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Conceptualizing a Digital Recruitment Platform for MBA Students at Metropolia University of Applied Sciences

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Finland is recognized for its hidden job markets and the importance of networking to secure employment. Talent Boost was established to guide international jobseekers. This initiative aimed to tackle challenges faced by people, who have difficulty in securing employment, such as career shifters, international and immigrant backgrounds, and women. Most of these are individuals who do not follow a traditional career progression.

I joined UAS in 2022 to build a tool that will assist local recruitment companies and SMEs in effectively matching international talents to local job opportunities. I have been forming the idea of building a recruitment platform that differentiates from today's current practices. I shared the idea with various courses and sought feedback from lecturers and peers on the type of recruitment platform that is missing in the market.

Luckily, another student, Mofiz, who joined Metropolia University of Applied Sciences in 2023, had the same idea and a similar dilemma. We collaborated with Metropolia on this thesis work, but with three different goal objectives. One challenge we faced was the existing platform, JobTeaser, which guided the data collection and complicated the process of conceptualizing a new digital recruitment platform. Throughout this journey, we questioned whose challenges this thesis addresses - those of Metropolia, the international MBA students, or local recruiters and SMEs. While Metropolia may improve its current recruitment platform, we hope the insights from our thesis can inspire further developments.

We would like to express our gratitude to our thesis supervisors, Zinaida Grabovskaia and Antti Hovi, Senior Lecturers at Metropolia for their continuous support, guidance, and encouragement throughout our research. We are also grateful to all students, recruiters, faculty members, and external experts for their time, effort, and honest feedback and insights.

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Abstract

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The objective of this thesis is to conceptualize a digital recruitment platform for the specific target group consisting of MBA students at Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, as a way to connect with recruiters. This platform concept aims to connect jobseekers and employers based on relevant skills and interests. This study discusses what students and recruiters expect from a platform like this and what the platform offers to both stakeholder groups.

This study utilized the applied action research approach and qualitative data collection methods, such as semi-structured interviews with MBA students as well as recruiters and discussions with university staff. Data were collected in three phases: starting with the current state analysis, followed by the co-creation of the concept, and ending with the validation of the final proposal. Results from the analysis informed the co-creation of a new digital recruitment platform that offered specific user-centric functionalities.

The thesis comprises both theoretical and practical parts. The literature review identifies the basic pillars of the platform, such as operational mechanisms, architectural frameworks, and privacy/security features of digital platforms. This thesis also includes insights collected from stakeholders that contributed to the concept of the platform. The study builds on theoretical models like the Customer Value Proposition (CVP) and Minimum Viable Product (MVP), facilitating a way to visualize the recruitment platform.

This thesis has two outcomes; one proposal offers to improve JobTeaser, existing Metropolia's digital recruitment platform, across three development areas, i.e. increasing outreach of the platform to students and recruiters, improving communication and recruitment process, and addressing the job matching, in order to improve the present positions of the platform among the students and recruiters. The other proposal presents a new platform concept for MBA students and recruiters to interact and organize a secure, user-centric recruitment experience. For Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, such a platform could become a strategic move to support the recruitment of MBA students which could thereby increase their employability as well as tighten ties with industry recruiters.

Keywords: Digital Recruitment Platform, Customer Value Proposition, Minimum Viable Product, MBA Student Employability, Stakeholder Perspectives in Recruitment, User-Centric Recruitment Platform

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1 Introduction

Digitalization significantly impacts higher education regarding how institutions operate and interact with students. Metropolia University of Applied Sciences is committed to digital solutions for academic and administrative functions. With this commitment, one area for improvement is the recruitment opportunities for MBA students. This thesis aims to take a step in this direction by proposing a service concept for a digital recruitment platform that contributes to better recruitment opportunities for students and their employers.

A recruitment platform is a structured system that links workers looking for employment with a company that wishes to fill openings by offering services that help streamline recruitment processes, job postings, candidate sourcing, and applicant status (Breaugh 2008). This means that it helps with centralizing recruitment, thus efficiently and effectively organizing applications received and reviewing prospective candidates (Chapman & Webster 2003). According to Rosoiu & Popescu (2016), online recruitment or e-recruitment refers to online systems that facilitate recruitment between jobseekers and employers, such as job postings, application status, candidate profiles, and employer tools. This has its own benefits (Rozario, et. al. 2019) for improving accessibility, matching algorithms, and real-time communication between them.

The traditional recruitment methods in higher education, such as career fairs and personal networks, are evident in limited opportunities to connect students with specific, relevant jobs. Such methods, research shows, usually do not match a student's particular skills with relevant job offers, limiting their employability potential (Sills 2014). Digital platforms overcome these limitations by personalized job opportunities, employment based on specific skills through data-driven technologies, and increasing engagement with potential employers (Barbarasa, et.al. 2017; Eveleigh 2022).

This thesis studies the perspectives of students and recruiters to conceptualize a digital recruitment platform. By studying this, it aims to develop a service concept that could improve help in offering access to recruitment opportunities for students.

1.1 Business Context

Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, established in 2007, is one of the largest Universities of Applied Sciences in Finland. It has four modern campuses, serving 17,473 students and employing 1054 permanent staff members. The university offers 80 Bachelor's and Master's degree programs. (Annual Report, Metropolia, 2023.) including 1,500 international students of about 100 nationalities. The university has an alumni network of 50,000 individuals (Study in Finland, 2024). In 2023, it awarded 2,600 Bachelor's and 537 Master's degrees. The university's 2023 financial report showed a total turnover of 121.8 million euros, a 9.6% growth, partly due to profitable investment activities, which boosted profits by 4.2 million euros. Metropolia employs 1,000 permanent staff, with personnel expenses totaling 75.6 million euros. The average employee age is 48.2 years, with 81% holding master's degrees and 22% having research qualifications. The primary languages of instruction and communication are Finnish and English. (Metropolia 2024.)

The case organization of this thesis is the Master´s program in Business Informatics and its MBA students who are business professionals, often with years of experience who have a lot to offer to recruiters. Hence, the idea emerged to think of a platform that could help students showcase their competencies to recruiters, as a starting point for development, which led to a platform at some point later.

1.2 Business Challenge, Thesis Objective, and Outcome

As the digital evolution, higher education experiences a need for digital tools to automate administrative tasks and attract students, and career services (Nkomo, et. al. 2021). The career fairs, personal networks, and generalized job boards for MBA students (Metropolia's JobTeaser Portal, 2024), are useful but limited in this digital age. Evidence shows that they do not provide the same level of reach and efficiency comparable to that obtained through digital platforms. It is visible via students struggling to market their skills and connect with employers. This affects short-term job prospects as well as long-term career growth and satisfaction. Figure 1 below shows the challenges faced by students in traditional recruitment methods.

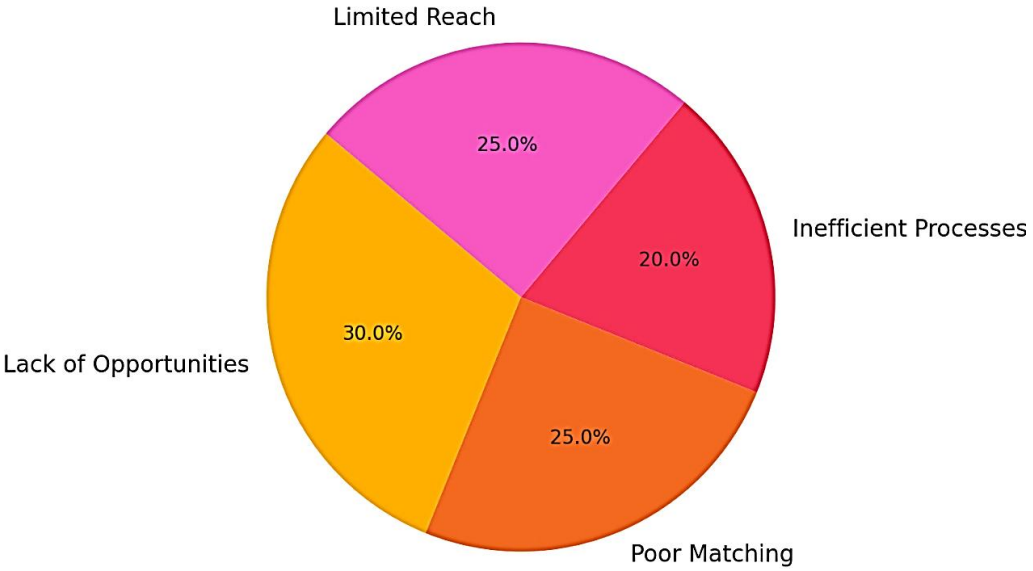


Figure 1. Challenges faced by students in traditional recruitment methods (GMAC, 2023).

From the recruiters' perspective, they lose a diverse, but detailed, and yet well-arranged candidate pool. This can lead to longer hiring times and increased costs to do this. (Fernandes & Machado, 2022). As a result, recruiters often struggle to match the most suitable talent with their organizations as they lack detailed profiles of candidates.

As shown in Figure 2, students are 50% more satisfied with using the digital recruitment methods than the traditional methods, in which the traditional methods are 20% more for recruiters, and the effectiveness results are 25% more for using the digital methods.

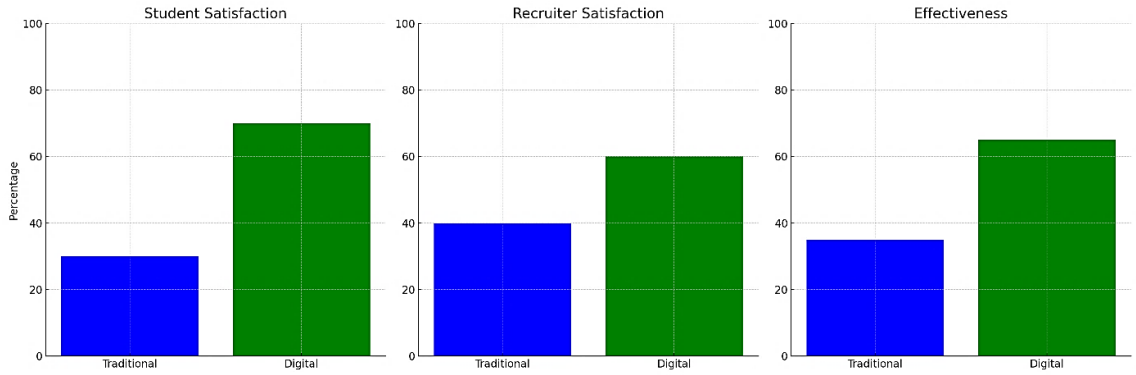


Figure 2. Student and recruiter perspectives on recruitment methods (NACE, 2022).

LinkedIn Talent Solutions (2024) reports that 3 in 4 recruiters are sourcing candidates on digital platforms as this recruiting tool helps them make better hiring choices. As well, a study by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE, 2022) found that digital platforms improve this process, benefiting both job seekers and employers.

Moreover, the student talent at Universities of Applied Sciences (UASs) is very diverse. Along with the competencies and nationalities, another important line of diversity is the previous work experience. According to the requirements set by the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, all master's students at UASs in Finland should possess full-time work experiences of at least 2 years to be eligible for a Master´s education (OKM, 2023). In reality, the work experience is often much longer, and the students are often in their 30s-40s or older, having various types of professional positions in the past. This feature makes this specific pool of candidates an asset for recruiters. This leads to the need to consider a digital recruitment platform that would showcase unique competencies of MBA students to recruiters, as a qualified pool of candidates. Because of this need, the case organization of this thesis, the master´s program in Business Informatics at Metropolia UAS, has shown an interest in developing a digital recruitment platform concept. Driven by the above needs, this thesis aims to conceptualize a platform that might leverage digital technology to essentially connect MBA students with employers.

The objective of this thesis is *to conceptualize a digital recruitment platform from the perspectives of both students and recruiters.* The outcome of this thesis is *a concept of the digital recruitment platform from the perspectives of both students and recruiters* so that the proposed concept would serve the needs of key stakeholders. Understanding the perspectives of students and recruiters is essential to meet their specific needs before any detailed planning begins.

1.3 Thesis Outline

The thesis employs a qualitative research approach aimed at understanding the needs of internal (students) and external (recruiters) stakeholders. Data collection methods include semi-structured interviews with MBA students and recruiters, discussions with staff members, and group interviews with key stakeholders.

The thesis is structured into seven sections. Section 1 outlines the background, significance, methodology, and scope of the thesis. Section 2 details the research methods and data collection techniques. Section 3 reviews existing knowledge of recruitment platforms and service concepts. Section 4 evaluates perspectives from students and recruiters on these platforms. Sections 5 and 6 are dedicated to the development and validation of a digital recruitment platform concept, using stakeholder input to refine the proposal. Finally, Section 7 concludes by summarizing the findings, including an action plan, evaluating the overall thesis, and providing closing remarks.

2 Method and Material

This section describes the research method and material used in this thesis. Firstly, it overviews the research approach selected for the thesis work. Then, it presents a research design followed by data collection and analysis used for this thesis.

2.1 Research Approach

Research methods can be grouped into research families, where each aims to address research objectives. The main difference between basic and applied research is their focus: *basic* research attempts to create new theoretical knowledge, typically with no intended practical use, whereas *applied* research attempts to solve specific, practical problems in real-world settings. (Saunders et al., 2020). *Qualitative* research explores complex topics by collecting non-numerical and poorly structured data i.e. interviews and observations while *quantitative* research adopts statistical analyses to test hypotheses (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). A *mixed-method* combines both qualitative and quantitative approaches for a broader perspective (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Research can also be a *field* study, which collects data directly from real environments, or a *desk* study, which obtains secondary sources in literature or databases (Yin, 2018). For *applied research*, it uses a range of different research methods and techniques to solve practical problems. Such methods typically include interviews, surveys, observations, and document analysis (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Coughlan and Coghlan, 2002). Blichfeldt and Andersen (2006) highlight that this uses participants' perceptions to formulate research questions, accommodating their needs and insights.

In *business studies*, two of the most popular research strategies are action research and case studies. *Action research* involves active collaboration between participants and researchers to find, and create solutions to their problems (Kananen, 2013). In contrast, *case studies* describe the contexts of one case or organization (Yin, 2018). Both methods are used in business research but differ in their level of engagement and the scope of their findings. Other research methods include experiments, surveys, archival research, case studies, ethnography, theory, and narrative inquiry (Saunders et al. 2020).

Applied action research distinguishes from the larger-scale strategic research methods in business as explained by Kananen (2013), this method is used to complete this type of research on a smaller scale as partial fulfillment of the master’s or a PhD thesis. The main difference of applied action research is that it has a shorter time frame and specific goals, for instance, but it is collaborative and participatory. In applied action research,

researchers work with participants to ensure the study solves practical, real-world problems that lead to actionable solutions, typically developed in one cycle of action-type research (Kananen 2013). As Kananen (2013) highlights, this approach is ideal when the intention is to improve existing processes or resolve practical issues. This approach is useful here, as it merges (Kananen, 2013) research with practical development efforts.

In this thesis, *applied action research* was chosen because of its suitability to solve a problem relevant to a business context. The study develops a digital recruitment platform concept with participant insights. A qualitative research strategy fits the practical aims of the study as it collects data through semi-structured interviews with stakeholders. The applied action research approach is suitable for this thesis due to its practical nature. By involving key stakeholders in the research process and refining the concept based on their inputs, this approach helps to arrive at a service concept in a predefined way.

2.2 Research Design

This presents the research design for this thesis, which follows the applied action research approach described in the previous subsection. The research design serves as a structured plan that outlines the stages of the study, detailing the parts involved in each stage and explaining the rationale behind the choices.

