

IN4MATX 133: User Interface Software

Lecture 16:
Databases and Local Storage

Professor Daniel A. Epstein
TA Goda Addanki
TA Seolha Lee

Today's goals

By the end of today, you should be able to...

- Differentiate relational from non-relational databases
- Explain the advantages of each style of database
- Use Firebase to implement a non-relational database

Today is a crash course in databases
CS 122A and 122B provide
substantially more depth

Data storage

- What happens when we refresh the A4 sleep tracking app?
 - We lose all of the data we logged
- This is obviously not ideal
 - We have to tell the browser, app, etc. to store it

Data storage

- Data can be stored locally on a device
 - Android and iOS allow apps to store some data
 - Capacitor provides (good) libraries for using local storage

Local Storage

- In Ionic, can store key-value pairs
 - Keys must be strings, values can be any type
- This is actually a non-relational database!
 - More on this in a few slides

Local Storage

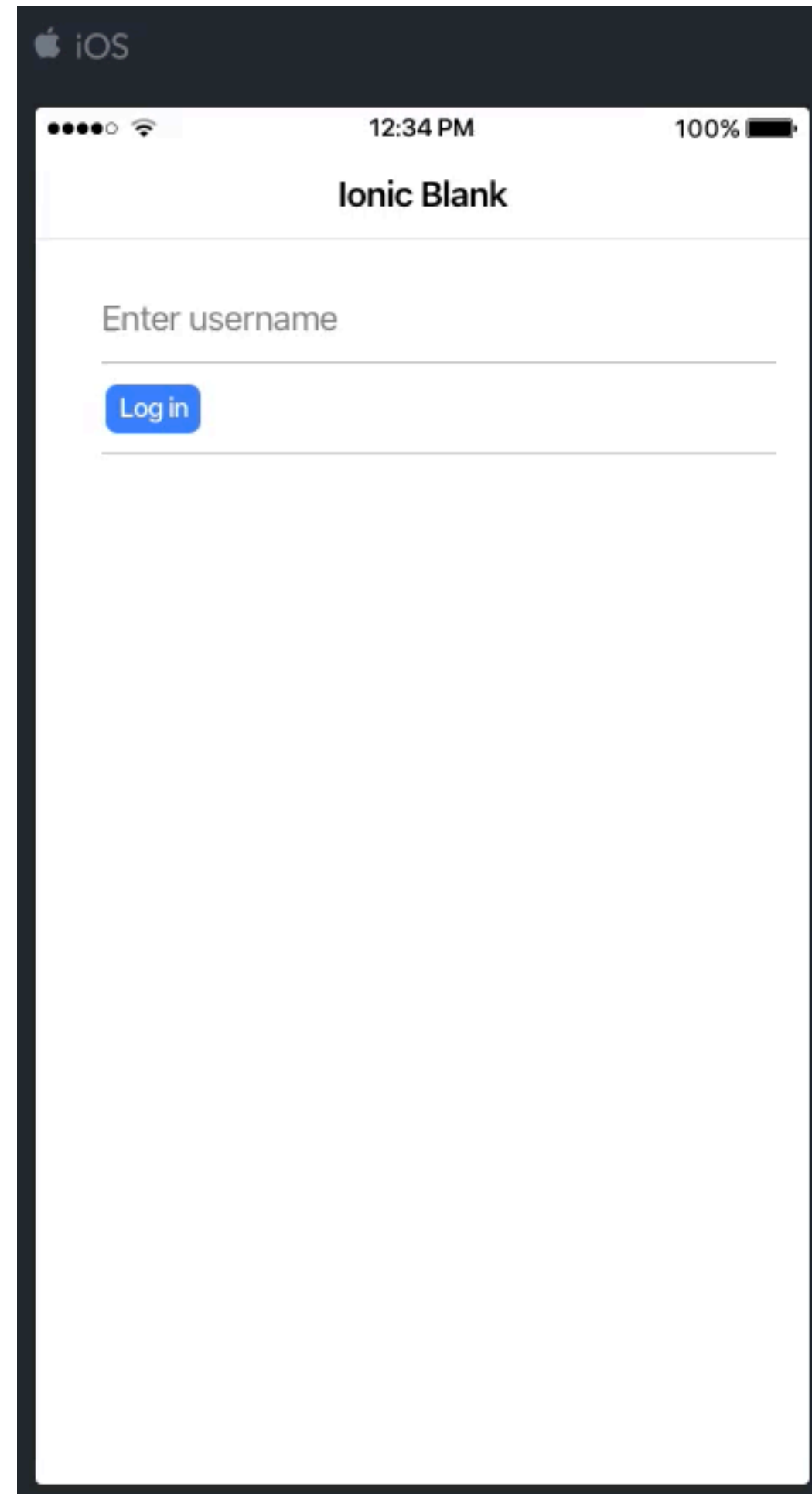
- Capacitor provides a cross-platform storage API

```
import { Storage } from '@capacitor/storage';
```

```
Storage.get({key: 'keyName'}).then((data) => {  
  console.log(data.value);  
});
```

```
Storage.set({key: 'keyName', value: 'value'}).then(() => {  
  console.log("set value");  
});
```

