuskyLink website, they were quickly overwhelmed navigating the platform. Kylie is primarily interested in using our product in order to find a club they can join and be a full time member of. They are hoping to find information like meeting times, values, and goals, features HuskyLink doesn't have.

Cameron



Personal

20 years old

Job

Full time student - Junior

Studies

Industrial Design

Hobbies

Ceramics (**club president**), art, music

From

South Seattle, WA

Needs

A more accessible platform for interested students to reach their platform and make information more available

Frustrations

When potential members can't find basic information about their club leading to missed connections and lower event attendance

Our Personas

Persona #2: Cameron

Cameron has a good sense of navigating HuskyLink as a club leader, but he feels like it can be hard to use, especially for students who might be interested in joining his club. He's put in most of his effort into updating the club's Instagram and Discord since these platforms are more accessible for the club to update. Cameron is interested in our product because it can provide accessibility that Husky Link does not provide. As a club leader, they often feel frustrated when potential members can't find basic information about their club, leading to missed connections and lower attendance at events.



02 Solution



[Click Here to Access Figma Prototype](#)

Solution Type

The solution designed was a **Mobile App**



Why was this the best format?

- **Centralized:** Condensing multiple functionalities and information sources into one synchronized, streamlined interface
- **User-Friendly & Interactive:** Features like the Husky Explore page provide an engaging, modern user experience, inspired by familiar interfaces (e.g., dating apps) that “gamify” user experience
- **Real-Time Abilities:** An app can send push notifications or make updates for upcoming events, updates, or cancellations, ensuring students stay informed in real-time
- **Tech-Savvy Audience:** University students are generally tech-savvy and comfortable navigating apps. An app reflects their preferred mode of interaction with digital tools, making ubiquitous adoption more likely

Addressed Problem Aspects

Discoverability and accessibility of Registered Student Organizations (RSOs)

- **Fragmented and Outdated Information:** The current platform, HuskyLink, is cumbersome, poorly maintained, and lacks centralized, up-to-date details about RSOs, including meeting times, locations, and event updates
- **Ineffective User Interface:** HuskyLink's interface is desktop-oriented, non-intuitive, and overwhelming, especially for new users who struggle to filter through an extensive list of hundreds of RSOs without sufficient search or personalization features
- **Scattered Communication Channels:** Many clubs rely on external platforms like Instagram, Discord, and LinkTree for outreach, causing confusion and making it difficult for students to locate essential information in one place

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Key Features: Version Control

Our app offers features for two different versions of our app. RSocial is directed towards students who join RSOs, while RSocial for Admin is meant for club officers to promote their club

- **RSocial**
 - This view allows students to browse clubs in an interactive way that provides relevant and customizable information
 - Users will explore clubs one at a time in the “Husky Explore” swiping feature
 - Users will be able to discover new clubs and events, private message clubs, add events to their calendar, and receive announcements
- **RSocial Admin**
 - This view allows RSO officers to add information about their clubs and events
 - RSO officers can release announcements, add events, and change their club pages

Key Features

Husky Explore

The “Husky Explore” swipe feature is the heart of our interface. This feature allows users to explore clubs one at a time by either “accepting” or “rejecting” clubs and events based on a quick summary of the user’s goals and values.

Customized User Profile

Students are able to update their student profile with their interests, which will impact the Explore Swipe algorithm. They may also apply customizations to app functions and track the list of clubs they have officially joined.

Messaging and Announcements

Users can message RSOs through a private message option, enabling easy outreach to ask questions about the club or sign up process. RSO officers can also put out announcements, notifications, and private messages on the RSO officer view.

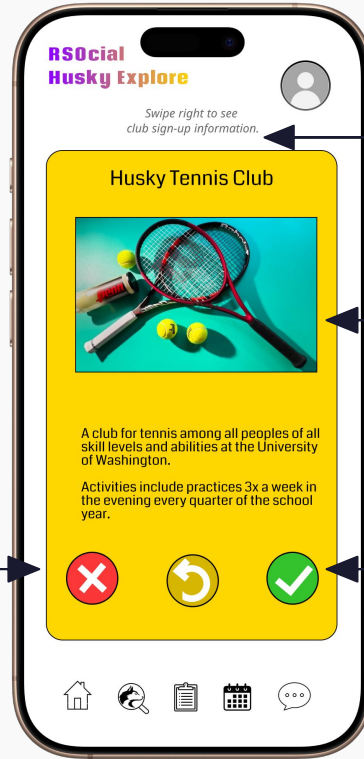
RSO Profile Page

The RSO profile page provides a comprehensive summary of an RSO, with integrations to other social media platforms, a list of all upcoming RSO events, and the club description.