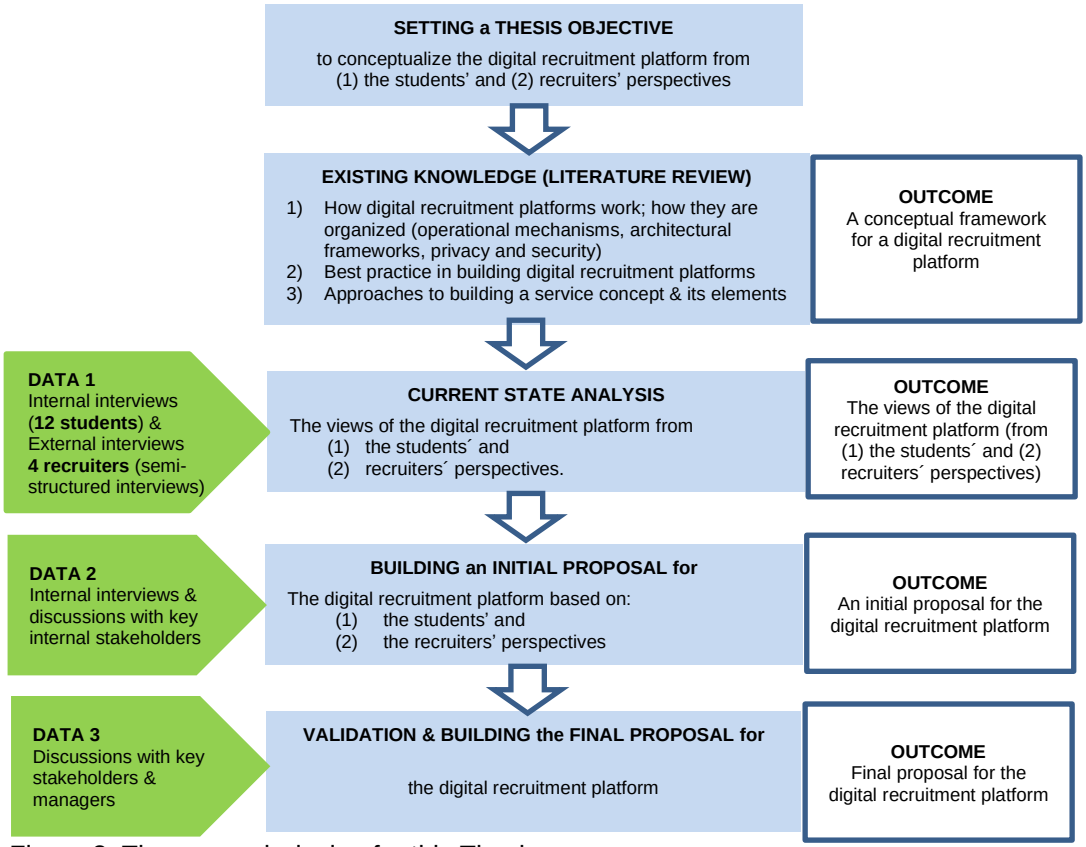


Figure 3. The research design for this Thesis.

As shown in Figure 3 above plans a visual representation of the research design for this thesis, and summarizes the entire research process, from setting the thesis objective to validating and building the final proposal for a digital recruitment platform concept. Its five sequential stages, the stages of the research flow, and how they are structured are designed. The first stage defines the objective of the thesis. The second stage reviews existing literature and best practices related to recruitment platforms and building service concepts. This review helps to provide a theoretical foundation for the study. In the third stage, the study examines the current state of a recruitment platform and its services by conducting interviews with students and recruiters. Based on the current state analysis and supported by the new round of data collection from internal stakeholders, the fourth stage constructs an initial proposal for the digital recruitment platform concept. The final stage contains a validation round of the initial proposal through expert discussions with stakeholders and managers. This ensures that the proposed concept aligns with the vision of the case organization. The outcome of this stage is the final proposal of a concept for the digital recruitment platform.

Each stage of the research design incorporates the collection and analysis of data and is built on the previous one. This type of research design ensures that the final output is informed by both theoretical and practical insights from the previous rounds, and logically leads to the development of a concept of a digital recruitment platform.

2.3 Data Collection and Analysis

The data collection and analysis used in this study includes three main types of data collected to understand the requirements, develop a proposal, and validate the service concept for a digital recruitment platform. The outline in Table 1 includes the participants, data type, topics, dates, length of interviews/discussions, and documentation methods.

Table 1. Details of data collection 1-3 used for this thesis.

SL	Participants	Data type	Topic, description	Dates	Length	Documentation
Data 1, Current State Analysis (Section 4)						
MBA students-Metropolia (12)						
1	Respondent 1: Student-1	Interview	Introduction, Research Design, Current State Analysis	24.9.2024	40min	Recordings & Field notes
2	Respondent 2: Student-2	Interview	Introduction, Research Design, Current State Analysis	25.9.2024	27min	Recordings & Field notes
3	Respondent 3: Student-3	Interview	Introduction, Research Design, Current State Analysis	25.9.2024	28min	Recordings & Field notes
4	Respondent 4: Student-4	Interview	Introduction, Research Design, Current State Analysis	26.9.2024	25min	Recordings & Field notes
5	Respondent 5: Student-5	Interview	Introduction, Research Design, Current State Analysis	27.9.2024	25min	Recordings & Field notes
6	Respondent 6: Student-6	Interview	Introduction, Research Design, Current State Analysis	27.9.2024	20min	Recordings & Field notes

7	Respondent 7: Student-7	Interview	Introduction, Research Design, Current State Analysis	27.9.2024	40min	Recordings & Field notes
8	Respondent 8: Student-8	Interview	Introduction, Research Design, Current State Analysis	27.9.2024	15min	Recordings & Field notes
9	Respondent 9: Student-9	Interview	Introduction, Research Design, Current State Analysis	27.9.2024	15min	Recordings & Field notes
10	Respondent 10: Student-10	Interview	Introduction, Research Design, Current State Analysis	2.10.2024	43min	Recordings & Field notes
11	Respondent 11: Student-11	Interview	Introduction, Research Design, Current State Analysis	3.10.2024	20min	Recordings & Field notes
12	Respondent 12: Student-12	Interview	Introduction, Research Design, Current State Analysis	19.9.2024	60min	Recordings & Field notes
Recruiters (4)						
13	Respondent 13: Recruiter-1	Interview	Introduction, Research Design, Current State Analysis	19.9.2024	60min	Recordings & Field notes
14	Respondent 14: Recruiter-2	Interview	Introduction, Research Design, Current State Analysis	24.9.2024	48min	Recordings & Field notes
15	Respondent 15: Recruiter-3	Interview	Introduction, Research Design, Current State Analysis	2.10.2024	37min	Recordings & Field notes
16	Respondent 16: Recruiter-4	Interview	Introduction, Research Design, Current State Analysis	3.10.2024	30min	Recordings & Field notes
Data 2, for Initial Proposal (Section 5)						
17	Respondent 17: Staff member-1 (Metropolia)	Discussion, interview	Co-creation	19.9.2024	60min	Recordings & Field notes
18	Respondent 18: Staff member-2 (Metropolia)	Discussion, interview	Co-creation	7.10.2024	60min	Recordings & Field notes
19	Respondent 19: Staff member-3 (Metropolia)	Discussion, interview	Co-creation	15.10.2024	60min	Recordings & Field notes
20	Respondent 20: Staff member-4 (External staff)	Discussion, interview	Co-creation	23.10.2024	60min	Recordings & Field notes
Data 3, for Validation and Final Proposal (Section 6)						
21	Respondent 21: Key member-1 (Metropolia)	Group Interview/Final Presentation	Validation, evaluation, and final improvements	11.11.2024	37min	Recordings & Field notes
22	Respondent 22: Key member-2 (Metropolia)	Group Interview/Final Presentation	Validation, evaluation, and final improvements	11.11.2024	37min	Recordings & Field notes
23	Respondent 23: Key member-3 (Metropolia)	Group interview/Final presentation	Validation, evaluation, and final improvements	11.11.2024	67min	Recordings & Field notes

As outlined in Table 1, data for this thesis was collected in three rounds. The first round examines the needs of the students and the recruiters. It uses semi-structured interviews with both MBA students and recruiters. Interviews were in-depth, conducted online, lasting typically 30 to 60 minutes, and recorded with field notes. The second round derives from Metropolia staff for their ideas on the concept model. This includes conducting interviews as well as online discussions to co-create the concept. The third and last round aims at validating the idea. The discussions are aimed at refining the concept based on the inputs collected from the management, and the proposal presented to key stakeholders and managers for the first time. The content analysis methods were used for analyzing the collected data. This approach consists of using codes for the interview transcripts along with discussion notes and extracting the most noteworthy concepts or trends. Through semi-structured interviews and discussions, the current state analysis, proposal-building collaboration, and validation will allow for the developing concept of a digital recruitment platform.

3 Existing Knowledge on Conceptualizing a Digital Recruitment Platform

This section reviews theoretical discussions on the elements of the digital platform concept. Starts with the basic pillars: operational mechanisms, architectural frameworks, and privacy/security features. It then reviews examples of best practices: LinkedIn, Jobly.fi, and Tyomarkkinatori.fi, which discusses the challenges and opportunities of these platforms. The seven service concepts show how these concepts contribute to value creation and user engagement. The conceptual framework finally synthesizes these insights to guide the concept to meet the needs of MBA students and recruiters.

3.1 Basic Pillars of Digital Recruitment Platforms

Communication effectively across different cultural contexts increasingly addresses the dynamic nature of the global workforce, which is expected to become more hybrid and culturally diverse in the coming years (GMAC, 2023). As noted by Signore et. al. (2023), contemporary recruitment strategies cater to the diverse perspectives of user groups from various cultural backgrounds. Digital recruitment platforms facilitate access to a broader and more diverse candidate pool. In this context, understanding the benefits of digital recruitment over traditional methods becomes vital (Sills, 2014), as outlined in Table 2, which compares the experiences offered by each platform.

Table 2. Traditional Recruitment Platforms vs Digital Recruitment Platforms (Sills, 2014).

Benefits	Traditional Recruitment Platforms	Digital Recruitment Platforms
Accessibility	Limited to specific channels (job fairs, newspapers)	Global access via the Internet, increasing inclusivity
Analytics	Limited tracking capabilities	Analytics for optimizing strategies and behaviors
Candidate Experience	Static, one-way communication; minimal customization	Dynamic, interactive; personalized processes
Cost	Higher due to physical materials & events	Lower, mainly for online maintenance
Engagement	Passive, candidates react to ads	Active, employer-candidate engagement
Innovation	Stable, with little change over time	Continuous innovation, AI for better matching
Reach	Geographically limited, often local/national	Global reach, accessible from anywhere
Speed	Slower, due to manual processes	Faster automated processes (sorting, scheduling)

The sources (McKinsey 2019; Rajput 2023) support the three basic pillars—operational mechanisms, architectural frameworks, and privacy/security features—to build a digital recruitment platform. According to McKinsey (2019), the core of digital platforms becomes a single operational system, supported by architectural design, which is achieved while safeguarding user data with privacy measures. As Rajput (2023) puts it, scalable digital frameworks allow platforms to handle significant loads of data and stay with GDPR compliance. These basic pillars together form the foundation for a digital recruitment platform with not less than minimum offerings—for users. This part now describes the elements of these pillars.

3.1.1 Operational Mechanisms (OM)

The University of Michigan exemplifies the benefits of a centralized approach whereby digital recruitment methods increase efficiency in recruitment for research teams (Doshi et. al., 2021). Even with a degree of constant publicness on social media with a degree of connectedness, increasing communication transparency between recruiters and candidates through a centralized recruiting process specifically providing verbal, written, and actionable feedback (both positive and negative) to job opportunities can lead to positive externalities and possibly normalization of providing valuable information such as detailed writing on individual social status (Doshi et al., 2021).

Likewise, digital recruitment platforms utilize analytics and feedback instruments to measure, analyze, and optimize user engagement and result with a data-driven approach that improves user experience and recruitment effectiveness (Martins et al, 2022). This is imperative during high recruitment times as it helps graduates and employers have a smooth experience (Salcedo, 2021).

The blend of technologies, AI and ML takes recruitment operations to another level by automating processes, resume parsing, application sorting, and interview scheduling. As a result, the initial phases of recruitment require minimal human effort, enabling the computerized organization of candidate data (Sills, 2014; Edith Pro, 2020). For example, Edith Pro has used AI to improve talent acquisition via better candidate matchmaking and an automated first screening process (Edith Pro, 2020). Also, involving academic faculty in recruitment strategies helps to align readiness to prepare for institutional goals. Diversifying who does interviews, though not common in practice, might contribute to attracting quality candidates by providing perspectives on the academic programs (Furbeck, 2021; Haggar, 2022). The elements of the operational mechanisms of digital recruitment platforms (derived from the elements defined before), their consequences, and the perspectives of both stakeholders are summarized in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Elements of Operational Mechanisms (OM) of Digital Recruitment Platforms.

SL	Elements	Consequences	Perspectives of Jobseekers	Perspectives of Recruiters	Sources
OM1	Centralized digital recruitment strategy	Improved hiring efficiency for research teams, enhanced transparency, and real-time feedback	Single platform for job search, application tracking, and communication with recruiters.	Centralized management of job postings, application tracking, and communication with candidates.	Doshi et al. (2021)
OM2	Analytics & feedback tools	Data-driven improvements in user satisfaction and recruitment efficiency, particularly during peak periods	Real-time data on job application status and market insights; personalized recommendations for career growth.	Insights on candidate pools, recruitment trends, and performance feedback to optimize hiring processes.	Martins et al. (2022); Salcedo (2021)

OM3	Integrating AI & ML	Automation of resume parsing, application sorting, and interview scheduling, reducing human intervention	Automated job matching based on profile and preferences; personalized job recommendations.	Candidate sorting, automated resume screening, and applicant ranking based on AI algorithms.	Sills (2014); Edith Pro (2020)
OM4	AI-powered talent acquisition	Improved candidate matching and streamlined screening process	Automated job matching based on profile and preferences; personalized job recommendations.	Candidate sorting, automated resume screening, and applicant ranking based on AI algorithms.	Edith Pro (2020)
OM5	Academic faculty involvement	Aligns recruitment strategies with institutional goals to attract high-quality candidates	Information on career fairs and academic programs to improve job placement opportunities.	Collaboration with faculty to align recruitment efforts with academic goals and enhance credibility.	Furbeck (2021); Haggar (2022)
OM6	Integrating social media strategies	Broader recruitment reach, user engagement through real-time updates, maintains user interest	Social media channels for sharing job opportunities and engaging with recruiters.	Utilization of social media for brand visibility, engagement with candidates, and broadening recruitment reach.	Nkomo et al. (2021); Haggar (2022)

Importantly, Nkomo et al. (2021) argue that these platforms interconnect social media strategies that link recruiters and employers for international jobs. Social media extends the recruitment reach and provides real-time updates that actively engage users packed with interactive features that keep users interested (Haggar, 2022).

3.1.2 Architectural Frameworks (AF)

Recruitment platform architecture includes the structural organization of the systems we develop to run (Albassam, 2023) and the technological stack (Gonzalez, 2023) that we use to support recruitment functionalities, scale, and security. This consists of core modules (Signore, 2020; Haggar, 2022) like job posting systems, applicant tracking systems (ATS), communication tools, and centralized management through which all the recruitment activities are automated and optimized including from candidate tracking to managing job advertisements. Also, compatibility with institutional systems eases to fit with strategic objectives (Haggar, 2022) and helps to manage job advertisements and recruitment calendars (Rozario et al., 2019).

The architectural framework also comprises significant information technology blocks for cloud framework, AI, and ML capabilities which promise scalability and performance in high data loads (Signore, 2020); thereby contributing towards recruitment process automation mechanisms, customized job recommendations, and resume parsing (Edith Pro, 2020; Peeler et al., 2021). Besides these technical features, the details regarding UI (user interface) and UX (user experience) design play a key to maintaining user engagement and satisfaction where the simple and intuitive dashboards and customizable interfaces assist job seekers and recruiters in efficient management (Martins et al., 2022). The elements of the architectural frameworks of digital recruitment platforms (derived from the elements defined before), their consequences, and the perspectives of both stakeholders are summarized in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Elements of Architectural Frameworks (AF) of Digital Recruitment Platforms.