Local Storage



**If we can store data on devices,
why do we need databases?**

Databases

- Provide reliability
 - You can get your data back if your phone dies or you get a new phone
- Provide cross-device support
 - Allow you to see and modify the same data across a phone and a desktop, for example

Databases

- Are more than files stored in the cloud
 - Can be “queried” efficiently to get subsets of data
- Two main approaches to making databases
 - Relational databases: MySQL, Postgres
 - Non-relational databases: MongoDB, Firebase
- Transaction: any add/delete/update/etc. made to a database

Databases

Relational databases

- Everything is organized into tables
- Tables contain columns with predefined names and data types
- Tables “relate” to one another by having overlapping or similar columns
 - Minimizes redundancy and keeps order
- Every data entry is a row of a table

<https://www.neonrain.com/blog/mysql-vs-mongodb-looking-at-relational-and-non-relational-databases/>

<https://www.mongodb.com/scale/relational-vs-non-relational-database>

Databases

Relational databases

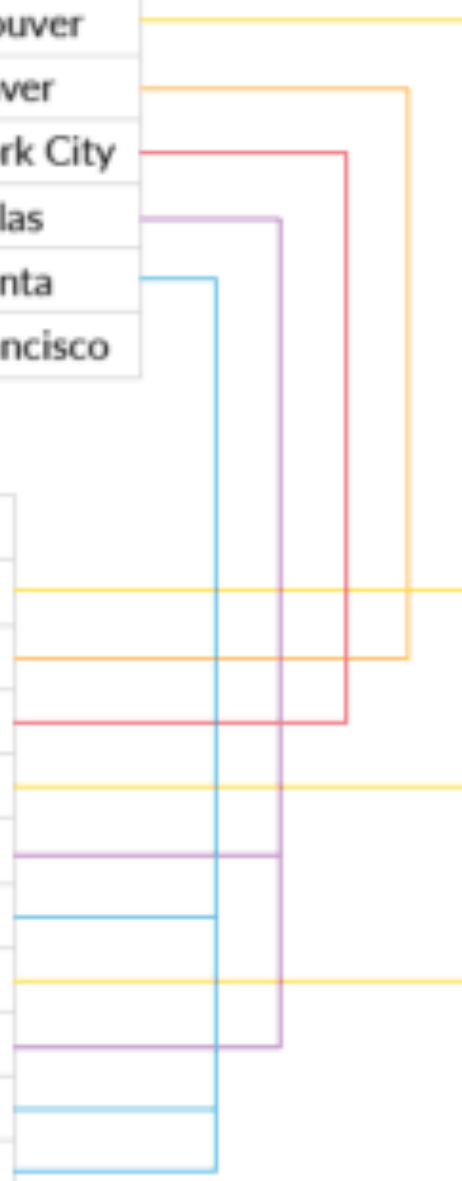
Relational

Person:

Pers_ID	First_Name	Last_Name	City
1	Dexter	Lanasa	Vancouver
2	Ava	Crim	Denver
3	Michael	Plumer	New York City
4	Olivia	Conlin	Dallas
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<https://www.mongodb.com/scale/relational-vs-non-relational-database>

Databases

Relational databases

```
CREATE TABLE IF NOT EXISTS tasks (  
  task_id INT AUTO_INCREMENT,  
  title VARCHAR(255) NOT NULL,  
  start_date DATE,  
  due_date DATE,  
  status TINYINT NOT NULL,  
  priority TINYINT NOT NULL,  
  description TEXT,  
  PRIMARY KEY (task_id)  
) ENGINE=INNODB;
```

<https://www.neonrain.com/blog/mysql-vs-mongodb-looking-at-relational-and-non-relational-databases/>

<https://www.mongodb.com/scale/relational-vs-non-relational-database>

Databases

Non-relational databases

- Everything is organized into objects
- There are no restrictions on how objects are structured
- Every data entry is an object, or “document”
 - Documents may be structured differently from one another

<https://www.neonrain.com/blog/mysql-vs-mongodb-looking-at-relational-and-non-relational-databases/>
<https://www.mongodb.com/scale/relational-vs-non-relational-database>

Databases

Non-relational databases

MongoDB
Document

```
{
  first_name: 'Dexter',
  last_name: 'Lanas',
  city: 'Vancouver',
  location: [45.123,47.232],
  phones: [
    { phone_number: '111-111-1111',
      type: mobile,
      person_id: 1, ... },
    { phone_number: '444-444-4444',
      type: home,
      person_id: 1, ... },
    { phone_number: '777-777-7777',
      type: office,
      person_id: 1, ... },
  ]
}
```