1. Husky Explore – Accept/Decline

The Husky Explore feature exposes users to clubs one club or event page at a time. While users read about each club they either “accept” it, which adds it to their profile and provides sign up instructions, or “reject” it to show they are not interested. After they reject/accept users are given a new club (or event) to view.

Reject button, allows users to continue exploring different clubs and brings them to the next club page



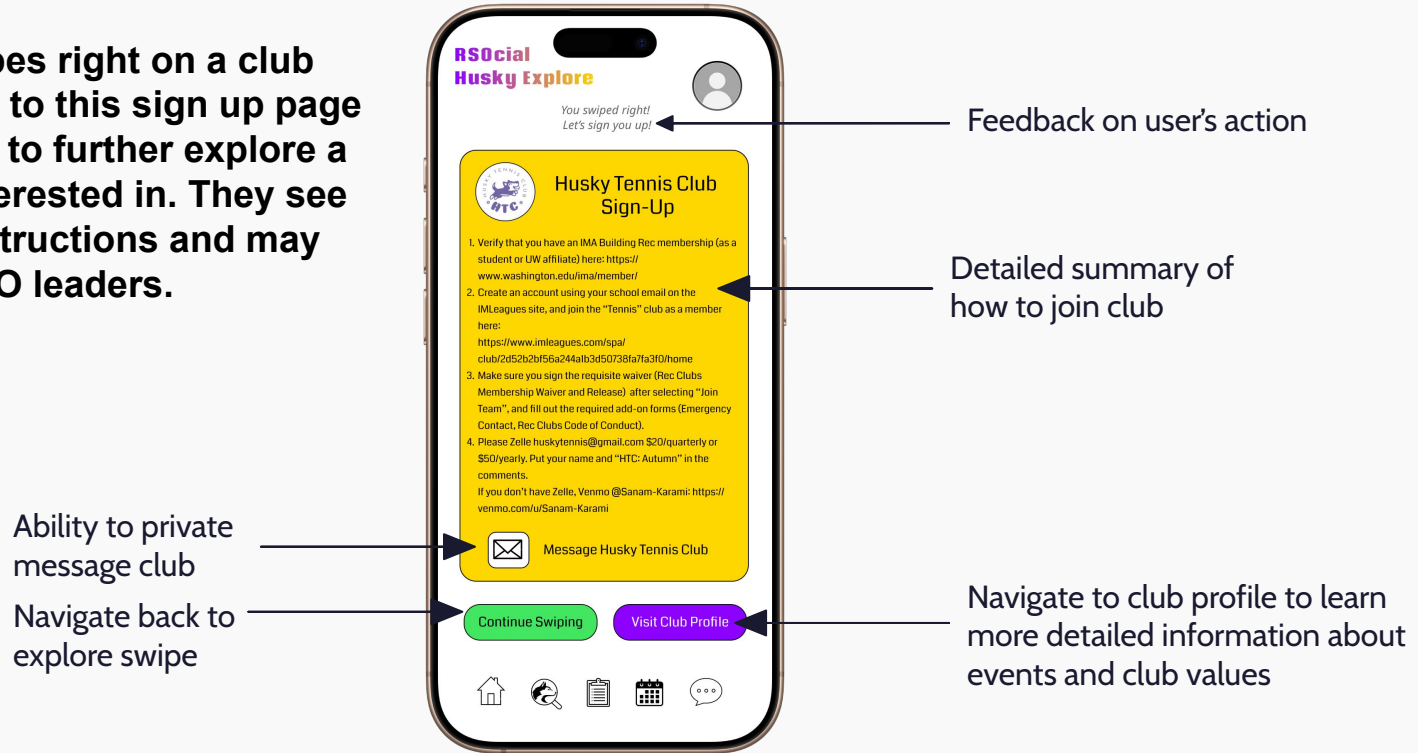
Instructions for use

Quick summary of club, succinctly introduces user to club values and goals

Accept button, brings users to a detailed sign up page and adds club to their profile