SL	Elements	Consequences	Perspectives of Jobseekers	Perspectives of Recruiters	Sources
AF1	Structural Framework (ATS, communication tools, job posting systems)	Streamlined recruitment activities, optimized job posting, and candidate tracking	Streamlines access to job postings, applications, and communication tools.	Centralized management of job advertisements and tracking.	Signore (2020); Haggar (2022)
AF2	Technological Infrastructure	Supports functionality, scalability, and security in recruitment processes	Ensures high performance and scalability for user interaction under heavy data loads.	Supports high-volume data management and scalability.	Albassam (2023)
AF3	Cloud Infrastructure	Ensures high performance under heavy data loads	Ensures high performance and scalability for user interaction under heavy data loads.	Supports high-volume data management and scalability.	Signore (2020)
AF4	Artificial Intelligence (AI)	Automates recruitment processes, including personalized job recommendations	Provides personalized job recommendations and automated resume parsing.	Automates candidate selection processes and job recommendations.	Edith Pro (2020)
AF5	Machine Learning (ML)	Enhances resume parsing and process automation	Provides personalized job recommendations and automated resume parsing.	Automates candidate selection processes and job recommendations.	Peeler et al. (2021)
AF6	Integration with Institutional Systems	Aligns recruitment with strategic goals, seamless management of recruitment calendars	Seamless access to institutional career services and job postings.	Smooth integration with institutional recruitment calendars and academic systems for alignment.	Rozario et al. (2019); Haggar (2022)
AF7	User Interface (UI) & User Experience (UX)	Improves user engagement and satisfaction with customizable dashboards	Enhances engagement with intuitive dashboards and customizable features.	Simplifies recruitment management through efficient interfaces.	Martins et al. (2022)
AF8	Security Framework (SSO, SAML)	Protects sensitive information, ensures compliance with GDPR	Ensures sensitive information and ensures compliance with GDPR.	Protects sensitive information through encryption and secure protocols (SSO, SAML).	Salcedo (2021)

Finally, a security framework (Salcedo, 2021) forms the base of platform architecture, including end-to-end data encryption and the implementation of secure protocols like Single Sign-On (SSO) and Security Assertion Markup Language (SAML) to secure sensitive information. Such measures are necessary to remain private and comply with legislation, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

3.1.3 Privacy/Security (PS) Features

Digital recruitment platforms are governed by strict regulations about the privacy and security of personal data within the European context where the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR, 2016) is essential. To ensure the protection of user information, it is necessary to prevent unauthorized access to it, however still within the restrictions of data protection laws (GDPR, 2016). As Signore (2020) points one of the most important things necessary to apply such regulations maintain user and legal trust. Importantly, as Salcedo (2021) mentions, through user empowerment in the control of personal data, rigorous data privacy regulation like GDPR has made digital platforms more trustworthy.

Platforms such as Edith Pro (2020) implement authentication by Single Sign-On (SSO) and Security Assertion Markup Language (SAML) which provide an extra layer of

protection by reducing how often users need to log into their tool and keeping track of passwords and user information. Together with encryption protocols, they help to secure data integrity and confidentiality, Haggar (2022). Besides these technological measures, Peeler et al. (2021) stress the need for clearly articulated consent protocols, that must be transparent and procedural and can complement the laws to ensure that users' rights are protected. The elements of the privacy and security features of digital recruitment platforms (derived from the elements defined before), their consequences, and the perspectives of both stakeholders are summarized in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Elements of Privacy and Security Features of Digital Recruitment Platforms.

SL	Elements	Consequences	Perspectives of Jobseekers	Perspectives of Recruiters	Sources
PS1	GDPR Compliance	Ensures legal integrity, enhances user trust, and enforces control over personal information	Protection of personal data; GDPR compliance; user control over data	Adherence to legal frameworks (e.g., GDPR); data protection	GDPR (2016); Signore (2020)
PS2	SSO & SAML	Strengthens authentication processes, enhances data security	Ensures sensitive information and ensures compliance with GDPR.	Protects sensitive information through encryption and secure protocols (SSO, SAML).	Edith Pro (2020)
PS3	Encryption Protocols	Ensures data integrity and confidentiality	Protection of personal information through strong authentication and encryption	Implementation of SSO and SAML for secure authentication	Haggar (2022)
PS4	Transparent Consent Protocols	Protects user rights, aligns with legal frameworks	Transparent consent protocols for data usage	Institutional oversight ensuring legal alignment	Peeler et al. (2021)
PS5	Ethical Use of Social Media Profiles	Raises ethical concerns regarding the handling of publicly available information in recruitment	Ethical use of social media profiles	Ethical use of social media profiles	Sills (2014)
PS6	Adaptive Cybersecurity Strategies	Addresses emerging digital threats and ensures proactive protection	Follow the guidelines of cybersecurity	Proactive cybersecurity strategies for platform security	Nkomo et al. (2021)

Finally, Sills (2014) observes that the potential utilization of social media in recruitment raises an ethical question relevant to publicly accessible information. Moreover, Nkomo et al. (2021) necessitate that organizations focus on cyber security accepting adaptive security techniques to address emerging threats in digital environments. The key elements of the pillars of digital recruitment platforms are summarized in Table 6:

Table 6. Key Elements of Basic Pillars of Digital Recruitment Platforms.

Operational Mechanisms (OM)	**Architectural Frameworks (AF)**	**Privacy & Security (PS) Features**
▪ Centralized digital recruitment strategy (OM1) ▪ Analytics & feedback tools (OM2) ▪ Integrating AI & ML (OM3) ▪ AI-powered talent acquisition (OM4) ▪ Academic faculty involvement (OM5) ▪ Integrating social media strategies (OM6)	▪ Structural Framework (ATS, communication tools, job posting systems) (AF1) ▪ Technological Infrastructure (AF2) ▪ Cloud Infrastructure (AF3) ▪ Artificial Intelligence (AI) (AF4) ▪ Machine Learning (ML) (AF5) ▪ Integration with Institutional Systems (AF6) ▪ User Interface (UI) & User Experience (UX) (AF7) ▪ Security Framework (SSO, SAML) (AF8)	▪ GDPR Compliance (PS1) ▪ SSO & SAML (PS2) ▪ Encryption Protocols (PS3) ▪ Transparent Consent Protocols (PS4) ▪ Ethical Use of Social Media Profiles (PS5) ▪ Adaptive Cybersecurity Strategies (PS6)

As seen in Table 6, the first pillar is the operational mechanisms that provide the key functionalities of the digital recruitment platforms to facilitate smooth and efficient recruitment processes. Key elements include a centralized model, real-time feedback, and analytics tools to support user engagement. With high volumes of data in the platform, these solutions will help platforms run faster and have accurate processing capabilities to make recruitment operations efficient. Employers and candidates find common ground with AI tools, such as talent acquisition systems, which increase matching accuracy and make selection easier. The second pillar is the architectural frameworks of digital recruitment platforms that include the structural and technological parts necessary for functionality. The structural part contains the integration of key modules like ATS, communication, and job posting systems, while the technological part is handy when it comes to scalability and reliability. Data cloud infrastructure, with AI and ML, manages large data and automates the recruitment process. Users rely heavily on intuitive dashboards for navigating recruitment activities, so a smooth UI and UX keeps them engaged and active. This pillar also includes security frameworks that protect sensitive data, whilst ensuring the system remains in compliance with regulatory requirements. Third, privacy and security features ensure user trust and complies with laws. Digital recruitment platforms have stringent compliance with data protection regulations, GDPR in Europe, which regulates the handling of personal information. Security measures SSO and encrypting methods are applied to data. This is where transparency for consent mechanisms and cybersecurity approaches can prevent attacks against data. The attention to ethics concerns about using social media profiles for recruitment puts forth the need for data privacy in the digital recruitment process.

The basic pillars of digital recruitment platforms: operational mechanisms, architectural frameworks, and privacy/security features are the foundation for building a minimum viable platform. With these pillars, we can conceptualize a digital recruitment platform that can handle tons of candidate data, work seamlessly, and not lose the trust of the users. Drawing theoretical elements from this foundation, we will introduce the key ideas behind a platform that is intended to automate recruitment processes but does so while protecting users' data and complying with legal requirements.

With an insight into the basic pillars, the next section will explore best practices on digital recruitment platforms of how these elements translate into action in the real world and identify challenges and opportunities.

3.2 Best Practices in Digital Recruitment Platforms

This section highlights notable examples of digital recruitment platforms and their impacts on streamlining recruitment processes. It also discusses the challenges these platforms face which affect their performance. Lastly, it explores opportunities these platforms provide through data-driven approaches and personalized job searches.

3.2.1 Examples of Digital Recruitment Platforms

Examples of digital recruitment platforms in Finland include LinkedIn, Jobly, and Tyomarkkinatori. We find the challenges and opportunities with their consequences.

Example 1-LinkedIn: Launched in 2003, LinkedIn is one of the largest online professional networks in the world with 900 million members. It brings tools for recruiters to post jobs, search for candidates, and passive recruitment; so, candidates can build resumes, network with professionals, and get jobs. (LinkedIn, 2024).

The digital recruitment platform, LinkedIn faces *some challenges affecting its user engagement, trust, and the quality of hire*. AI can speed up recruitment, but it can also *take humans out of the recruitment process* and *lower the value of candidates*, which drives the *drop-out rate up* and will *affect hiring quality* eventually (Talhive, 2024). Moreover, AI recruitment tools *become less scalable and reliable*, and their continuous needs can lead to the breakdown of the entire system and *lower user trust* (Harvard Business, 2015). *A UX/UI* ruins user engagement and satisfaction; inviting a need to keep candidates and recruiters *locked into the messy platform interface*. Recruiters and candidates leave *unsatisfied with time-consuming processes* (Havoc Digital, 2024). At the same time, *unverified credentials* feed this concern: *eroding credibility and trust* as recruiters compete with false data (Havoc Digital, 2024). Similarly, *algorithmic bias spreads unfairness*, as it leaves some groups outside of recruitment processes, resulting in *mistrust and disengagement of recruiters and candidates* (SocialTalent, 2024).

LinkedIn has access to *few opportunities*, which in digital recruitment platforms allow for *operative and strategic gain*. *Cheap recruitment* (Havoc Digital 2024) utilizes AI tools to screen and target candidates, which *decreases time-to-hire* and *makes it less costly* to operate. With *access to a vast talent pool* (SocialTalent, 2024), LinkedIn *improves labor market efficiency by providing access to diverse*, *high-quality candidates across geographic, linguistic, and cultural boundaries*. With *personalized jobsearch experience*

(McKinsey, 2019), jobseekers are recommended according to their profile, skills, and interests, *find better job matches*, and *hire faster*. Also, *AI recommendations* (Solanki & Gujarati, 2024) *improve the data-driven recommendations* and, by improving the accuracy of candidate matching algorithms, it helps to *reduce the scan process, and human errors,* and provides *a more accurate and non-biased selection of candidates*. Finally, *employer branding* (Sarah & Jen, 2023) creates a perception of a company that *attracts like-minded talent* that aligns with the same values and mission of the companies from LinkedIn which further *leads to continued recruitment and retention advantages*.

Example 2-Jobly.fi: Jobly.fi is a Finnish job platform, rebranded from Monster.fi in 2022. Alma Media is the owner of this platform with a values-based job search, finding jobs that fit values while matching skills. Jobly shows the net impact data of companies in collaboration with Upright so that the choices of the users support with data on how much positive or negative impact employers have on society and the environment. The challenges and opportunities are drawn from the website Alma Media (updated in 2022).

Jobly faces *some challenges* affecting *a competitive and user-friendly application*. Challenges of *integrating new and existing technology* lead to *inefficiencies, downtimes, limited compatibility, and frustrated users* that *undermine the reliability of the platform*. *Limited scalability* limits Jobly to address the increase in user traffic and data needs, more than likely forcing expensive infrastructure upgrades. Another challenge that arises is *UI/UX design* because it must be simple but functional at the same time otherwise customers will migrate toward a similar platform with a nice UI and UX. Another major concern that needs consideration is *data privacy and security* as huge quantities of sensitive information are stored. Poor protocols not only jeopardize data but tarnish Jobly's repute, making it a target for lawsuits, fines, and user distrust–after all, who will want to continue to use a service if they think their data is not safe, which further endangers engagement and standing in the market

Jobly has *a few strategic opportunities* with significant consequences. Its *personalized job search experience* fosters personalization and interaction that *leads to user engagement and retention* that attracts traffic and ad dollars. Jobly, with Alma Media's media reach behind it, offers *low-cost hiring* that is purposeful and beneficial, which makes it *a good fit for many small and medium enterprises*. A partnership adds to *employer branding* through an Upright impact link between candidates and their job

roles, allowing companies to *highlight their positive contribution to society and the environment* that *improves reputation and talent attraction*. Alma Media's network supports Jobly's growth across industries and regions with *an increase in flexibility and scalability* that establishes Jobly as the leading job search platform in Finland.

Example 3-tyomarkkinatori.fi: Työmarkkinatori.fi (initially it was mol.fi, then TE-palvelut.fi) is a Finnish digital employment platform developed by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and KEHA-keskus. Launched as a pilot in March 2017, *Työmarkkinatori* became fully operational in May 2022. (Duunitori, 2023; TE-palvelut, 2024). The platform integrates public and private services to support recruitment and Finland's labor market goals (KEHA-keskus, 2023; Duunitori, 2023).

Technological integration and scalability are arguably *some of the biggest challenges* faced by Työmarkkinatori which arises from combining data from a multitude of public services and private employers *resulting in inefficiencies like time-consuming matching of jobseekers with vacancies and downtimes*. This *lowers the user confidence* as a reliable platform (Duunitori, 2023; Työmarkkinatori, 2023). The time it requires to learn and adapt to the new environment affects adoption, yet this *UI/UX design* goes one step ahead by *the less intuitive interface*, which makes *the navigation harder* for jobseekers and employers with highly technical backgrounds and skills–and so it all degrades the performance (Duunitori, 2023). The use of AI for job matching also raises *data privacy and cyber security concerns* as the process requires tight encryption and secure systems to solve trust and engagement issues (Duunitori, 2023; Työmarkkinatori, 2023). It is also *difficult to serve diverse stakeholders*; if the needs of government, private, and education sector stakeholders become misaligned, *the inefficiencies can increase* and *hinder proper job matching* (Työmarkkinatori, 2023). *Technical and interface barriers restrict communication*, which *upsets users, holds responses, and delivers incorrect job information*, *damaging the platform's reputation* (Työmarkkinatori, 2023).

The low-cost recruitment model of Työmarkkinatori includes aggregating job openings and matching workers to them through AI algorithms, *decreasing intermediation, and lowering workforce recruitment costs* (Työmarkkinatori, 2023). This low-cost model allows *easy hiring for SMEs and discovering new job sectors for the industry*. Moreover, Työmarkkinatori *supports access to global talent* in its recruitment processes by issuing rules for recruiting foreign workers, adding such new skill sets and opportunities to

Finnish companies, and increasing their ability to innovate (Työmarkkinatori, 2023). Also, this process of matching jobseekers to available vacancies is digitalized and uniform, which *allows matching to be standardized* and *employment services to be rationalized across Finland* thereby *increasing the number of jobseekers* that can place into work and *address national-level goals for employment* (Duunitori, 2023; Työmarkkinatori, 2023).

3.2.2 Challenges of Digital Recruitment Platforms

Technological integration is one of the challenges yet. Most recruitment platforms try to adopt AI and ML for functions like resume parsing and job recommendations, however, integrating these technologies with existing institutional systems is still challenging (Haggar 2022; Salcedo 2021). Platforms balance using cutting-edge technologies while keeping user interfaces simple. Failure to do so leads to lower engagement rates, as a result, the platform is less efficient to bring in and keep them with (Signore 2020).

For the architecture, *scalability, and reliability* preserved by recruitment platforms. The use of cloud infrastructure and AI/ML improves platform performance and allows the automation of the recruitment process (Edith Pro 2020; Peeler et al. 2021). Yet, scalability takes a hit when platforms are not designed for large user volumes, or when system upgrades trail behind the company's needs (Stone & Deadrick 2015). A shared yet hierarchical structure shaped by institutional systems and translated into architectural design is for the recruitment calendars and posting jobs (Rozario et al. 2019).