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Databases

Non-relational databases

- There is no well-defined enforced structure
- That said, flatter structures are generally better

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<https://www.mongodb.com/scale/relational-vs-non-relational-database>

Databases

Non-relational databases

```
{  
  // This is a poorly nested data architecture, because iterating the children  
  // of the "chats" node to get a list of conversation titles requires  
  // potentially downloading hundreds of megabytes of messages  
  "chats": {  
    "one": {  
      "title": "Historical Tech Pioneers",  
      "messages": {  
        "m1": { "sender": "ghopper", "message": "Relay malfunction found. Cause: moth." },  
        "m2": { ... },  
        // a very long list of messages  
      },  
    },  
    "two": { ... }  
  }  
}
```

<https://firebase.google.com/docs/database/ios/structure-data>

Databases

Non-relational databases

```
{
  // Chats contains only meta info about each conversation stored under the chats's unique ID
  "chats": {
    "one": {
      "title": "Historical Tech Pioneers",
      "lastMessage": "ghopper: Relay malfunction found. Cause: moth."
    },
    "two": { ... }
  },
  // Messages are separate from data we may want to iterate quickly but still easily paginated and queried,
  // and organized by chat conversation ID
  "messages": {
    "one": {
      "m1": {
        "name": "eclarke",
        "message": "The relay seems to be malfunctioning."
      },
      "m2": { ... }
    },
    "two": { ... }
  }
}
```

<https://firebase.google.com/docs/database/ios/structure-data>

Question

Which database structure will be best for retrieving all first names?

- A** The relational database
- B** The non-relational database
- C** They will be about the same
- D** I'm not sure
- E** [space intentionally left blank]

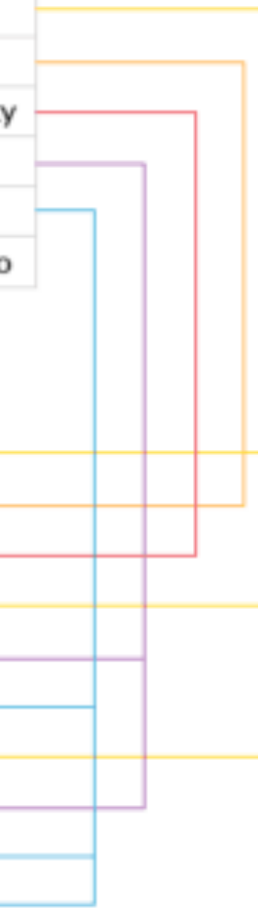
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Non-relational

```
{  
  first_name: 'Dexter',  
  last_name: 'Lanas',  
  city: 'Vancouver',  
  location: [45.123,47.232],  
  phones: [  
    { phone_number: '111-111-1111',  
      type: mobile,  
      person_id: 1, ... },  
    { phone_number: '444-444-4444',  
      type: home,  
      person_id: 1, ... },  
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  ]  
}
```