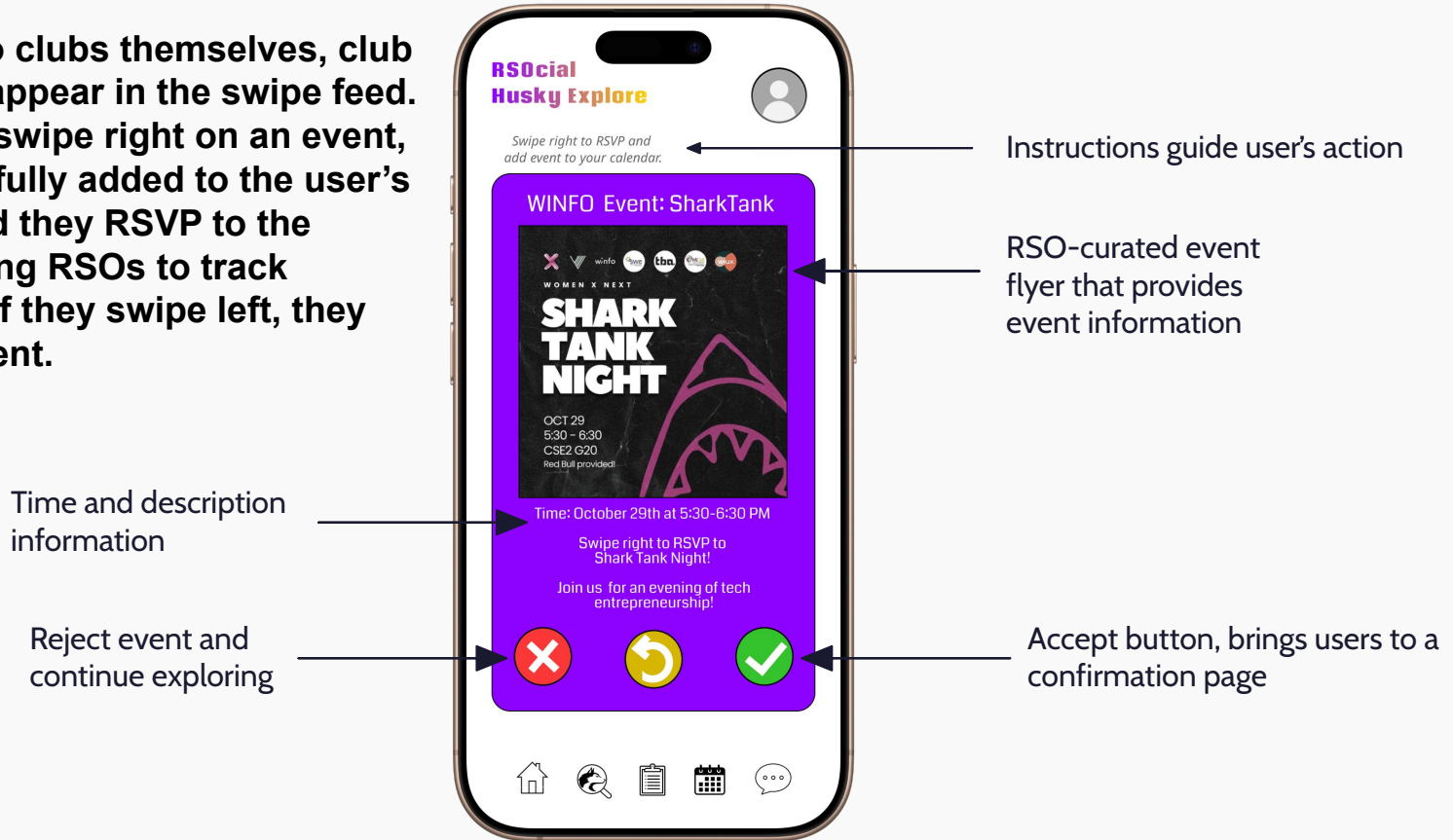
1. Explore Swipe – Swipe Right Sign-up

After a user swipes right on a club they are brought to this sign up page that allows them to further explore a club they are interested in. They see clear sign up instructions and may message the RSO leaders.