Another significant challenge is *UI/UX design***.** How to design a platform affects how people use it. Dashboards that assist either jobseekers or recruiters are important to have on a recruitment platform (Martins et al. 2020), hence the platforms focus on such dashboards. A platform that builds a strong, extensible architectural foundation is likely to respond to future technology shifts and user demand (Rozario et. al. 2019).

Data privacy and security are essential for user trust and legal compliance (Signore 2020; Peeler et al. 2021). This includes GDPR, strong data encryption, and secure authentication methods like Single Sign-On (SSO), and Security Assertion Markup Language (SAML) for transparent consent protocols (Signore 2020). Ethical handling of sensitive data from social media profiles during recruitment is a careful consideration to prevent privacy breaches (Sills 2014; Nkomo et al. 2021). It is also critical to have *cybersecurity strategies* in place to prevent user data from breaches (Sills 2014; Nkomo

et al. 2021). Customized and transparent data handling is critical for stakeholder expectations and ethical compliance.

User engagement suffers on platforms that do not offer intuitive and easy-to-navigate interfaces, and so, it limits their ability to acquire and retain users. Digital recruitment platforms, though a level of convenience, result in an impersonal approach to the initial screening process which in many ways results in a widening gap between the candidate and the organization thus minimizing the scope of value co-creation. (Stone & Deadrick 2015). As such, this disassociation decreases user engagement since candidates believe that preference and need for individuality are non-existent. To facilitate high user engagement, the platform offers core features such as tailored job recommendations, timely notifications, and bilateral communications tools (Signore 2020).

Further challenges arise for *the stakeholders' needs.* Recruitment platforms balance the standardization of the recruitment process with the flexibility for a spectrum of applicant profiles, especially in international recruitment settings (Stone & Deadrick 2015). Faculty involvement is key to aligning recruitment activity with educational objectives, but sharing recruitment roles with teaching and research duties is challenging (Furbeck 2021). As such, career development services are most appropriate for recruitment platforms, as these functions are complementary to academic goals (Salcedo 2021).

Lastly, digital platforms are highly dependent on asynchronous communication channels (Stone & Deadrick 2015), which limits value creation. The absence of face-to-face *communication* leads to a less personalized recruitment process, wherein the perceived value from the candidate's perspective is reduced and candidates tend to drop out of the application stage itself (Stone & Deadrick 2015). Table 6 below shows the key challenges, along with the consequences, faced by digital recruitment platforms.

Table 7. Key Challenges Faced by Digital Recruitment Platforms.

SL	Challenges (C)	Examples as Evident	Consequences	Sources
C1	Technological Integration	LinkedIn; Jobly.fi; Työmarkkinatori.fi	lower user engagement and decreased platform effectiveness	Haggar (2022); Salcedo (2021)
C2	Scalability & Reliability	LinkedIn; Jobly.fi; Työmarkkinatori.fi (Scalability)	experience lag, affecting recruitment processes & organizational demands	Edith Pro (2020); Peeler et al. (2021); Stone & Deadrick (2015)
C3	UI/UX Design	LinkedIn; Jobly.fi; Työmarkkinatori.fi	reduce user engagement makes it harder for platforms to retain users & effectively manage recruitment processes	Martins et al. (2022)
C4	Data Privacy & Security	LinkedIn; Jobly.fi; Työmarkkinatori.fi	breaches, loss of trust, and legal issues, particularly with regulations like GDPR	Signore (2020); Peeler et al. (2021); Nkomo et al. (2021)
C5	Cybersecurity	Työmarkkinatori.fi	risk exposing sensitive user data, leading to potential breaches and a loss of user confidence	Sills (2014); Nkomo et al. (2021)

C6	User Engagement	LinkedIn	reduce the platform's ability to attract and retain users, affecting recruitment success	Stone & Deadrick (2015); Signore (2020)
C7	Stakeholder Needs	Työmarkkinatori.fi	Balancing standardization with flexibility strains platform capabilities and user satisfaction	Stone & Deadrick (2015); Furbeck (2021); Salcedo (2021)
C8	Communication Limitations	Työmarkkinatori.fi	limits personalization and increases dropout rates during the recruitment process.	Stone & Deadrick (2015)

3.2.3 Opportunities of Digital Recruitment Platforms

Unlike traditional recruitment processes that incur costs related to newspaper ads and in-person assessment, digital platforms *reduce recruitment costs significantly* as most of the recruitment process is performed digitally (Okolie and Irabor, 2017). The most common career platforms contribute to a group of candidates for employers at the lowest possible price compared to the expenses of recruitment agencies, reducing the overhead (Rosoiu and Popescu, 2016). These platforms save a lot of time because they automate screening candidates, which shortens the hiring cycle (Monika and Haribabu, 2023).

The digital platforms *ignore geographic limitations* for recruiters to source candidates from different regions and countries, planning a diverse talent pool (Williams et al. 2021). A presence that spans the globe brings unique and niche skills to augment the local talent pool that simply not be found within home market borders, increasing diversity and experience in the local workforce. Digital platforms offer the flexibility to facilitate this, through remote work and virtual assessments. (Rosoiu and Popescu 2016).

These platforms provide *a personalized jobsearch experience* for job seekers. Profile-building facilities on platforms allow candidates to fill in details of their qualifications and skills for better matches while searching for employees (Okolie and Irabor 2017). Moreover, they offer candidates a plethora of job postings that get updated regularly thus increasing the opportunity of a respective job application being submitted to a job that is relevant to them (Rosoiu and Popescu, 2016).

Employers utilize these platforms for automated candidate job matches using algorithms, which match candidates to job openings based on skills, qualifications, and experience, thereby improving the accuracy of the selection process (Monika and Haribabu, 2023). Not only does this *data-driven approach to recruitment* increase the quality of hire also at the same reduces the risk of human error and unconscious bias in the process. It allows candidates who are best fit for their company's needs (Williams et al., 2021). Whether a company needs to hire or increase a few employees, digital platforms use flexibility to manage recruitment resources (Rosoiu and Popescu, 2016). Freelancer

platforms provide gig workers; thus, companies address the growing demand for *flexible workforce* in various industries through short-term projects (Williams et al., 2021).

Digital profiles and targeted job ads enable companies to attract company culture, values, and benefits for candidates that resonate with the vision of the company and work culture (Rosoiu and Popescu, 2016). This creates a positive perception of the company among potential employees, creating *an employer branding opportunity.* With the growth of companies, their processes support large volumes of applications via data-driven analytics to make sure the recruitment process is equipped to be scalable on a company level (Williams et al., 2021). In addition, improved candidate experiences contribute to employer branding efforts because happy jobseekers are likely to have a positive attitude toward the company and promote the company to others (Okolie and Irabor, 2017). These opportunities, *"when combined,"* create *a consistent digital process* that benefits both employers and jobseekers. Table 7 below shows the key opportunities with consequences enjoyed by digital recruitment platforms.

Table 8. Key opportunities enjoyed by digital recruitment platforms.

SL	Opportunities (O)	Examples as Evident	Consequences	Sources
O1	Cost-Effective Recruitment	LinkedIn; Jobly.fi; Työmarkkinatori.fi	Reduced costs and faster hiring through automation	Okolie and Irabor (2017); Rosoiu and Popescu (2016); Monika and Haribabu (2023)
O2	Global Access to Talent	LinkedIn; Työmarkkinatori.fi	Access to diverse, specialized talent from any location	Williams et al. (2021); Rosoiu and Popescu (2016)
O3	Personalized Job Search Experience	LinkedIn; Jobly.fi;	Tailored job matches and continuous access to updated listings.	Okolie and Irabor (2017); Rosoiu and Popescu (2016)
O4	Data-Driven Decision	Työmarkkinatori.fi	Increased accuracy in candidate selection, reduced bias	Monika and Haribabu (2023); Williams et al. (2021)
O5	Flexibility and Scalability	Jobly.fi;	Efficient management of fluctuating recruitment demands	Rosoiu and Popescu (2016); Williams et al. (2021)
O6	Employer Branding	LinkedIn	Improved company reputation and candidate attraction	Rosoiu and Popescu (2016)
O7	Consistent Digital Process	Työmarkkinatori.fi	Seamless, scalable, and efficient recruitment process	Williams et al. (2021); Okolie and Irabor (2017)

In brief, Section 3.2 describes three main aspects, i.e. examples, challenges, and opportunities of digital recruitment platforms: LinkedIn, Jobly, and Tyomarkkinatori. As the largest professional network, LinkedIn shows us the potential market access to talent and AI assistants. Jobly offers a values-driven job search that matches candidates with opportunities that integrate the long-term impact they seek. Tyomarkkinatori outlines one concrete example of how both the public and private sectors collaborate to simplify employment services in Finland. Such platforms give us an idea of how to make the overall recruitment process a better one by data-based strategies which leads to a better match between the candidate and the employer.

However, these platforms are faced with several challenges. Technological integration, balancing seamless user experience with AI implementation, and scalability continue to be challenges. Design as an interface (UI/UX) should be intuitive because it must reach a variety of user groups, and if it's too complicated to use, they will lose interest. Trust is kept by establishing data privacy and security, and compliance with regulations, such as GDPR. Moreover, the use of technology in recruitment creates friction by cybersecurity risks and the need for personalized real-time interactions.

As for the opportunity aspect, digital recruitment platforms provide cost-effective options by automating the hiring process while accessing talent globally. Jobseekers will benefit from these platforms through personalized jobsearch experiences while creating synergy for candidate and company values and improving employer branding as well. Moreover, data-based decision-making and flexibility optimize the recruitment process by supplying the right candidates, which increases the long-term benefits of recruitment.

In the next section, theoretical models that help explain service concepts are discussed, and the general structure will provide for conceptualizing a digital recruitment platform.

3.3 Building a Service Concept

This section overviews the most popular tools related to a building service concept. It studies the service concepts by Goldstein et al. (2002), and Grönroos (2015), the service blueprint by Shostack (1984), the Double Diamond by the Design Council (2005), and the Customer Value Proposition (CVP) by Osterwalder (2015), the Business Model Canvas (BMC) by Osterwalder & Pigneur (2010), and it also covers a Minimal Viable Product (MVP) by Reis (2009).

3.3.1 Service Concept by Goldstein et al. (2002)

Goldstein et al. (2002) introduce the service concept as a core element of a service design that connects customer needs with the strategic intent of a company. The concept depicts the correlation of "what" and "how" facilitating a service experience to deliver value or overvalue (exceed customer expectations). The authors describe it as the structure that combines the principles of design, development, and management of the service. It guides the service creation process and incorporates both the physical and non-physical aspects of a service, hence shaping the customer experience of a service. Figure 4 below shows the service concept adopted from Goldstein et al. 2002.

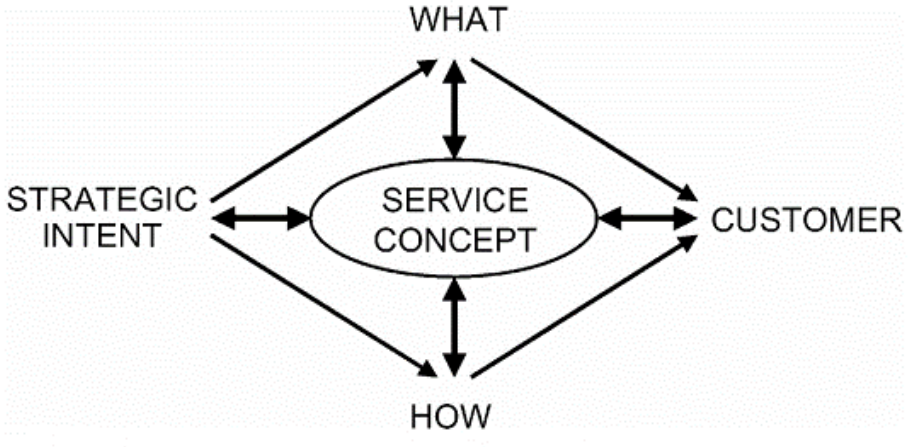


Figure 4. The Service Concept (Adopted from Goldstein et al. 2002, page 124).

As seen in Figure 4 above, Goldstein et al. (2002) state that the concept is more than service features as it is the plan to deliver the service. It covers everything from the service offering itself, which defines the core and supporting services that are to be offered to customers. The core service is the main value the customer is searching for, and the supporting services simply add further value to this. The service process is also one of the components of the service concept, describing the series of activities in the performance of the service. This process requires careful design to be both efficient and effective, less so in reliability, and one that finally satisfies the end-user or consumer. The perceived quality of the service is related to the service process efficiency. The service outcome is associated with the initial stage of a service process, and service experience is synonymous with the value customers perceive from the finally provided service. The first is that a proper alignment among the service offering, the process, and the outcome is a prerequisite for achieving favorable service outcomes, and in turn, high levels of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Finally, the service system contains all the resources (including people, technology, and infrastructure) that support the service delivery process. A service is a well-designed process; it enables the service to be delivered consistently and effectively, allowing the company to maintain strategic goals through continual service innovations that fulfill customer needs.

To summarize, this service concept is a framework for how a service will be designed and delivered. By aligning service offerings, processes, outcomes, and systems, companies build services that meet their customer's expectations and strategic goals.

3.3.2 Service Concept by Grönroos (2015)

Grönroos (2015) depicts a service concept that features the difference between "service design" and "designing for service." Service design creates a process or activity that enables service provision and allows the user to interact with the service. This includes creating features like navigation, user interfaces, and operational workflows that will make the delivery of the service more efficient. On the other hand, designing for service is more about the design of systems, resources, and surroundings of the service, to ensure that the service provides, in the most valuable way, what a user is looking for. This also extends beyond the servicing activities to designing tools, be they physical or digital, that are aligned with the customer's goals. Grönroos (2015) claims, that service design and designing for service must go together to provide an integrated service experience that helps the users to reach their goals. Figure 5 below shows the design for the service triangle model adopted from Grönroos (2015).

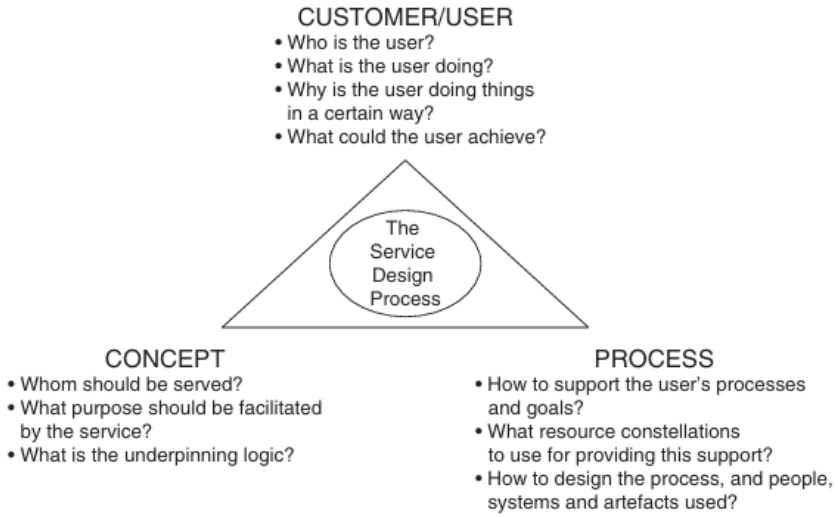


Figure 5. The design for the service triangle (Grönroos, 2015, page 222).

As seen in Figure 5 above, the triangular structure depicts three essentials: the customer/user, the concept, and the process. At the center of this model is the customer/user. This is vital to design a service that works for them: what are their aims, what do they do on a day-to-day basis, and what keeps them awake at night? Grönroos (2015) argues that traditional methods of market research are inadequate for achieving this knowledge, instead suggesting an ethnographic study or deep user research which can provide insight into what customers aim to do with the service. The step after understanding the customer insights is to develop a concept that serves as a foundation for the service design. It addresses important questions like who the service is for and what it should accomplish. It also finds the logic behind the service, which can trigger

innovative solutions that change the way the service is delivered. Lastly, the service process describes how the service will be delivered. According to Grönroos (2015), this process must involve different types of resources (people, technologies, and systems) to provide a service experience for the customer. It achieves that by not only shaping the nuts and bolts of how a service is delivered but also how it is perceived. This model is the concept of value co-creation which holds that value for a service is never produced solely by the service provider but together with the user. The all-around value of the service we feel is based on the user's engagement and interaction.