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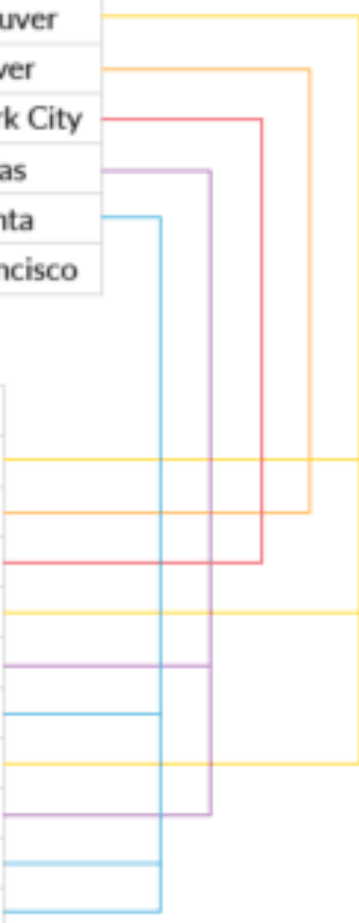
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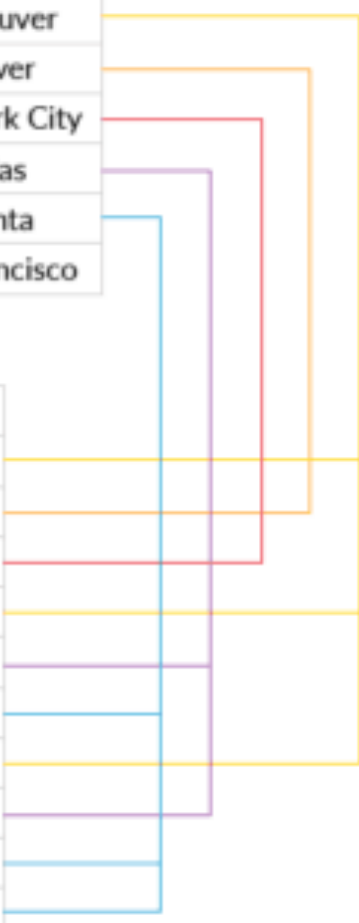
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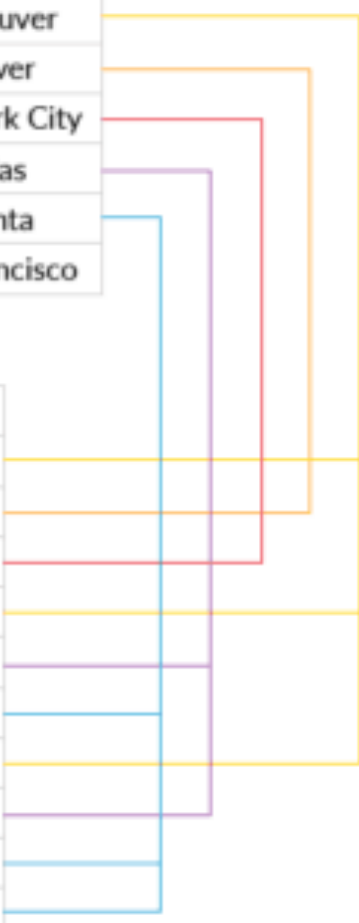
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      type: office,
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}
```

Databases

Advantages of relational databases

- Relational databases support better querying
 - Provide *languages* for querying, such as Structured Query Language (SQL)
 - Those languages can be used to ask for specific tables or even join data across tables
 - “Give me the first name of every user whose phone number starts with 949”

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Databases

Advantages of relational databases

- Relational databases are more organized
 - Because field types are defined, data reliably follows that structure
- Relational databases are more reliable
 - Structure is enforced when new data is added
 - Transactions are atomic, so it's easy to “get” the current state of the database