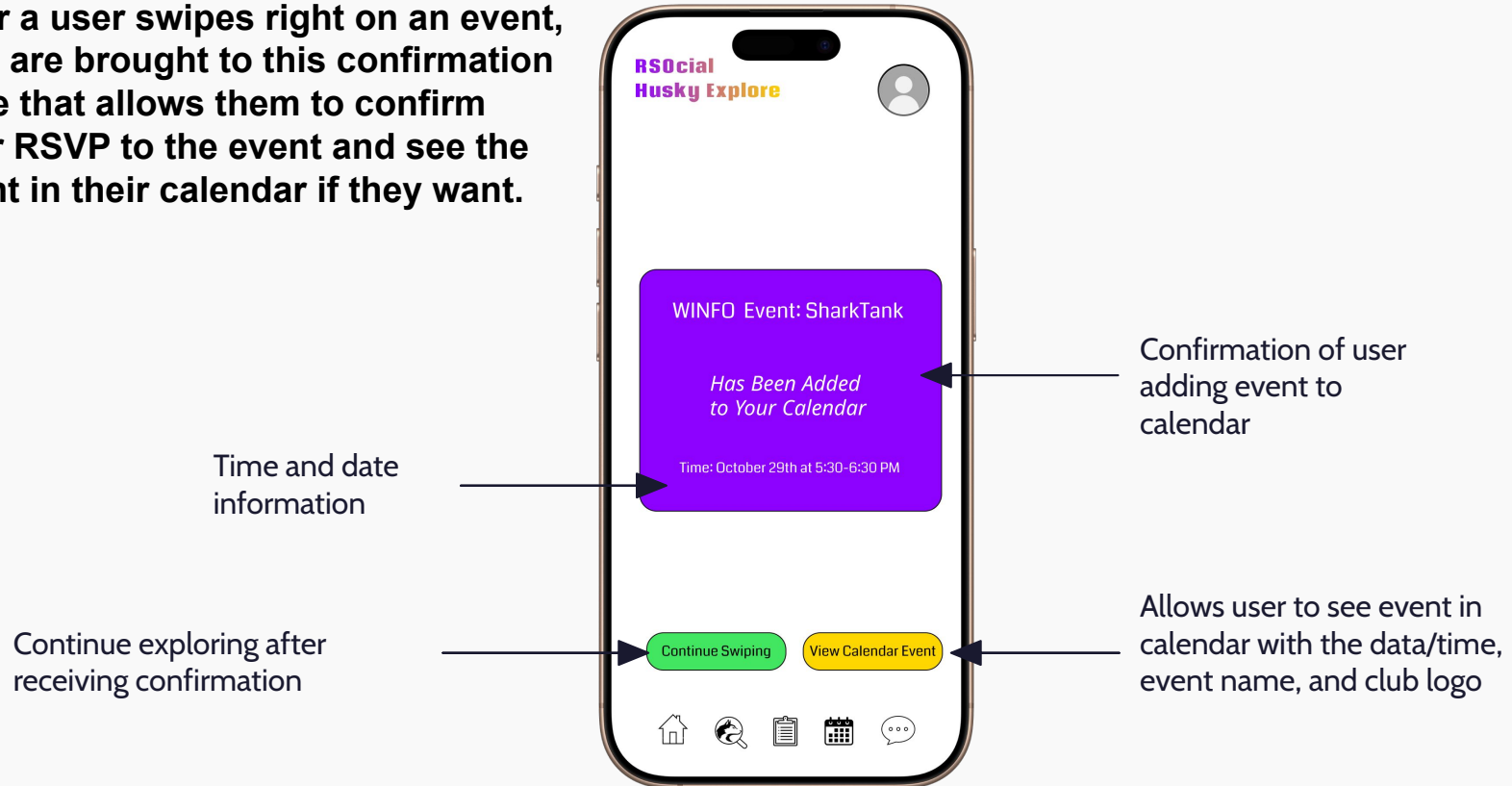
1. Explore Swipe – Swipe Right Sign-up

In addition to clubs themselves, club events may appear in the swipe feed. When users swipe right on an event, it is successfully added to the user's calendar, and they RSVP to the event, allowing RSOs to track attendance. If they swipe left, they reject the event.