Grönroos (2015) recommends a holistic service design process where the services are aligned with the needs of the user. Identifying and integrating service design, resources, and user engagement; to build a value environment that augments user satisfaction with the strategic goals of the company.

3.3.3 Service Blueprint by Shostack (1984)

Shostack (1984) first discussed the service blueprint as a tool to visualize and analyze service processes. This tool provides a visual layout of the components and interactions in a service, representing how services support execution and where improvements be made. It helps discover the possibilities of failure, optimize the processes that are part of the service, and make it possible to fulfill the expectations from the service to the customers and the company in the service itself. This tool aims to simplify the high level of complexity of service operations by separating visible and invisible aspects of service delivery. It outlines each component of the service experience, including customer interactions (the "frontstage" activities) and the supporting efforts (the "backstage" activities) that support the service. Figure 6 below shows a template for a service blueprint cited from Gibbons (2017).

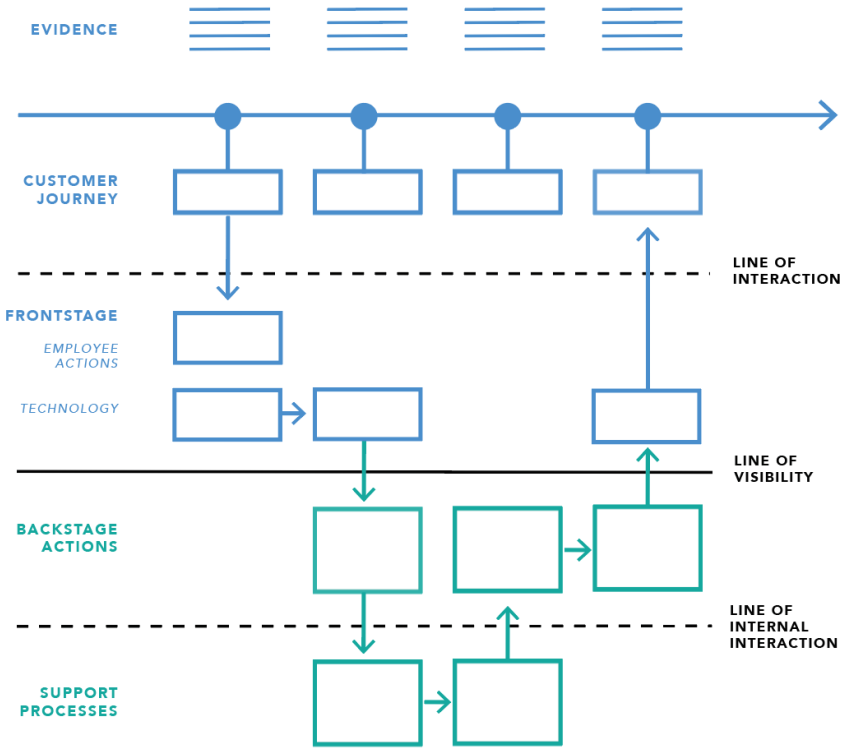


Figure 6. Service Blueprint: A Template (cited from Gibbons, 2017).

As seen from Figure 6 above, the blueprint is divided into multiple core components. The first of those is the customer's line of visibility, which divides the activities the customer can see from those he does not watch happening behind the scenes. The customer actions and a service employee or system interaction appear above this line. The backstage activities, like data, supplies we need to process the orders, etc., and other supporting functions not assigned to the customer but are essential for the service delivery to work, are activities below the line. Yet another aspect of the service blueprint is the failure points—specific points in the service where there's a high probability of error. By plotting these points of failure, companies can use them to proactively design mechanisms around their flaws and plan corrective actions to reduce service failures. Also, in the Shostack model, the time element is the time required to deliver each step of the service. These components help companies to establish reasonable time frames for service delivery, which indicates that service will be available, and delays will be reduced. Executing standard times allows service providers to manage service quality and customer expectations.

The service blueprint is a framework that provides companies with a powerful structure to capture the fundamentals of their service design and delivery. A visualization of the service process helps businesses identify inefficiencies, improve customer experience, and align their operations with strategic goals.

3.3.4 Double Diamond by the Design Council (2005)

The Double Diamond Model was launched in 2005 by the Design Council as a framework for the design process and highlights the need for both divergent and convergent theories in problem-solution. This model is divided into two diamonds: the first diamond is all about finding and defining the problem, and the second diamond is all about building and validating solutions to the problem. Figure 7 below shows the double diamond model prescribed by the Design Council in 2005.

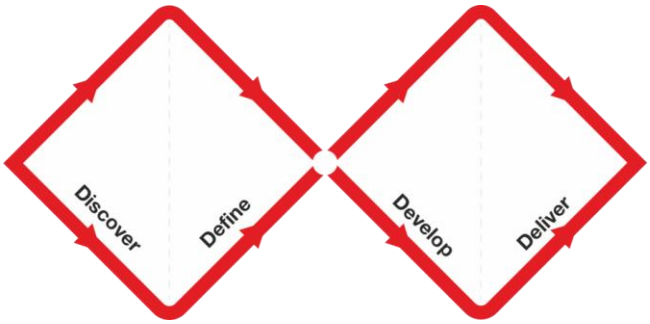


Figure 7. The Double Diamond (Adopted from the Design Council 2005).

The first phase, "Discover," is where designers look broadly around the problem space. This is a phase of insight, research, and pushing against assumptions to understand the problem. The objective is to broaden the learning opportunity, exploring as many options and viewpoints as possible, before meeting a clear problem statement. The next step in the model after "Discover" is the "Define" phase. The insights and data collected are then condensed and examined to determine the most prominent themes and greatest pain points. This stage represents the first step towards a convergent view, as, after a wide expansion of the problem, it is reduced to a clear specific problem statement. This definition of the problem is the foundation for the design that comes next.

The second diamond starts with the first phase of what we call "Develop," where we generate and test many ideas and possible solutions. This phase is the stage of experimentation and refinement—where different methods to address the predefined problem are tested. This involves prototypes, feedback loops, and testing, as the ideas are refined and validated to meet the needs of users. The last phase, "Deliver," highlights the launch and implementation of the final solution. This phase relates to final testing, assessment, and production to ensure that the solution is feasible and solves the problem that was originally specified. At this stage, a convergent view happens in this stage where the design gets finalized and is all set to be delivered to the end users.

The Double Diamond Model is a famous design thinking framework. Its simplicity and its capability to guide a complex design process are part of its appeal. Promotes creators to provide a balance between creative and structured analysis, resulting in solutions that are innovative and insight into significant problems.

3.3.5 Customer Value Proposition (CVP) Canvas by Osterwalder (2015)

The Value Proposition Canvas (or Customer Value Proposition canvas), introduced by Osterwalder in 2015, is a tool in the hands of a company to see how well a product or service fits the needs and wants of its customers. The CVP, a part of Osterwalder's broader Business Model Canvas (BMC), maps the company's value as an experience against the customer's expectations, goals, and aspirations. The canvas consists of two sides, the Customer Profile and the Value Map. Figure 8 below shows the customer value proposition canvas adopted from Osterwalder 2015.

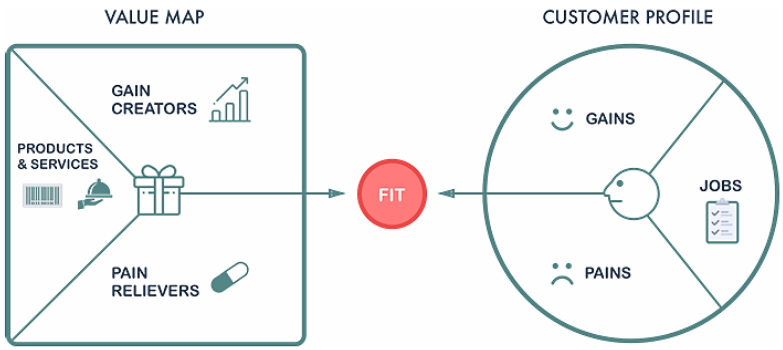


Figure 8. The Customer Value Proposition Canvas (Adopted from Osterwalder 2015).

As shown in Figure 8 above, the customer profile identifies the customer segment using three key elements: customer jobs, pains, and gains. *Customer jobs are what customers are trying to do*. *Pains: negative customer experiences/challenges to perform a job*. *Gains: positive experiences/opportunities that customers want*. The Value Map is the counterpart of the customer profile (*achieve a "product-market fit"*). It matches the *customer profile to the products/services that solve the customer's jobs*, *pain relievers that relieve the customer's pains*, and *gain creators that create the customer's gains*.

CVP goes through achieving a "product-market fit" way, described by Andreessen (2007), where a product that fulfills the needs of consumers has a match of what the consumers wish and what a product/service offers. This synergy further increases the value perception in customers' minds as a product that meets their needs also completes

the task in a way that aligns with their expectations and preferences (Mailchimp, 2023). Companies can improve their CVP through the effective measurement of product-market fit as the offer certifies a better acceptance within the target audience in most scenarios, leading to higher value match, higher customer satisfaction and finally contributing to business success (UserVoice, 2017). Thus, product-market fit becomes an important factor, so the value proposition is not only just theoretically sound but also practically relevant to the target customer (Leibson, 2018; Stanford University, 2023).

3.3.6 Business Model Canvas (BMC) by Osterwalder & Pigneur (2010)

The Business Model Canvas, (Osterwalder and Pigneur, 2010), is a strategic tool for creating a business model and is a visual chart with nine interrelated building blocks. The central unit of the BMC is the value proposition, which specifies the bundle of products and services that create value for a customer segment—a specific group, a company aims to reach and serve. Customer segments are accessed and served via channels, they deliver the value proposition and are maintained through customer relationships. These three elements—key resources, key activities, and key partnerships—constitute the operational side of the BMC that supports the value proposition, maintains customer relationships, and delivers revenue. The revenue stream describes the way the business makes money from its customers and the cost structure describes the resources and activities to maintain a business model. The BMC presents a systematic tool for ensuring that all the elements form a definite direction to confirm each block aligns and innovates to achieve sustainable growth. Figure 9 below shows the relationship between Business Model Canvas and Value Proposition Canvas adopted from Strategyzer in 2023.

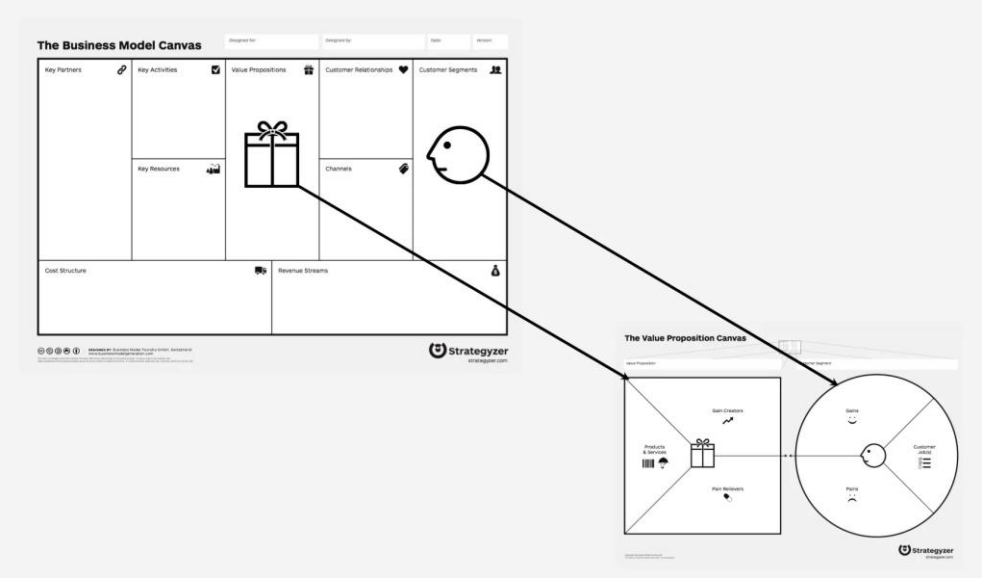


Figure 9. Business Model Canvas vs. Value Proposition Canvas (Strategyzer, 2023).

The BMC is a wider, strategic tool and it has a strong relationship with the CVP. We can see this connection with how both canvases highlight that value creation is done with the customer in focus. Because the CVP determines what their customer's jobs, pains, and gains are, the CVP is directly related to the customer segments element of the BMC whereby companies determine and describe their groups of customers (Osterwalder and Pigneur, 2010). By aligning this and the insights that are offered by the customer profile, companies can customize their offerings. In addition, the CVP map of products and services relieving customer pains and creating gains draws directly from the value proposition element of the BMC. The value proposition describes the bundle of products and services that create value for a specific customer segment, establishing a link between a company and the group of customers whom it aims to serve (Osterwalder et al., 2010). So, BMC and CVP are closely interlinked and together ensure that we have not only a consistent business model but also a well-defined, specific value frame; thus, customer groups exhibit higher strategic fitness (Blank, 2013).

3.3.7 Minimum Viable Product (MVP) by Ries (2009)

The Minimum Viable Product (MVP) is one of the cornerstones of the Lean Startup (Ries, 2009). According to Kotler and Keller (2009), it is the simplest product or service that can be offered to the market, only with the minimum features (Ries 2009) to meet the needs of early adopters. The aim is to validate the service with the least resources possible to get feedback from the users without putting in the effort and resources to build a product a company is not sure that the market will pay for (Ries, 2009). For a service, the model allows service providers to launch a version of their service to the market, listen to user feedback, and adjust the proposition based on real market use. This also reduces the risk of misalignment with user preferences by allowing service providers to over-invest in feature sets they think are useful to a customer—when they may be the opposite of what adds value for those customers. (Ries, 2009).

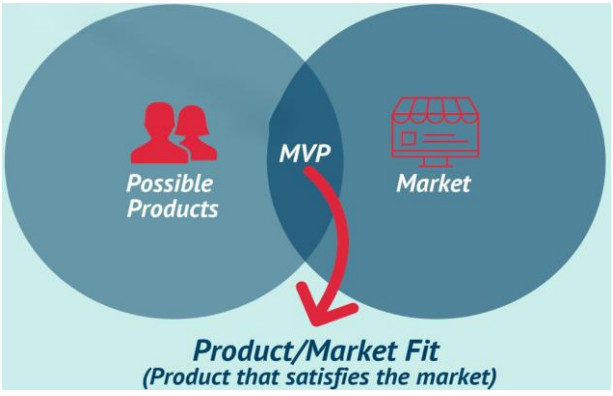


Figure 10. Minimum Viable Product (MVP) (Reis, 2009).

The MVP framework is intrinsically linked to the product-market fit, a goal defined by Andreessen (2007). *Product-market fit is achieved when a service, or product, has a clear market segment that it serves for high-level traction and customer demand*. All startups first get to product-market fit, right product, right market=growth (Andreessen, 2007). When the MVP gets good acceptance from the target market, it indicates that the service is going in the right direction to find product-market fit. However, if the MVP fails to get traction, it offers insights that help adjust toward a niche offer (Ries, 2009). To us, the MVP is strong in the quest to answer the product-market fit. We can achieve product-market fit as we closely bring early user feedback to ensure we are providing market needs in our service offerings by delivering only those that are necessary.

To summarize, this section lays the foundation for the service concept starting from Goldstein et al. (2002) who argues between the service offering, the service process, the service outcome, and the service system. This allows the user to have their needs met on time, leading to customer satisfaction. After that Grönroos (2015) distinguishes between service design (functionality building for interaction) vs designing for service (system building for value creation). Such an arrangement ensures the possibility of the integration of user and service support processes for value co-creation.

The service blueprint by Shostack (1984) is a tool to map a service process differentiating visible (customer-facing) and invisible (backstage) activities. This model identifies the weaknesses and when things might not work as they should for the overall quality of service. The Double Diamond model (Design Council, 2005) describes the specific process of problem identification and solution development by two diamonds of divergent and convergent views linked to 4 phases (discover, define, develop, and deliver).