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Databases

Advantages of non-relational databases

- Non-relational databases support more flexibility
 - Structure imposes restrictions
 - Adding a new field (column) can mess up a relational database
- Non-relational databases are faster for simple operations
 - It's much easier to “watch all the files” than to query and index many rows across multiple tables

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Databases

Relational vs. Non-relational

- Relational databases tend to be used in Enterprise, large-scale applications
 - It's important that data conforms to standards
 - It's important to robustly query large amounts of data
- Non-relational databases tend to be used in smaller applications
 - Data flexibility is valuable
 - Data is small enough to reliably retrieve and parse
- That said, plenty of large apps use non-relational databases and vice versa

Databases vs. Local Storage

- Who needs access to the data?
 - Just the user, or others?
 - As a developer, do you need access?
- Is the data sensitive?
- Is the data valuable enough that it should not be lost?

Databases vs. Local Storage

- Databases are crucial if more than the local device needs access
 - Cross-device app: [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com) and the mobile app need your profile information
 - Developer: to understand habits across users or provide a data-driven service
- Some privacy can be preserved if data is only stored locally
- Which to use depends on the type of data and context

One non-relational database: Firebase

Firestore

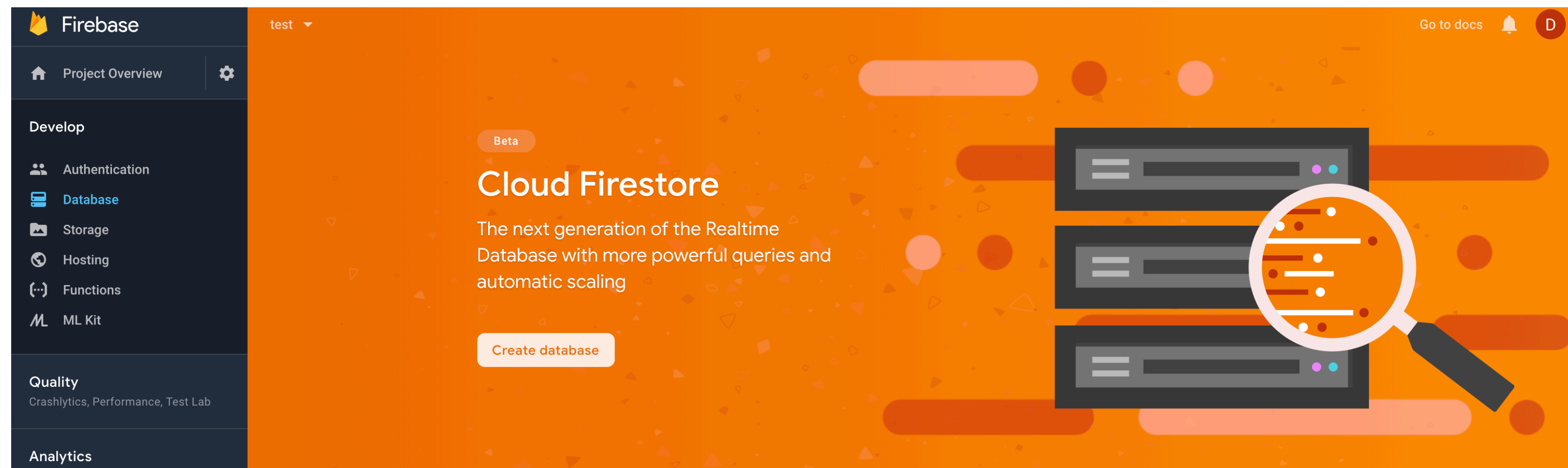
- First released in 2011
- Acquired by Google in 2014
- Has features besides databases
 - Media storage
 - Authentication
 - Analytics



Firebase

Setting up the database

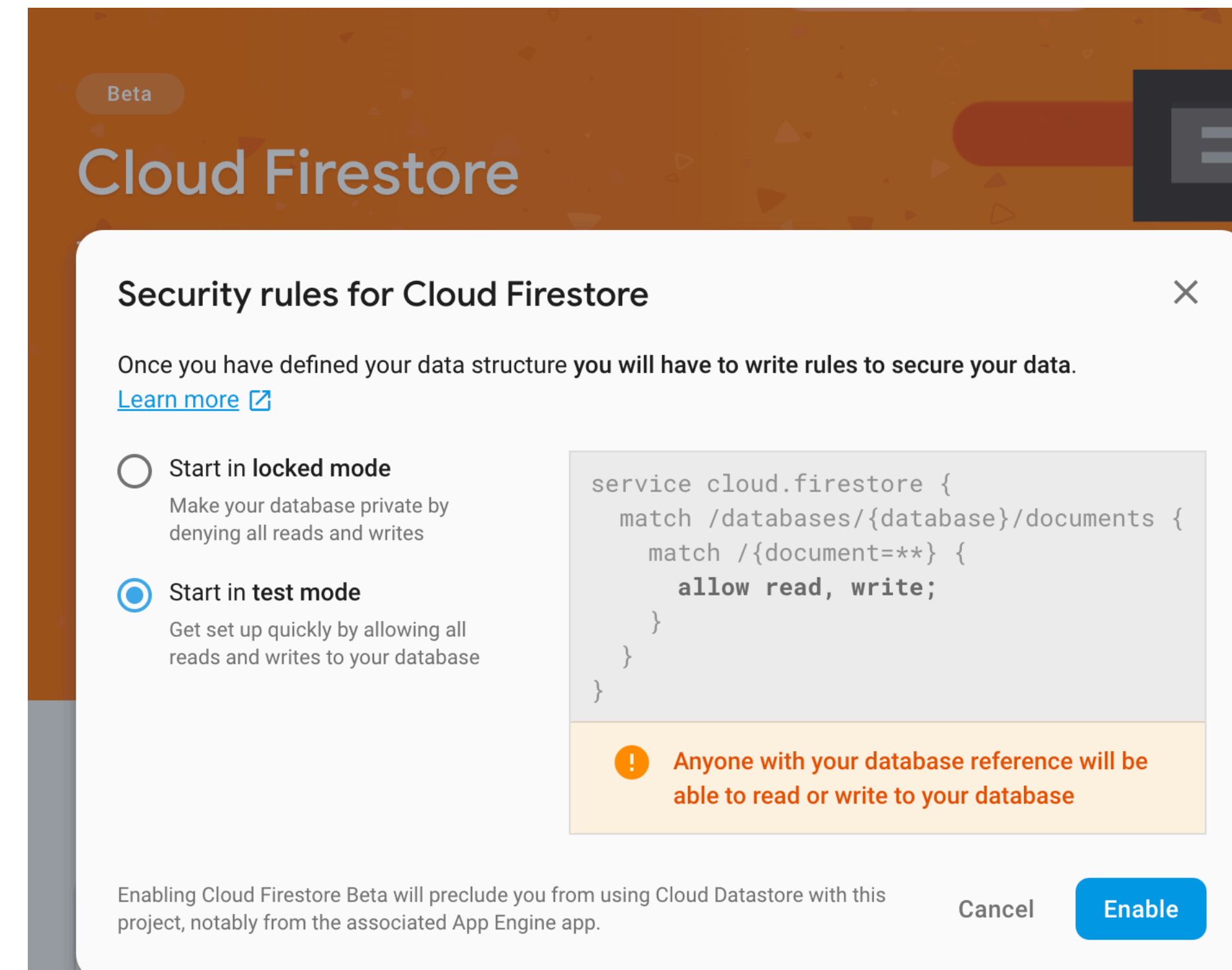
- Create a new project: <https://firebase.google.com/>
- Create a database



Firestore

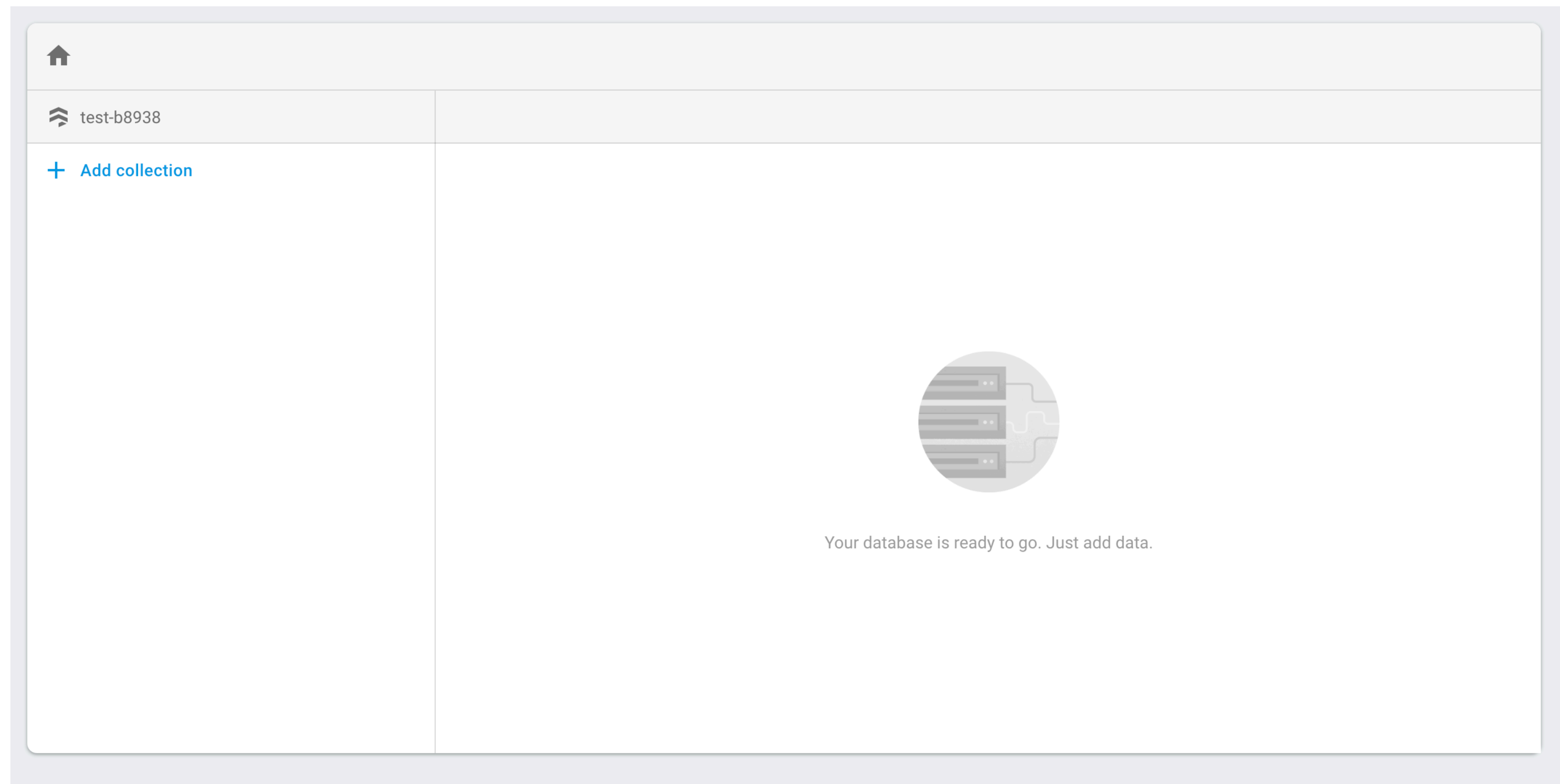
Setting up the database

- Start your database in “test mode”
 - Anyone can read or write to your database
 - This means *anyone*, even localhost
 - Gets around browser’s origin restriction
 - This is bad practice, of course. It’s better to allow specific users
 - Take a databases class to learn about permissions



Firestore

Setting up the database