1. Explore Swipe – Swipe Right Sign-up

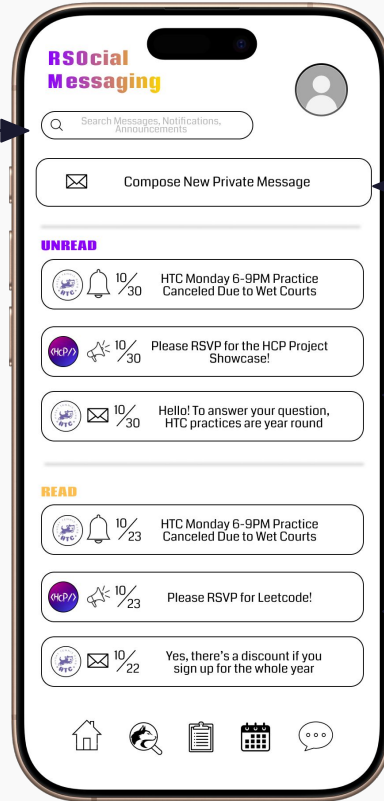
After a user swipes right on an event, they are brought to this confirmation page that allows them to confirm their RSVP to the event and see the event in their calendar if they want.



2. Messaging and Announcements

Search private messages
and announcements

This page is a hub of all club announcements and private messaging features for students, accessible from the “message” icon on the navigation bar. Here users can access any announcements that were sent out, or start a private message.



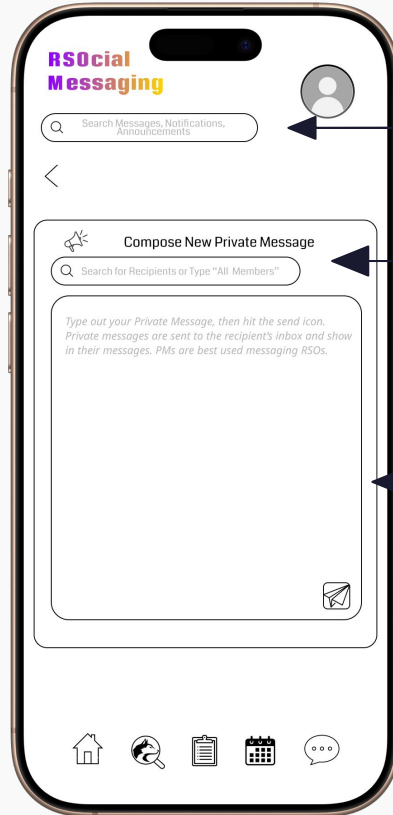
Brings user to private
messaging page where
they can compose a
private message

Unread announcements
from clubs user has added
to their profile

Read announcements
from clubs user has
added to their profile

2. Messaging and Announcements

This is the private messaging page where a user can compose a private message. The messaging feature allows users to message RSOs with any inquiries they have. This is meant to bridge the gap of execution by offering users a place to contact clubs if they have questions or concerns.



Search previous messages or announcements

Specify recipient of message, a user can find recipients on the app by typing and choosing from recipients that pop up

User will type the body of their message here

3. Customized User Profiles

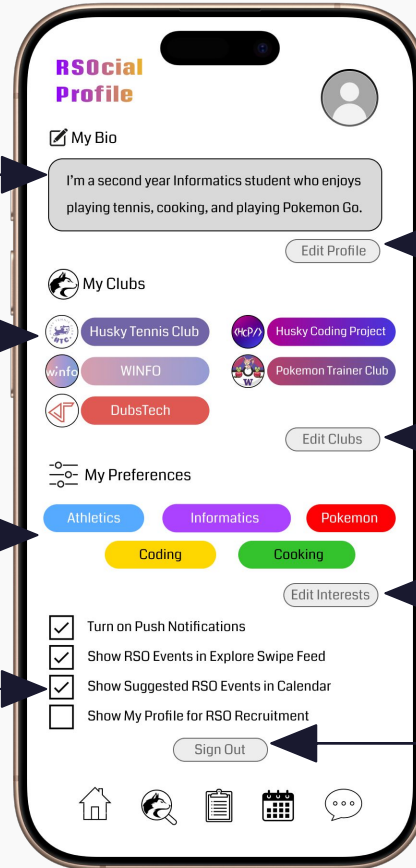
Users will have to make a customized user profile that will help our app recommend relevant clubs, and for club RSOs to understand prospective members better