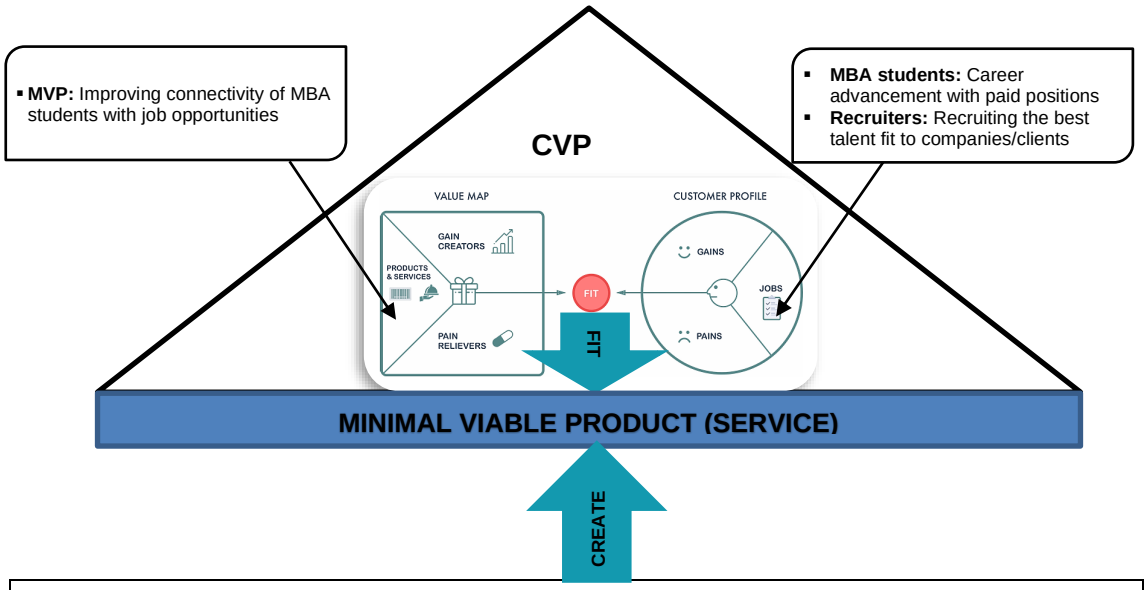
In addition to these theoretical pictures, Osterwalder's (2015) Value Proposition Canvas (VPC) or Customer Value Proposition Canvas (CVP) and the Business Model Canvas (BMC) have the basic assumption that a service value proposition fulfills the expectations of customers. Finally, to attain a product-market fit, through the concept of the minimum viable product (MVP) (Ries, 2009), launching versions of the service (a minimal version of the service first), identifying weaknesses, and re-developing services based on the success or failure of the service in the market.

In a nutshell, all these models highlight the need to align service design and delivery to satisfy user expectations to realize value and strategic fit. The combination of these tools

helps in the conceptualization of services that address user pain points, which connects back to the earlier discussion on service platforms within this thesis.

3.4 Conceptual Framework of This Thesis

The conceptual framework (CF) identifies existing knowledge to conceptualize a digital recruitment platform. It then defines the elements of the CVP and connects them to the CF. Finally, the study outlines the MVP required at a minimal level to formulate a service to exist, selects some elements among many found in the basic pillar of what a digital recruitment platform contains, and the findings assist reach the goal of this thesis.



Key Elements of Basic Pillars of Digital Recruitment Platforms		
Operational Mechanisms (OM)	**Architectural Frameworks (AF)**	**Privacy & Security (PS) Features**
▪ Centralized digital recruitment strategy (OM1) ▪ Analytics & feedback tools (OM2) ▪ Integrating AI & ML (OM3) ▪ AI-powered talent acquisition (OM4) ▪ Academic faculty involvement (OM5) ▪ Integrating social media strategies (OM6)	▪ Structural Framework (ATS, communication tools, job posting systems) (AF1) ▪ Technological Infrastructure (AF2) ▪ Cloud Infrastructure (AF3) ▪ Artificial Intelligence (AI) (AF4) ▪ Machine Learning (ML) (AF5) ▪ Integration with Institutional Systems (AF6) ▪ User Interface (UI) & User Experience (UX) (AF7) ▪ Security Framework (SSO, SAML) (AF8)	▪ GDPR Compliance (PS1) ▪ SSO & SAML (PS2) ▪ Encryption Protocols (PS3) ▪ Transparent Consent Protocols (PS4) ▪ Ethical Use of Social Media Profiles (PS5) ▪ Adaptive Cybersecurity Strategies (PS6)

Figure 11. Conceptual Framework for this Thesis.

Figure 11 above, it can guide that the Conceptual Framework of this thesis aims to incorporate some key elements for a digital recruitment platform that can support MBA students and at the same time meet the needs of recruiters. At its foundation is CVP which captures the platform's essential role: providing students with the right set of values by linking them with relevant job opportunities and helping recruiters hire quality and best talent quickly. Taking this a step further the MVP (Minimum Viable Product) model allows us to focus on a simplified first version of it which has been tested in the

real world with users. This MVP is shaped by these three pillars—Operational Mechanisms, Architectural Frameworks, and Privacy and Security Features. Operational elements consist of centralized recruitment tools, AI-powered analytics, and feedback systems, making recruitment seamless for both sides. There are two aspects to these frameworks: one is about the scalability and usability of Platform Architecture, i.e. about how technically strong and accessible the platform is and how easy it is for users to navigate the platform. The final point is Privacy and Security Features with GDPR compliance and encryption to secure user data and ensure trust. These elements work together to create an interrelated structure that enables the platform to be responsive to user needs while ensuring security and productivity.

The next section identifies and analyzes the current recruitment practices and the case company’s platform along with the voices of the stakeholders.

4 Current State Analysis of Case Organization's Recruitment Platform & Practices (from the Students' and Recruiters' Perspectives)

The Current State Analysis (CSA) studies the existing digital recruitment platforms and practices at the case organization to assess stakeholder needs and digital recruitment system effectiveness. First, the CSA describes how data was collected and then describes Metropolia's digital recruitment platform and practices. It also identifies challenges and expectations from a digital platform and pinpoints what are the key areas where improvement is needed. This analysis highlights the functionality of the organization's current recruitment platform to support student employability and reveals opportunities for future improvements.

4.1 Overview of CSA Stage

The current state analysis starts with the analysis of the existing recruitment platform (JobTeaser), focused on the analysis of the needs and expectations of MBA students and recruiters for a digital recruitment platform. There are 3 steps involved.

First, the CSA examines JobTeaser (Metropolia's recruitment platform) and touches on the use of other prominent digital recruitment platforms in Finland, like LinkedIn, Jobly, and Työmarkkinatori, since the students use them alongside JobTeaser or instead.

Second, 16 respondents (MBA students from Metropolia, three staff members, and three recruiters in Finland) were interviewed. They input qualitative data on student and recruiter experiences and job-search behaviors and preferences, which could not be easily captured in a survey. This input later led to insights that mapped to the conceptual framework to build a platform concept.

Third, the analysis ends by identifying the findings and results from the current state analysis, particularly for strengths and weaknesses in Metropolia's recruitment practices and its JobTeaser platform, and the perspectives about the digital recruitment platforms from students and recruiters.

Data collection relied on semi-structured interviews through Microsoft Teams with MBA students and recruiters. A total of 16 respondents were interviewed. The interviews used two semi-structured sets of questions, one for the recruiters, and the second for the MBA students, and lasted each appx. 60 minutes or over. Its goal was to create a picture of

the current practices, needs, and expectations of these stakeholders for the digital recruitment platform. The initial questions asked how the participants used digital recruitment platforms during their job search (for students) or candidate search (for recruiters). The interviews also assessed whether they can be categorized as passive or active job-seeking behaviors and professional engagement. Questions two to five asked demographic questions about the respondents, followed by asking about current practices, needs, and expectations in their job search in Finland. Questions six to eight asked about the use of recruitment platforms. Lastly, questions 10–12 focus on how the current recruitment platform used might be improved for any future platforms.

4.2 Description of Metropolia's Recruitment Practices & Platform

Metropolia provides career guidance and counseling services, along with access to some tools to support students in their career and educational paths. The subsections below briefly touch on some current practices and the available platform.

4.2.1 Metropolia's Current Career Guidance Practices

There are no special Career services aimed at Master's students, on the same level as for Bachelor's, but there are several projects still that cover also Master's students, especially targeting international students who find it more challenging to search for jobs. Career services at the case organization have a few focus areas. First, the Talent Boost program aims to integrate the employability of international talents into the Finnish labor market, supporting the Finnish Government's objective to increase the employment rate of international graduates. Metropolia aims to connect students with Finnish companies and professional networks, promoting career prospects through company collaboration. (Talent Boost program, Metropolia, 2024.) As part of this program, the students can book online appointments with career coaches to receive support in career planning, skill identification, and polishing their CVs or LinkedIn profiles for job applications, as well as engage in various specialized courses.

Second, personalized career guidance is open at SIMHE (Supporting Immigrants in Higher Education) for immigrants who have completed higher education in Finland or abroad and would like to pursue studies in Finland. This program targets degree holders who are employed or unemployed, but not studying integration training or as degree students in Finnish universities of applied sciences. (SIMHE, Metropolia, 2024).

Third, the case organization offers various tailor-made courses, for example, a 2-credit career guidance course “Boost Your Job Search” aims specifically at master’s level students. This course focuses on real-world skills for job-seeking and employment, for example, the analysis of job advertisements, cover letters, and resume writing. It also includes lectures that develop essential skills such as optimizing LinkedIn profiles, recognizing personal strengths, and familiarity with the Finnish job market. A significant content of the course scope is adapting to the Finnish employment scene, industry trends, and methods to manage strategies during unemployment. Such practices help students stay prepared to continue moving forward in their career journey even whenever there are potential setbacks. (Boost Your Job Search, Autumn 2023: Course content).

Finally, Metropolia organizes stand-alone events, like webinars on career development and job market integration, local recruitment events, competency recognition, and resources like blogs and the Kielibuusti initiative, which improves communication skills vital for success in the Finnish job market (Guidance Generalia, Metropolia, 2024). These offerings aim to support students in successfully improving their career prospects. However, it is commonly agreed that Metropolia's career services are currently focused on BBA students. Based on the interviews, the program is still in its early stages, and research is needed to understand the students' challenges and benefits more broadly.

4.2.2 Metropolia’s Current Recruitment Platform, JobTeaser

JobTeaser is an ecosystem between students, universities, and recruiters, described as a platform for people in their twenties, who are uncertain about what they want to do next. It aims to help users land their first internships or jobs, which is shown in its partnerships with universities and institutions around the world (JobTeaser, 2024). Founded in 2008 by Adrian Ledoux and Nicolas Lombard, JobTeaser has entered the top ranks of the European market leaders in recruitment and career guidance. JobTeaser is present in 25 different countries and has over 250 employees serving students, recruiters, and companies (JobTeaser, 2024). GetApp (2024) states that JobTeaser is a European platform that gives companies access to 4 million young talents and connects over 750 schools to 80,000 companies. Finnish universities such as Laurea, Haaga-Helia, and Aalto University also use JobTeaser. The biggest benefit is that it is free for all Metropolia students. Trustpilot (2024) rates JobTeaser at 3.9/5 for 908 reviews.

At the case organization, the main users of the platform are Metropolia students. Figure 12 below shows the students' sign-in process.

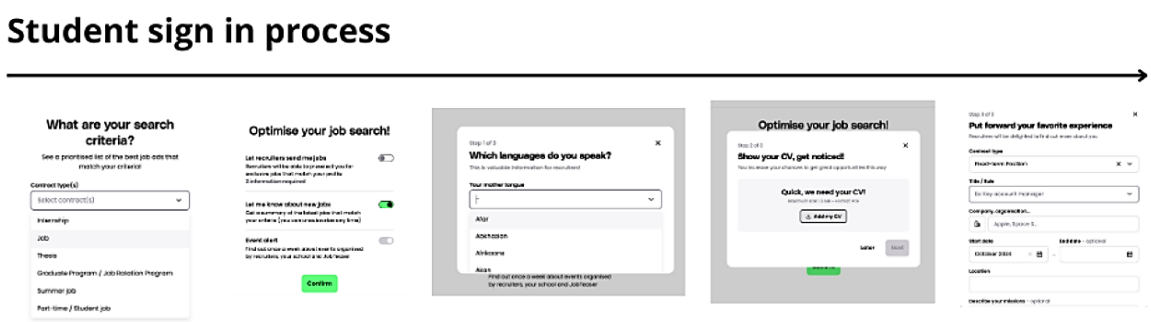


Figure 12. Student sign-in process (JobTeaser 2024).

First, *the sign-in process* is handled as follows. Upon registration, students are asked to select from a dropdown menu that offers a limited set of search criteria. The menu provides six contract types: *internship, job, thesis, graduate program, summer job*, and *part-time/student job*. The menu also asks for the job location, start date, and job category. The search criteria are then input into the system and the system prompts the user to grant permission to three individual requests. *Job* and *event alerts* make the two bottom permissions, whereas the topmost permission lets recruiters shortlist a user and send job alerts that match the user profile with the kinds of jobs a user is looking for. Selecting the *"let recruiters send me jobs"* requires two more steps as a user. The first step is to specify languages, including the user's mother tongue and other spoken languages. The second step is to upload a CV. Once all the sign-up steps have been completed, users can enter the dashboard of the platform. The top right of the profile interface provides navigation options, such as jobs, companies, events, advice, and career tips, as shown in Figure 13.

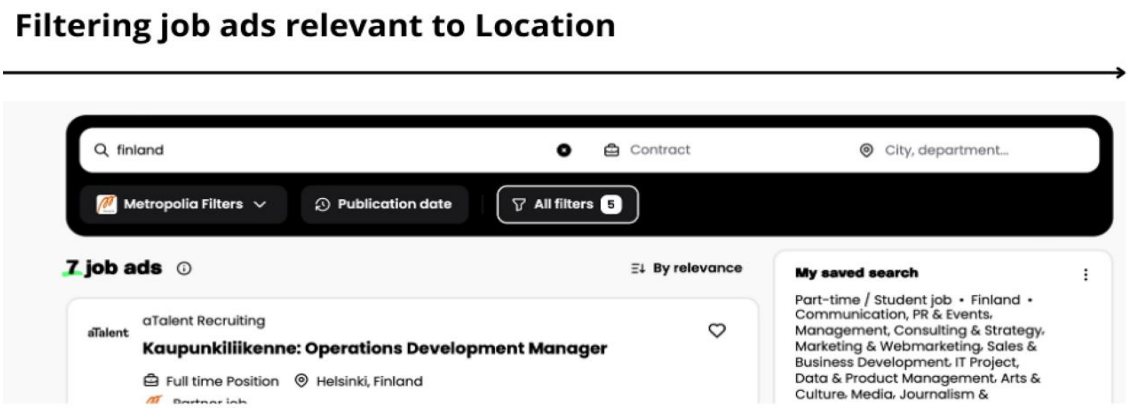


Figure 13. Filtering job ads relevant to Location (JobTeaser 2024).

Second, *the job search process* is handled as follows. Figure 13 shows the filtering options in JobTeaser, Finland. The students can see that 7 jobs are available in Finland

and navigate to the company pages with 551 companies registered with JobTeaser (in October 2024).

Figure 14. Filtering companies (JobTeaser 2024).

For *recruiters*, JobTeaser offers two sign-up options (Figure 15). The first option allows recruiters to create *a recruiter account*, post job ads, and search for talents that align with job postings. This account provides tools to monitor and manage the recruitment process, allowing them to track the number of applicants viewing and applying for their job posts. However, Metropolia validates the job ads within a few days of posting.

