

Persona X

fresh perspective | optimal outcome

Selected Usability Findings SciStarter.com



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SciStarter

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SciStarter.com: Citizen Science Hub

beta

scistarter
Science we can do together.

log in / sign up search: go

home project finder our blog

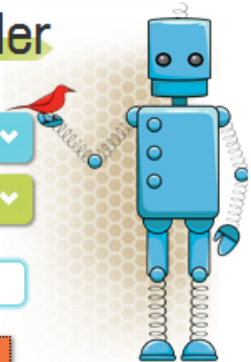
project finder

pick an activity ▾

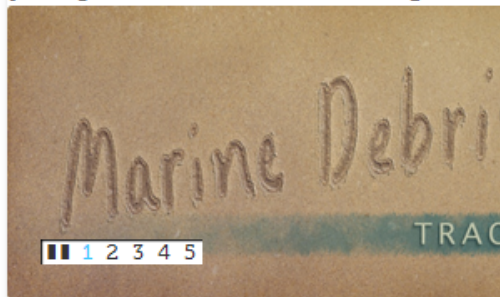
pick a topic ▾

search keywords

advanced search



projects of the day





1 2 3 4 5

Marine Debris Tracker

goal Improve the health of our beaches.

task Map trash on coastlines and waterways.

 Like  Anywhere [comments](#)

our blog

Source: <http://www.nps.gov/jela/barataria-preserve.htm> Each year since 1996, the National Geographic Society joins with the U ...

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for scientists

Add a project and we'll connect you to our community of doers!

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as seen in



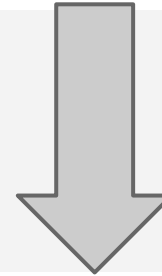
Primary Evaluation Methods

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| User interviews | i. 5 users ii. Approximately one hour each |
| Survey | i. 68 users ii. Site feature breakdown |
| Comparative Analysis | i. 8 comparators ii. Five types: Direct, indirect, partial, parallel, analogous |
| Heuristics Evaluation | i. 5 testers ii. Critique based upon established usability standards |
| Usability Evaluation | i. In-depth site walkthrough with potential/unfamiliar user ii. Generation of immediately salient feedback |

Finding 1

Rethinking the login feature will increase the site's value.

- Account creation currently benefits SciStarter but not users (per usability evaluation)
- Requiring a login to participate in site community, receive the SciStarter newsletter and track achievements increases site value to users



A SciStarter account is required to continue.

Sign in

username

password

Forgot your username or password?
No problem!

Create new account

username

email

password

re-enter password

agree to the **terms of use** ☒

find out about new projects with our weekly newsletter ☒

Sign in via Facebook

We won't share any of your data with Facebook, or post anything to your Facebook profile.

Recommendation 1



- Develop a user profile page
- Add a sidebar displaying recently visited projects
- Unify user identity across site login/discussion platform

Finding 2

Revising the search platform will reduce friction and increase engagement.

- Advanced search contains multiple methods for finding a project, but date/location search methods are either not supported or not effective.

The image shows a screenshot of an 'advanced search' interface. At the top left, the title 'advanced search' is in bold, with a link 'View all projects' below it. The interface is divided into three main columns. The first column, titled 'what interests you?', contains two dropdown menus: 'All Activities' and 'All Topics'. The second column, titled 'search for', has an empty text input box. The third column, titled 'location (Philadelphia, U.K., ...)', also has an empty text input box. Below these columns is a section titled 'show only' which contains six filter options, each with a checkbox: 'free/low cost projects', 'projects suitable for children', 'do-it-yourself projects', 'featured projects', 'projects I can do outdoors', and 'teaching materials available'. A 'search' button is located at the bottom right of the form.

advanced search

[View all projects](#)

what interests you?

All Activities

All Topics

search for

location (Philadelphia, U.K., ...)

show only

- ☐ free/low cost projects
- ☐ projects suitable for children
- ☐ do-it-yourself projects
- ☐ featured projects
- ☐ projects I can do outdoors
- ☐ teaching materials available

search

Recommendation 2



- Rewrite topics/activities categories
- Add project start/end date search
- Build mapping tool for location search, and geolocate users by IP address to provide a default location. Standardize location criteria to latitude/longitude and use API to translate.

Finding 3

Structuring site information efficiently creates a more usable “place” for citizen science.

Our evaluation indicates the users are satisfied with the amount of information presented on a page at once. However, we found the organization of the information in certain cases caused confusion and frustration for users. The way the search results are presented in advanced search lack the visual cues the users requires to quickly process the information. The results appear below the search options that take up most of the screen space. There is no summary of search outcome, such as the number of results, pagination, or highlighting of keywords. Each project listing provides the name and a brief description but does not include other pertinent information, such as the date and the location. In the “discussion” tab of a project, extraneous content is placed above the comment entry form, which distracts the users from their main goal that is to post comments.

Recommendation 3

Provide summary of search outcome by clearly indicating the number of projects returned including zero, highlighting of matched keywords, and pagination if necessary.

Include the types of information users find the most useful, such as the start/end dates and location, in the summary of projects.

Relocate extraneous content, such as advertisement and related links, in the “discussion” tab of the project page and move the comment entry form to the top where the users’ attention is.

Finding 4

Creating a coherent image of SciStarter will broaden the appeal of the site.

When users decide to participate in a project, they are directed to the project site that is external to SciStarter. It opens in the same browser and users need to use the back button to come back to the project page in SciStarter, which creates a disconnect in the users' experience with SciStarter.

Recommendation 4

Open external website on new tabs or windows, giving the user the option to simply close the project site and come back to SciStarter.

Add SciStarter's image on third-party's sites

include "bookmark me" icon and or pop/up to like on facebook as other means to let users find SciStarter

Discussion

Content building

- Current Content

- Blog Promotion

Project Search

- Project Filtration Methods

- Overview

Form Factor

- Community, Resource via App

- Achievement Tracking & Data tool via Mobile

Thank you!

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