User BIO that describes their interests and hobbies

All of the clubs the user has added using the explore swipe feature

Preferences of the users used to recommend relevant clubs

Preferences of the users used to recommend relevant clubs



A user can update their bio here

A user can add or remove clubs here

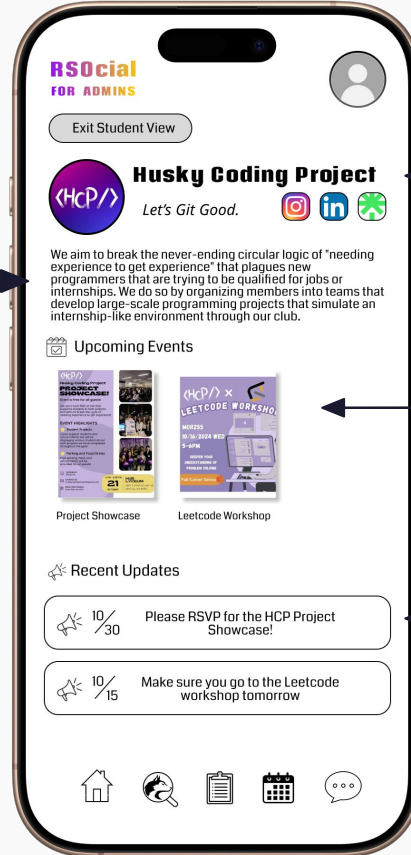
A user can add or remove interests here

A user can sign out of their account from their profile page

4. RSO Profile Page

In depth bio for prospective members to learn more about the RSO

RSO's will create an RSO profile page for students to view. This page will have information about the club that current and prospective members would need. This page allows RSOs to keep their information updated and relevant.



Social media links so students can access the social media of the RSO

All upcoming events for the RSO

All recent updates for this RSO

4. RSO Profile Page – Event Creation

RSOs can create events to be featured on their profile page. They will be able to add a title, description, time and a photo related to their event.

Create a date for the event

Final confirmation of event that will add it to the final profile page

RSOcial
FOR ADMINS

Edit your event for students to view.

Enter your event title here.

Save

Enter your event description here.

Save

Enter the date and time of your event.

Save

Upload a photo or flyer for your event.

+

Save

Add Event

Create a title for upcoming event

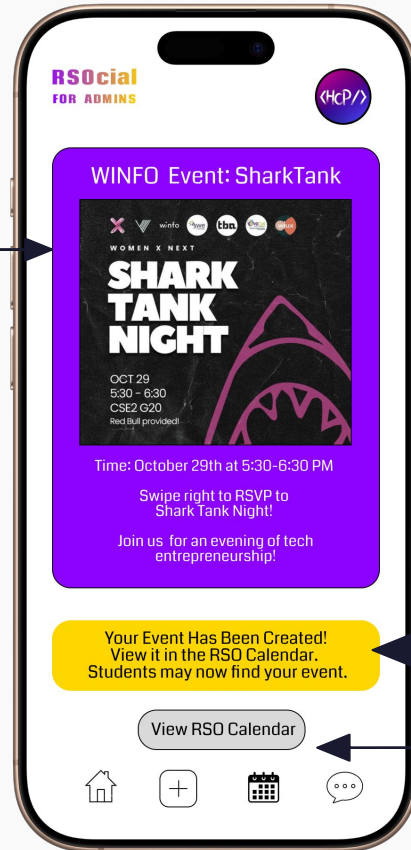
Create the description of the event here

Upload a file of a photo promoting the event here

4. RSO Profile Page – Event Confirmation

Information card about event that has all relevant information about event

“To bridge the gulf of evaluation, you must provide feedback that is immediate...” (Ko, Amy). Our gulf of evaluation for RSO admin includes the input of event information, and the output of those events being posted on the page. This bridge helps RSO admin understand what they are posting.