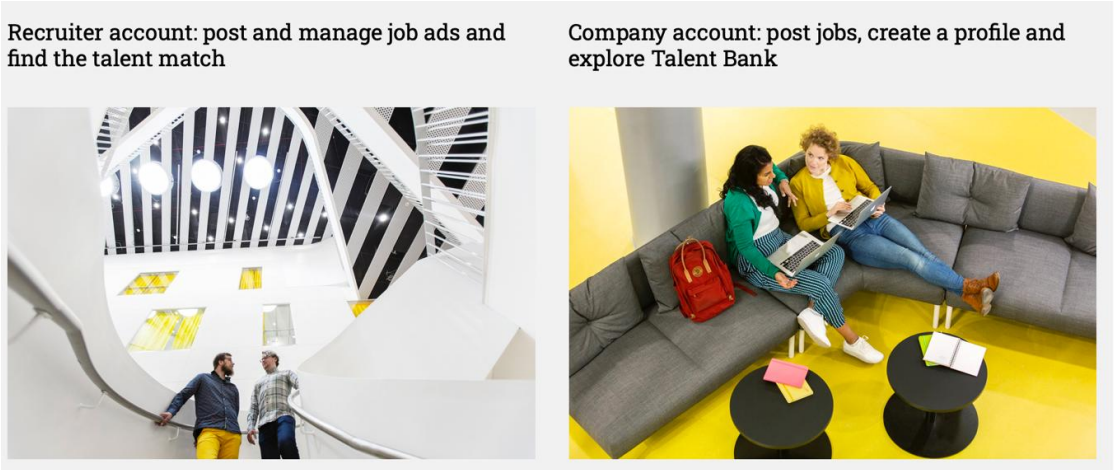


Figure 15. Two sign-up options for recruiters (JobTeaser 2024).

The second option is *a company account*, through which recruiters can post jobs, create company profiles, and find the Talent Bank. This account also improves the employer's brand visibility. The features are available for companies, like personalized applications from users, the ability to create and manage events, and for recruiters, access to keyword search criteria and the Talent Bank. Students who upload their CVs become immediately visible in the Talent Bank. However, there is no clear mention of this feature in the student user profile or the sign-up process for JobTeaser (Figures 12-14). Importantly, when recruiters visit the Talent Bank via Metropolia's account (for free), they

can see only the students of Metropolia. If they want to see all the available candidates, they need to subscribe with a fee. The application for Metropolia's Talent Bank is free for both types of recruiter profiles. Companies that are already registered tend to opt for the company account, as the primary value lies in accessing the Talent Bank.

Regarding *the company profile sign-up process*, the first step involves a login/signup button. Below this, JobTeaser advertises that, with just one click, companies can reach 800 schools and universities through multipost job ads. However, it notes that recruiters are limited in their ability to post more than five job ads or hire beyond a certain number of people. During the interviews, it was revealed that Metropolia has challenges with posting job ads during the summer, as the staff responsible for approving these ads are often on summer break in July. This delay in publishing job ads impedes the promotion of companies with open vacancies. As a result, companies may be perceived negatively on the student dashboard due to the limited visibility of their available positions (Figure 16). On the other hand, job posting also has its own cycle in Finland, so that in July such activities typically significantly subside, if at all.

The third and fourth steps in the sign-up process require companies to provide specific information before Metropolia assesses the company's profile.

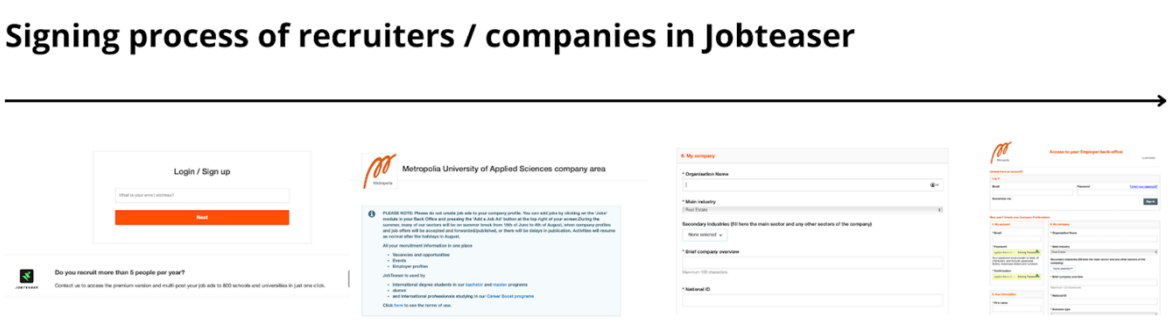


Figure 16. Signing process of recruiters/companies (JobTeaser 2024).

To summarize, the user interface from the students' interface is easy to use. However, JobTeaser does not have *(1) many job offerings* (in October 2024, when this analysis was done, there were only 4 open vacancies listed for Finland.) According to Stat (2022), there are 571,742 companies in Finland, of which 37,931 have 5 or more employees) and *(2) JobTeaser does not have a mobile application*, which affects the convenience of use by its users. JobTeaser is developing a mobile version, but it is not yet published for public use (in October 2024).

4.3 Analysis of Stakeholders' Perspectives (MBA Students & Recruiters) Related to Digital Recruitment Platforms

The analysis of stakeholders' current practices, needs, and expectations follows the logic of the conceptual framework, identified in Section 3. The current state analysis focuses on the MBA students and the recruiters' customer profiles and value in the use of digital platforms.

4.3.1 Metropolia's Recruitment Practices & Platform

Metropolia offers its JobTeaser recruitment platform to all students. However, most respondents said about their *limited awareness and use of JobTeaser*, pointing to the need for more *visibility and engagement* with JobTeaser with the help of Metropolia's career services:

> *"I haven't heard that kind of thing." (Respondent 9)*
>
> *"I've heard about it. I've not used it." (Respondent 11)*
>
> *"…I've not used JobTeaser before. I once heard about it, but I never used it." (Respondent 7)*
>
> *"Job what? I was about to google it. Honestly, I have been familiar with those platforms when I was looking for a job still in my Bachelor's, but I never worked with them." (Respondent 14)*
>
> *"I don´t think I ever used JobTeaser. I think I'm hearing about it for the first time." (Respondent 15)*

Some respondents (2, 4, & 5) said that JobTeaser is *mostly targeted to recent graduates or junior roles*, while some students *find value in experienced worker or career-changer-oriented content*.

> *"Actually, I don't know what the market of the JobTeaser is... I think that the options there are very limited. And for Finland, I don't know, maybe just two options there." (Respondent 2)*
>
> *"It's a platform for new fresh graduates… I'm not a fresh graduate anymore… I have years of experience." (Respondent 4)*
>
> *"I found mostly opportunities for people who are looking for their first job opportunity. So, not for career changers, industry changers like it would be my case." (Respondent 5)*

These responses point to the need to *broaden the sectors and types of roles for the jobs that can be posted*, to ensure JobTeaser (or an alternative platform) is *as inclusive as possible for all students*, including those who have a wider diversity of experience and/or career aspirations.

Respondents (1, 3, & 6) noted that JobTeaser does *not offer enough vacancies in Finland to suit the students, specifically local opportunities and fields of interest*.

> *"In the JobTeaser I see a lot of opportunities out of Finland like France, Germany, and other countries... Yes, there is content there, but not useful content (for me)." (Respondent 1)*
>
> *"I have seen, for example, all the positions are posted on LinkedIn but not all the positions are posted on JobTeaser." (Respondent 3)*
>
> *"Yeah, I do believe that when I started my studies in Metropolia we had some meetings... So as far as I know, I do have the profile there. But I didn't let's say update it very often, yeah." (Respondent 6)*

These responses point to the need to offer a wider range of job opportunities more *relevant to their professional areas after graduation*.

Interviews also confirm that *the platform is not well-known inside the case organization*. The staff member admitted that *special efforts are needed to develop the use of the platform*.

> *"This means that Metropolia needs to do a lot of heavy lifting to lure the students, recruiters, and companies to use the platform... we must add more resources to attract students as well as recruiters to the platform, which has been used since 2020." (Respondent 18)*

These responses point to the need for *further promotion which requires organizational efforts and resources*, so that JobTeaser would become a bigger part of the Metropolia career guidance ecosystem and would bring students to better contacts of their career opportunities.

To sum up, this part of the analysis suggests that *JobTeaser as a digital recruitment platform within Metropolia needs to increase its reach, and relevant offerings, and promote its use* to improve students´ satisfaction levels with this platform, and to some extent, the same is also relevant for recruiters.

4.3.2 Customer Profiles and Jobs of the Students and Recruiters

Stakeholders (i.e. customer segments) in this context include (1) *the MBA students* of Metropolia studying Business, and (2) external company recruiters.

First, among *the MBA students (customer segment-1)* and their *"jobs-to-be-done"*, there are two sub-groups of students: *the locals*, i.e. those already living and established in Finland, and *the internationals* who come from abroad to study in Finland. On the Master's level, both sub-groups are already established professionals who either live in the country or have recently relocated to Finland to *study, advance their careers, and find employment opportunities (jobs of customer segment-1*) here with their overseas experience and skills. Second, the other group comprises *recruiters (customer segment-2)* from external companies, who *want to recruit the best talent fit to companies/clients* (*jobs of customer segment-2*). Yet, their clients are the companies and not Metropolia itself. By understanding the recruitment processes and needs of both stakeholders, it is possible to identify their objectives and establish points of mutual compatibility that can help to improve the recruitment platform.

For students as the customer segment-1, *three distinct categories of jobseekers* were identified. The first category is *active* jobseekers, students who consistently search for job openings on various platforms and are always looking for new career prospects. The second category is *passive-active* jobseekers, students who are currently employed but are not fully satisfied with their present job. As a result, they passively search for positions not just by title, but by title and scope that fits within their career goals (for example, relocation positions in Finland, or specific project roles). The third category is *passive* jobseekers, who are satisfied with their current employment but would be open to a change if offered a higher position or one that aligns with their long-term career prospects.

To illustrate *the active jobseekers*, Respondent 1 is in manager-level positions at startups and Respondent 3 is a professional who can only apply for internships as she is still in her second year of studying in Finland.

> *"I started my career as a PLC developer... started to shift my career... I want to have some exposure to the Finish working culture and... embrace myself in a good start-up." (Respondent 1)*

> *"I have like four years of experience in my home country... but the only replies I have got are the internship roles." (Respondent 3)*

As seen from these examples, active jobseekers are *persistent and flexible in their job search* but find it difficult to match their skills with the right opportunities and require a large network to carry forth their message.

To illustrate *the passive-active jobseekers*, Respondent 4 is a Former Credit Control Head, is out of a job now, has no external vacancies, and is *looking for new roles*. Similarly, Respondent 6 is a Sales Director, *open to any role* where he can develop his managerial skills, and Respondent 10 is a Former Director, now working in a non-managerial role, and is *looking for potential job advancements*.

> *"I was the head of credit control... I'm expecting to graduate in the spring... I'll start my job search." (Respondent 4)*
>
> *"Promoted to the sales director... if it is not possible, I hope that there's Metropolia's diploma will help me..." (Respondent 6)*
>
> *"I worked there for over 20 years... I found a job, but not at a director or senior director level..." (Respondent 10)*

As seen from these examples, passive-active jobseekers *tend to apply only for ads* that seem to offer a step up towards where they see themselves in the future, while at the same time keeping to their current positions.

To illustrate *the passive jobseekers*, Respondent 2 *fills in job-related soft skills*, Respondent 5 *develops its growth within the organization*, and Respondent 16 *stays updated with job-search websites for future needs*.

> *"I'm an accountant... not a change in the direction of my career, but... an add-on to my skills." (Respondent 2)*
>
> *"I've worked with cultural management... the master's in business informatics to give me more capabilities." (Respondent 5)*
>
> *"I have been employed for five years... if I need it, I would be probably doing more research." (Respondent 16)*

As seen from these examples, passive jobseekers are *internal developers*, they *express high commitment toward the organization and show a willingness to grow within the organization* but not necessarily looking for a job change.

For recruiters as the customer segment-2 and their *"jobs-to-be-done"*, are professionals using recruitment platforms as part of their recruitment processes (Respondents 13, 14,

15, & 16). In this study, they are grouped into two types: *internal* and *external* recruiters. First, *Internal recruiters*, or in-house recruiters, search and select candidates specifically for their companies, for full-time, part-time, and specific project roles to fulfill their organizations' needs. They interact with active and passive jobseekers, filtering the candidate profiles to the specific company´s needs.

> *"I was always working in-house, so I never worked in the agency. I worked in a startup…mostly engineers that now we are looking for or some highly technical roles." (Respondent 14)*

By understanding the company culture and goals, internal recruiters can directly align recruitment with organizational objectives.

Second, *External recruiters* are part of staffing and recruitment firms that help client companies find the right talent for specific positions. They handle various clients and provide services such as direct search, executive search, and consulting for specialized top-level positions. External recruiters do much more than recruiting, they also assist clients in branding, communications, and marketing, serving to make the client an attractive proposition to prospective candidates.

> *"We built our recruitment company in 2013, mainly concentrating on executive search and interim managers." (Respondent 13)*

> *"I was a recruitment consultant…I had several clients…my responsibilities ranged just from headhunting for specific companies." (Respondent 15)*

> *"I'm a marketing and communications professional…one of my clients whom I supported…was working in the digital recruitment industry." (Respondent 16)*

Thus, *external recruiters become client-oriented*, and they not only *source candidates* but also assist them in *developing their branding and recruitment communications*. Table 9 below summarizes the customer profiles and their defined jobs.

Table 9. Summary of Customer Profiles and their Jobs.

Customer Segments	Segment Characteristics	Segment Jobs-to-be-done
Active Jobseekers	MBA students actively searching for jobs on various platforms.	Seeking roles that provide Finnish work culture exposure and match their skills.
Passive-Active Jobseekers	Employed MBA students exploring new roles aligned with long-term goals.	Looking for roles offering career advancement without disrupting current roles.
Passive Jobseekers	Satisfied in current roles but open to higher-level or growth-aligned roles.	Focused on internal growth, monitoring job boards for future opportunities.
Internal Recruiters	In-house recruiters sourcing talent to meet specific company needs.	Filling roles that align with company culture and technical requirements.

External Recruiters	Agency recruiters assisting various clients with hiring needs.	Conducting candidate search, branding, and communications support for clients.
MBA Students (All Jobseekers)	*Local & international MBA students in Finland aim to establish or advance their careers.*	*Seeking paid employment that aligns with their skills and supports career advancements.*
Recruiters (All Recruiters)	*Internal & external recruiters find best-fit candidates for client and company roles.*	*Identifying candidates, aligning the best talent with job requirements, & improving branding.*

To sum up, *the jobs-to-be-done* of the recruiters is to streamline the recruitment process by aligning skillsets and experiences with job offerings. *The jobs-to-be-done* of *MBA students* is *to find jobs* and/or *advance their careers in Finland (e.g. secure opportunities that minimally match their skillsets and experiences)*, whereas the main *jobs-to-be-done* of *recruiters* is to *identify the right candidates for specific job positions*.

4.3.3 Pains (Challenges) and their Pain Relievers of the Students and Recruiters

Active and passive/active jobseekers experience the most pains (challenges) in the Finnish job market, unlike passive jobseekers who have already secured their positions. From the interviews, there were identified five pains (challenges) of both stakeholders: *the language barrier, approachability, job mismatch, communication and recruitment process*, and *recruitment platforms.*

First, *the language barrier* continues to be *a major pain* for those who do not speak Finnish in gaining employment in Finland and separates jobseekers from jobs. Both students and recruiters agreed that it is a key factor for employment. In the same manner, respondents (2, 3, 6, 11, 13) acknowledged that their inability to speak Finnish inhibits their job search and career growth. As an example, Respondent 3 stated, *"If you have Finnish language fluency, this will increase your probability of getting a job."* Respondent 11 noted that *"the market wasn't international enough"* for English-only speakers, and some non-Finnish speakers left due to limited job options. Respondent 13 pointed out that without [Finnish] a very narrow niche is available to candidates: *"The lack of local language knowledge is the most important challenge for them to get a job here."* Fluency in the Finnish language poses a huge hurdle to jobseekers as lack of fluency in the local language disqualifies many from finding jobs that they would otherwise be qualified for.

Second, *approachability,* or the ability to connect directly with employers*,* is often cited as *a pain for jobseekers;* many agree that when applications are digital-only, there is limited room for personal contact. Respondent 1 summed up the issue as follows: *"Everything is online only,"* which makes it difficult to approach employers in person.