Firestore

Setting up the database

- Firestore documents (objects) are organized into *collections*
- Collections are somewhat like tables in relational databases
- But Firestore is non-relational and has no structure requirement
- Multiple documents in the same collection may have different structure
- Example collections: users, sleepdata

<https://firebase.google.com/docs/firestore/data-model>

Firestore

Setting up the mobile app

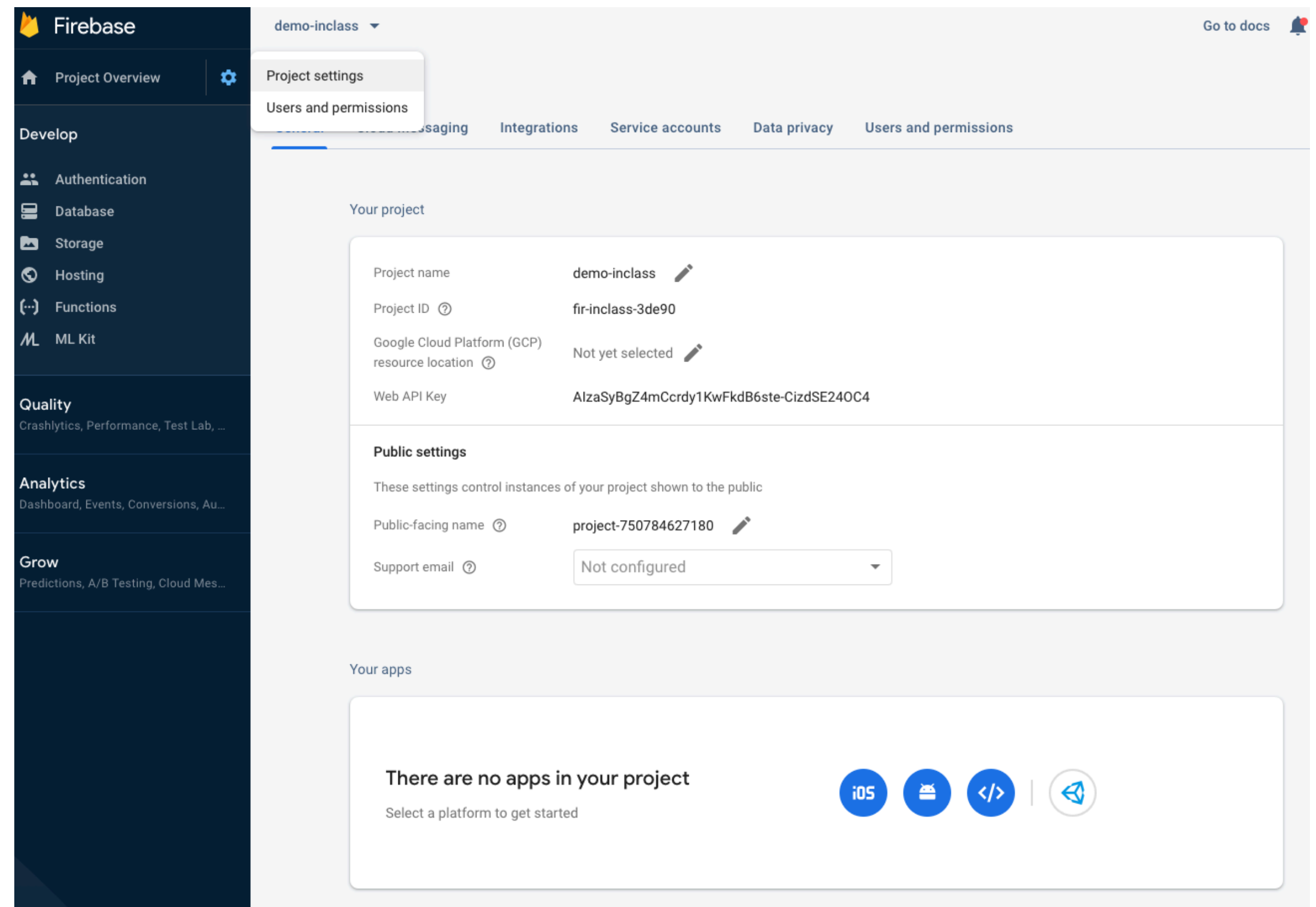
- Angular officially supports a Firestore library
 - It works with Ionic since Ionic builds on Angular
- `ng add @angular/fire`
- Install `firestore`

<https://github.com/angular/angularfire>

Firebase

Setting up the mobile app

- Command line should walk through
- Add configuration information for your Firebase app to `environments.ts` file in Ionic
- Edit Ionic's `module.ts` to point to this environment information
- Also add `AngularFirestoreModule` to the `module.ts`



<https://github.com/angular/angularfire/blob/master/docs/install-and-setup.md>

Firestore

Accessing the database from the mobile app

- `Firestore` is a service and is injected like any other service