Confirmation message for RSO admin to show that their event was successfully added to their page

View the calendar for the RSO



03 Evaluation

Prototype Testing

Face-to-face usability testing sessions with two University of Washington students and one RSO officer to observe interactions.

Scripted task-based approach, guiding participants through key app features like navigation, the Husky Explore page, and messaging.

Designed **tasks** for students to replicate common scenarios, including:

- Navigating to an RSO profile page.
- Exploring new events and clubs using the swipe feature.
- Solving problems like joining an RSO or finding event details.
- Customizing their profile settings

Qualitative feedback through **think-aloud** protocol.

Testing Takeaways

- **Gulf of Evaluation:** Need for clear user feedback + need for action confirmation (Ko, 2024)
 - Users didn't get confirmation that their actions were actually completing something
 - Users struggled with understanding the outcomes of their actions, such as adding a club or RSVPing to an event
- **Redundancy:** Need for simplification of navigation
 - The interface was dense with unclear navigation pathways
 - There were redundant icons (two buttons did the same action, such as accessing their profile)
- **Gulf of Execution:** Lack of guidance – need for prompts and instructions
 - Difficulty understanding features without prompts (ie. text or user input was expected of them)



Significant Design Changes

1. Improved User Feedback for Actions

- **Before:** Features lacked clear feedback & users were unsure about what affordances our software had
- **After:** Added a confirmation pop-up to act as a, "... signifier, which [is] any sensory or cognitive indicator of the presence of an affordance" (Ko, 2024)

2. Simplified Navigation Bar (reduced redundancy)

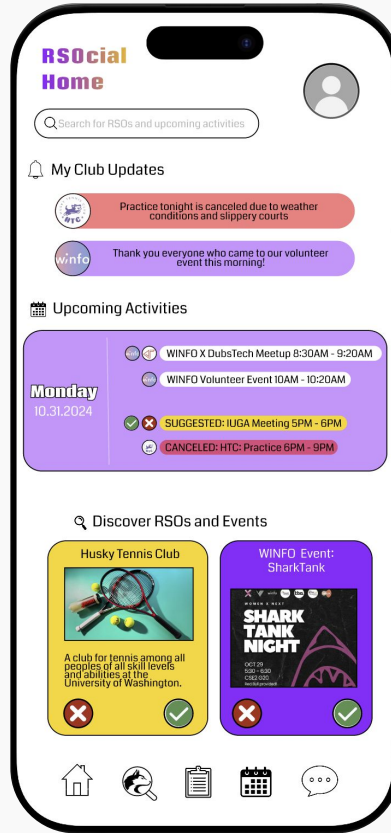
- **Before:** The navigation bar had redundant icons (ie. duplicate user profile links on both the top-right corner & bottom navigation bar). Icons were small & cluttered.
- **After:** Removed redundant profile icons from the navigation bar & adjusted the layout to emphasize core features. Increased the size of remaining icons for better usability & clarity.

3. Added Contextual Prompts and Actions

- **Before:** Pages lacked guidance on how to use features (composing messages or signing up)
- **After:** Added prompts and tooltips on key pages to guide user input

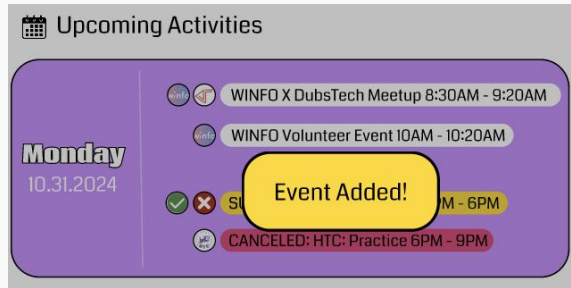
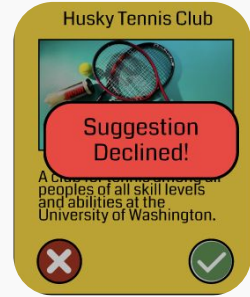
1. Improved Feedback for Actions

Before



After:

Explore Swipe on the home page has been simplified with no scrolling, has larger buttons (which lead to user feedback pages when clicked), and seamlessly integrates with main Explore Swipe page.



2. Simplified Navigation Bar

Before



After



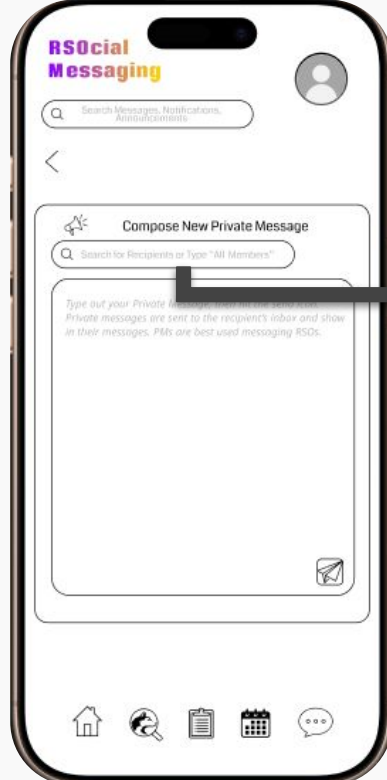
We found during usability testing that users were overwhelmed by the navigation bar. We realized the navigation bar had redundant functionality with the “profile page” icon, since users can access their profile from the top right user icon already.

Icons have been redesigned to display main features of the app without user profile redundancy.

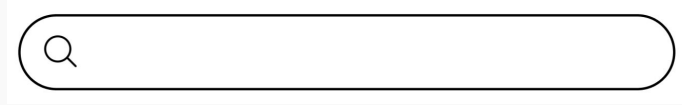
(From left to right: Home Page, Husky Explore, RSO Directory, Calendar, Messaging)

3. Added Contextual Prompts and Instructions

Before



After



During our usability testing we found that users tended to have questions about what they were supposed to do on some pages. Our solution to this was adding prompts and instructions in several parts of the app.

Guide text is now displayed in text entry fields (and other locations throughout the app) to better explain the result of user input and bridge the gulf of execution.



04 Limitations

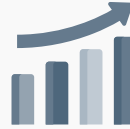
Assumptions



Users are familiar with basic **digital communication platforms** such as Instagram, Discord, and mobile apps. These assumptions shaped the app's interface and features.



Students prioritize **ease of use, accessibility, and tailored recommendations**. Additionally, they value platforms that consolidates scattered information in one place.




RSO officers are motivated to improve club visibility and are comfortable using **digital tools** for outreach, managing updates, event creation, and communication.




Users are assumed to **want community involvement**, whether to build social connections or explore academic and professional opportunities.



Unaddressed Needs

- **Integration with External Platforms:** While many RSOs rely on platforms like Instagram, Discord, and Google Calendars, full integration of these tools into the app was not achieved, limiting the app's ability to serve as a comprehensive hub for all club-related interactions
 - **Support for Non-Student Stakeholders:** The app primarily focused on current students (needing a UW NetID login), but needs for incoming freshmen, transfer students, and alumni who lack access to HuskyLink were not addressed
 - **Accessibility Features:** While usability improvements were made, specific accessibility enhancements (e.g., support for screen readers, multilingual support) were not included, potentially limiting inclusivity for diverse user groups
- 

Future Extensions

- **Enhanced Accessibility Features:** Add multilingual support for *international students*. Implement screen reader compatibility and high-contrast modes for students with disabilities. Create simplified, step-by-step tutorials for users unfamiliar with digital platforms.
 - **Customizable Filters For Diverse Needs:** Introduce filters tailored to *commuter students*, such as events near public transport or weekday-only schedules.
 - **Cross-Campus Collaboration Tools:** Provide tools to help RSOs coordinate with each other. Add forums or discussion spaced for students to share recommendations about clubs.
 - **Expanded Support For Non-Traditional Users:** Include options for *alumni* to engage with RSOs for mentorship or guest speaking opportunities.
- 



05 References

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