```
import { Component } from '@angular/core';
import { Firestore, doc, deleteDoc, setDoc, getDoc } from '@angular/fire/firestore';
import { Observable } from 'rxjs';

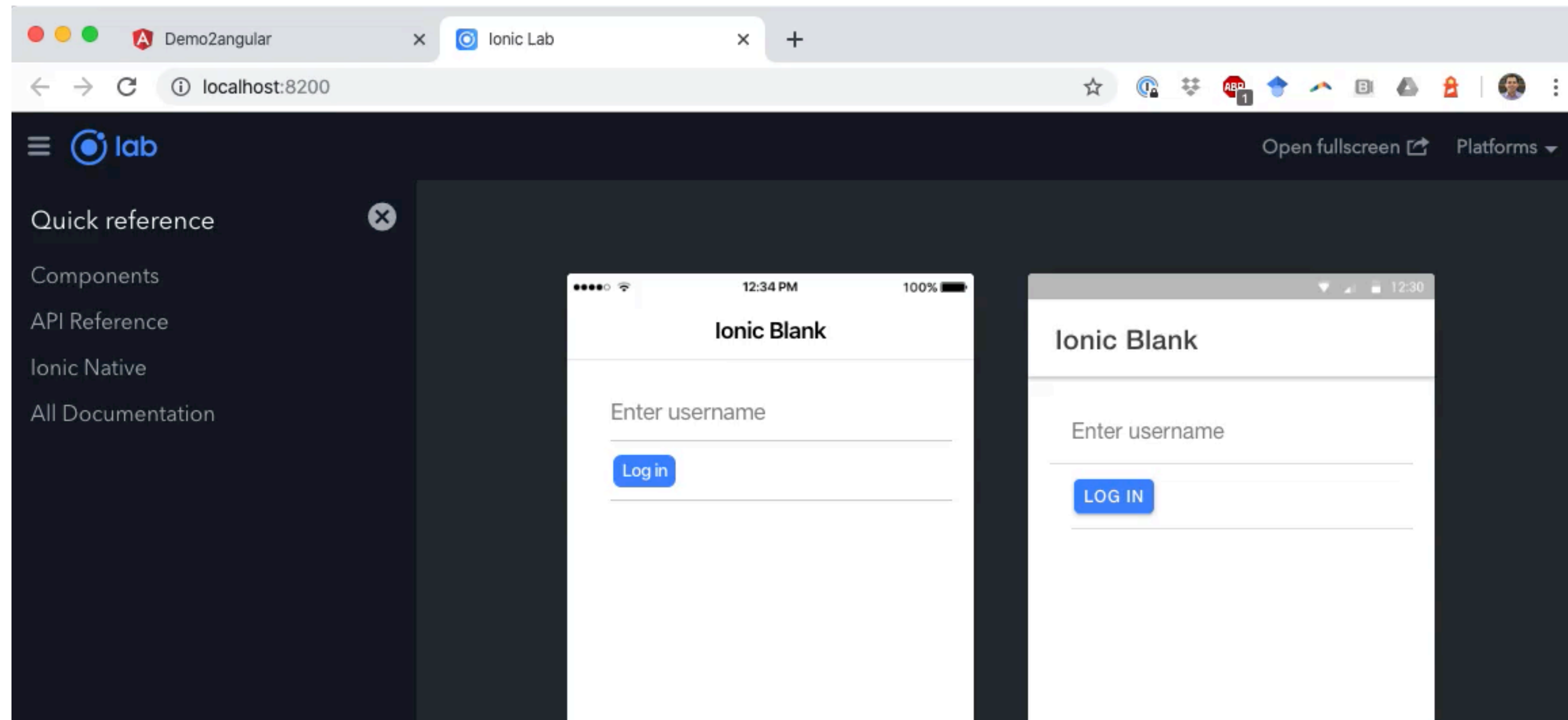
export class HomePage {

    constructor(private db:Firestore) {}

}
```


Firebase

Getting some data



Firestore

Get values

```
getDoc(doc(this.db, 'path')).then((response:any) => {  
    var data = response.data();  
});
```

Firestore

Add

- New objects can be added asynchronously

```
setDoc(doc(this.db, 'path'), {'key': value}).then(() => {  
    console.log('object added');  
});
```

Firestore

Delete and Update

- The document reference can be used to delete or update documents

```
deleteDoc(doc(this.db, 'path')).then(() => {  
  console.log('document deleted');  
});
```

```
updateDoc(doc(this.db, 'path'), {'key': value}).then(() => {  
  console.log('document updated');  
});
```

Firestore

Converting TypeScript objects to and from JSON

- Firestore expects JSON rather than a TypeScript object
- TypeScript classes need to be converted to and from JSON

```
export class DataLog {  
  id:string;  
  values:number[];  
  
  toObject():{} {  
    return { 'id':this.id,  
            'value':this.values};  
  }  
  
  fromObject(object:{}) {  
    this.id = object['id'];  
    this.values = object['value'];  
  }  
}
```

Firestore

Converting TypeScript objects to and from JSON

- Non-primitive fields, like Date, may need extra conversion

```
export class DataLog {  
  date: Date;  
  
  toObject(): {} {  
    return { 'date': this.date };  
  }  
  
  fromObject(object: {}) {  
    // Stored as number of milliseconds  
    this.date = new Date(object['date'].seconds * 1000);  
  }  
}
```

Documentation

- AngularFire documentation is unfortunately out of date and inaccurate
- Google's direct Firestore documentation is more useful
- <https://firebase.google.com/docs/firestore>

Today's goals

By the end of today, you should be able to...

- Differentiate relational from non-relational databases
- Explain the advantages of each style of database
- Use Firebase to implement a non-relational database

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