> *"This digital-only interaction creates a gap between jobseekers and hiring managers, as candidates often feel that they cannot communicate their qualifications beyond an online application"* (Respondent 1).

From the perspective of the students, this absence of direct contact hinders the potential of the candidates to establish *a meaningful connection with the recruiters*, in the desired manner, in the hiring process.

Third, *job mismatch* is what many job seekers experience when they have the skills for a job but cannot find one in their area of expertise and have no choice but to venture into different career paths. For Respondent 2, *international experience does not translate into local requirements*, and he stated that without this match, *"it will be very difficult to penetrate the job market."* This was also echoed by Respondent 11 who mentioned the small job market in Finland makes it *"very, very difficult"* to stay in their professional field. Respondent 3 stressed the importance of connections claiming that in such situations, the companies *"trust each other,"* which makes it difficult if the candidates do not have local experience and contacts. As respondents complained, the job mismatch prevents skilled jobseekers from fully using their skills and sets them up for jobs they are not so interested in.

Fourth, *communication and the recruitment process* are the pains to jobseekers with long recruitment processes, which then impact the jobseeker experience and impression of employer engagement. Respondent 4 shared frustration explaining, *"I've never got a response… regardless of if I was among the five who applied for a job or the 500."* As an illustration, Respondent 10 mentioned communication inconsistencies with *"some of the bad employers",* as there was little to no follow-up from some of the bad employers, leaving applicants unsure of the next steps. Respondent 10 described the laborious application process stating that *"uploading your CV… then being asked to upload your CV again… was time-consuming,"* with timelines sometimes extending up to *"five to six weeks."* The long, "faceless" recruitment process creates uncertainty and frustration for applicants and decreases enthusiasm about recruitment. Poor communication and lengthy recruiting timelines lead to disengagement that discourages jobseekers.

Fifth, *the recruitment platforms* are the basis for connecting the jobseeker and recruiters, but they often fail to bring efficiency. Among their challenges are *information asymmetry, cost,* and *information overload.* From the recruiters´ perspectives, Respondent 15 noted candidate profiles are not poorly standardized as *"you would sometimes find profiles that have very limited information on them,"* which required further communication before

finding a candidate with relevant backgrounds. Such inconsistency in profiles creates delays in hiring, as the recruiter needs to get the missing information by reaching out. Respondent 14 mentioned limitations with LinkedIn's *"Recruiter light"* platform, noting that the full version for access to the identification of relevant *"open-to-work profiles."* Moreover, recruitment platforms are also expensive. Respondent 13 stated that recruiters *"have to pay for the platform,"* with access fees for sites such as Duunitori, LinkedIn, and JobTeaser high, meaning cost prohibitive to be on multiple platforms.

Similarly, jobseekers are frustrated by lengthy times for recruitment, with Respondent 11 describing that an application response *"took three months plus"* and Respondent 15 described that *"it could take anywhere from six weeks to even probably twelve weeks"* so that even the most interested candidates would be likely to withdraw from such processes. As Respondent 16 mentioned, jobseekers also face *"information overload,"* since job boards pop up on places like LinkedIn, Glassdoor, and Indeed, meaning that jobseekers must navigate various sources all at the same time, complicating their search process.

As for Metropolia´s situation in regard to these challenges, the respondents shared insights that reflect Metropolia's efforts to address pains (challenges). These pain relievers focus on *personalized support (Respondent 17), accelerate the recruitment process (Respondent 17)* and *increase visibility to the job market via various initiatives (Respondents 14, and 17)*. Respondents highlighted some of Metropolia´s *strategies that relieve pains*, such as unfamiliarity with the local culture, lack of professional experience, and limited access to networking opportunities.

> *"In Metropolia, we're seriously thinking that we need to train our international students with the help of career guidance instructors, how to present themselves better." (Respondent 17)*
>
> *"Metropolia, of course, would like to help in this process so that it will be done faster, and students will have a taste of what is like the local culture and the job market. Facilitate and speed up their employment." (Respondent 17)*
>
> *"Metropolia, for example, we had last year a lot of company visits or these kinds of external events, that you could visit for free just with your teacher and with the class. It might sound like no one will notice you, but it works." (Respondent 14)*
>
> *"We see in practice that international students have many challenges in finding a job or landing a thesis project quickly in Finland, and as Metropolia, we would like to help our students to better reach out to recruiters and*

> *companies through, for example, an idea of a digital recruitment platform." (Respondent 17)*

To ease guiding the process of employment, helping to show the landing candidate a path for brands and professional working environments from local training sessions/visits — establishing points for digital efforts are some of the pain relievers.

Table 11 below in Section 4.3.4 summarizes the Pains (Challenges) and their corresponding Pain Relievers for the Students and Recruiters. It also shows the needs and expectations of the stakeholders, MBA students, and recruiters, about a digital recruitment platform.

Summing up, recruitment platforms are essential, but they also face some pains such as unclear profiles, long processes, noise, and expense. Such problems lower both jobseekers and recruiters' efficiency and thereby create the demand for solutions that are easy to use and effective. The five pains (challenges)—language barriers, approachability, job mismatch, communication and recruitment process, and recruitment platforms—represent systemic and process barriers that prevent job matching. Relieving these pains makes it easier for jobseekers to secure jobs and employers keep their hiring process on track.

4.3.4 Gains (Opportunities) and their Gain Creators for the Students and Recruiters

First, *matching relevant skills with job opportunities* is important to both recruiters and candidates as aligning skills and job opportunities for MBA students in Finland. In this situation, recruiters match relevant skills with job requirements while candidates must better showcase their capabilities online. Respondent 14 suggests that better showcasing skills to employers is more valuable for getting their attention since direct applications (e.g. via LinkedIn) work well, which is also supported by Respondent 10.

> *"It's your opportunity to …influence… in a good way… (to show that) you have a skill that is needed … on your profile; it is summarized very well; the idea of it is readable. So, this would be an employable talent…" (Respondent 14)*

> *"In Finland, … the LinkedIn path is the path that led to securing the current role. So, I applied directly to the company, and I was recruited… No agency." (Respondent 10)*

As seen from these examples, the relevant skills matching skillfully *showcased in the profile* and proactive strategies can strengthen MBA student employability. It improves the chances for successful identification of appropriate candidates by recruiters.

Second, *direct employment through digital platforms* is essential for MBA students which matches skills to roles and mostly removes intermediaries. Respondent 3 makes a similar point about LinkedIn (for English-speaking companies) and Respondent 2 stresses that it is key to connect directly with hiring managers via LinkedIn.

> *"I like LinkedIn. It was there when I found a job here in Finland. So, when I arrived here and I got this job, I was happy with what I was doing because it's the same as what I do in my home country…. I just applied for all those vacancies on LinkedIn that I think I qualify for and yeah, luckily, I got the opportunity. It was direct employment… It was the accounting manager who emailed me for an interview." (Respondent 2)*

> *"Because when I was in Finland, I had applied to a lot of places on a lot of platforms… but somehow the working language of that organization is English, that gave me an edge… but I think, if I'm not wrong, I think it was through LinkedIn." (Respondent 3)*

As seen from these examples, MBA students connect directly with employers using digital platforms in a way that defies the limits of traditional recruitment.

Third, *the search for talents with specific skills* can be considered a strength of recruitment of international talents. Some specific skills can be not available locally, with an emphasis on qualifications and international experience. Respondents 5 & 6 indicated that networking and previous contacts were relevant for their recruitment due to specialized expertise in their areas. As mentioned by Respondent 15, hiring from abroad is used to resolve skill gaps.

> *"The reason for hiring from abroad … wasn't because the client wanted someone specifically from abroad. It was because they needed someone with a specific skillset, and that person was not found in this country. … We would constantly come to the same person over and over again when doing similar searches…" (Respondent 15)*

> *"… my first opportunity here was related to contact that I had with managers of the festival here in Finland… then after that, I got job positions based on the context that I've made in this cultural event ..." (Respondent 5)*

> *"I applied for this job based on the recommendation from the former director … I got information that the recruitment is ongoing...." (Respondent 6)*

> *"Usually, companies don´t look for just international talent.… but hiring skills first, not nationality or internationality." (Respondent 15)*

As seen from these examples, expertise and networks are critical for international jobseekers to find a way to increase their employment opportunities.

Fourth, *networking and collaboration* with reputed companies create *key opportunities* for international MBA students. Respondent 1 suggests that exposure to the Finnish work culture helps to reach the job market, and Respondent 5 highlights that meeting people in various events, can lead to jobs.

> *"(I think the remedy here is) Exposure to Finish working culture, and I want to embrace myself in good start-ups here and try to understand and learn of the technologies here and various cultures working with diverse people." (Respondent 1)*

> *"This is the way I got hired… people are getting to know each other in festivals, in collaborations… volunteer and then when there's an open position, open paid position." (Respondent 5)*

As seen from these examples, networking and collaboration are essential for job opportunities. The students can benefit from networking in various types of events and participating in professional networks, resulting in job opportunities of their interest.

Additionally, as Respondent 6 said, *doing specific projects and initiatives* according to their expertise areas can bring international students major gains in term of their future employability and professional development, as it helps the students build practical knowledge while still within their current student roles.

> *"Yes, it would be good to have some opportunities to be involved in some projects… with a chance that you can work after-hours, like 2 hours per day for the next two months on some project, so it will be very interesting, as from my perspective, it would give me some specific experience…" (Respondent 6)*

Those examples shared by interviewees point to potential gain creators with practical experience from projects addressed in a manageable and flexible way. This is what many students who seek to upgrade their capabilities without leaving their current roles/ jobs.

4.4 Key Findings from the Current State Analysis

This section summarizes the findings, focusing on the identified strengths and weaknesses of the current use of the JobTeaser platform, and stakeholder needs and expectations. First, it identifies the strengths and weaknesses of Metropolia's digital recruitment platform and practices are summarised. Next, it highlights the needs and expectations of stakeholders regarding the platform's functionality and services.

4.4.1 Strengths & Weaknesses of Metropolia's Recruitment Platform & Practices, from the Students' & Recruiters' Perspectives & Improvement Areas for JobTeaser

The strengths and weaknesses of Metropolia's recruitment platform and practices are summarized in Table 10 below.

Table 10. Strengths and weaknesses of Metropolia's digital recruitment practices and current platform, JobTeaser.

Development areas for using JobTeaser	Strengths (as gains/opportunities)		Weaknesses (as pains/challenges)	
	Students	Recruiters	Students	Recruiters
Increased outreach to students and recruiters	▪ Free to explore jobs, internships, and projects ▪ Established European market leader focusing on universities and students	▪ Free to post job ads and events ▪ Established European market leader with a student pool of candidates	▪ Limited accessibility (no mobile application) ▪ Low awareness and engagement among MBA students; Career guidance resources focusing on BBA students	▪ Confusing sign-up options. ▪ Low awareness and engagement among recruiters
Improving Communication & Recruitment Processes	▪ General career coaching to support MBA students' employability ▪ Personalized guidance (a pilot phase for MBA students) ▪ SIMHE application for international students. ▪ The 2-credit course for insights into the Finnish job market for MBA students	▪ Tools to monitor and manage the recruitment process	▪ Unhelpful or irrelevant content (as perceived by some students) ▪ Limited promotion and training about JobTeaser	▪ Delays in job ad approval, particularly during summer. ▪ The need for better structured, clear, careful (i.e. higher quality) student candidate profiles.
Addressing the Job Matching	▪ The 2-credit course focuses on real-world skills for job-seeking and employment	▪ Offerings of entry-level jobs oriented to students	▪ Limited job vacancies (mostly outside Finland) ▪ Job offerings focusing on BBA students; few higher-level job offerings	▪ Companies are interested to have access to the digital profiles of candidates ▪ The need for better structured, clear, careful (i.e. higher quality) student candidate profiles

As seen from Table 10, the key strengths and weaknesses of Metropolia's digital recruitment platform, JobTeaser, and related practices include the following points.

From the students' perspectives, JobTeaser is attractive because it is a proven European platform linking universities with companies and students, providing free access to jobs, internships, and projects. In addition, some current Career services at the case organization focus on employability such as general career coaching offered to all

students, a pilot phase of personalized guidance for MBA students, and the SIMHE services towards international students. However, there are a few key weaknesses as well. There are some limitations due to access to JobTeaser, especially since there is no mobile version of the application; it means students will only use it from a PC when they are at home or in a study place. Moreover, with current limited efforts for JobTeaser promotion and training, MBA students remain both unaware of the concept and less interested in engaging in this platform. As most career guidance focuses on BBA students, it leads MBA students left without dedicated Career services. The job listings on JobTeaser are also mainly for entry-level jobs, so the platform is consequently not seriously considered by MBA students.

From the recruiters' perspectives, JobTeaser has the substantial benefit of free posting job ads and events, while also benefiting from a strong European recruitment network with academic institutions. However, the weaknesses in the system that affect recruiters relate to confusion in the sign-up process. Also, delays in approving postings in the summer create lags, which can slow recruitment cycles. Moreover, the platform’s limited mid-to-senior-level role options can discourage recruiters from getting experienced MBA talent, making it less suitable for companies with high-level role requirements.

Based on these insights, 3 development areas can be outlined *for JobTeaser* in relation to MBA students. First, the use of this recruitment platform requires *an increased outreach* of JobTeaser to students. Creating a mobile app and better marketing/training material would help with that; ease for recruiters to sign up and start getting business from day one also helps them. Second, communication should be improved, offering *better promotion and training about JobTeaser,* with the simultaneous goal also of creating *more relevant profiles of students* with personalized job recommendations. Lastly, the *Job Mismatch* area encourages expanding job offerings in Finland and to higher job levels to match the objectives of MBA students looking for local, higher-level jobs.

All these 3 development areas will be addressed in the improvement proposal in Section 5 to increase user engagement, improve the communication and recruitment process, and address job matching.

4.4.2 MBA Students' and Recruiters' Perspectives on a Digital Recruitment Platform

Table 11 below shows a more detailed view of the perspectives of both stakeholders about a digital recruitment platform.

Table 11. Students' & Recruiters' Perspectives on a Digital Recruitment Platform.

CVP	Students' Perspective (Data 1)	Recruiters' Perspective (Data 1)
Jobs	▪ Seeking paid employment that matches their skills and advances their careers.	▪ Identifying best-fit candidates, matching talent to job needs, and improving employer branding.
Pains	▪ Language Barrier: Limited roles for English-only speakers; Restriction to niche roles for non-Finnish speakers ▪ Approachability: Online applications limit engagement; Limited face-to-face contact ▪ Job Mismatch: International experience mismatches local needs; Limited job market forces roles outside of expertise ▪ Communication & Recruitment Process: Low response rates reduce motivation; Redundant steps prolong applications ▪ Recruitment Platforms: Multiple platforms cause information overload	▪ Language Barrier: Limited roles due to candidates' language skills ▪ Job Mismatch: Hard to find qualified candidates. ▪ Communication & Recruitment Process: Slow hiring discourages candidates ▪ Recruitment Platforms: Incomplete profiles delay hiring; Limited tools for candidate access; Long processes lead to candidate dropout; Complexity in using multiple channels; High fees restrict multi-platform access
Pain Relievers	▪ Language Barrier: Finnish Language support for inclusivity ▪ Approachability: Networking events, video introductions ▪ Job Mismatch: AI program training for matching skills; Mentorship, and networking for trust-building ▪ Communication & Recruitment Process: Automated application process, & standardized feedback ▪ Recruitment Platforms: Centralized job postings	▪ Language Barrier: Language support and inclusive programs ▪ Job Mismatch: University partnerships for better candidate access ▪ Communication & Recruitment Process: Automation to speed up hiring ▪ Recruitment Platforms: Standardized profiling structure; Premium features for better recruiter access; Shortened timelines via automation; A unified platform; Partnerships for cost-effective channel access
Gains	▪ Relevant Skills Matching with Jobs: Improved employability through skill-job matching ▪ Direct Employment via Platforms: Direct connections support job acquisition ▪ International Talent with Specific Skills: International mobility for career options ▪ Networking & Collaboration: Increases links to Finnish employers	▪ Relevant Skills Matching with Jobs: Vital to meet job requirements ▪ Direct Employment via Platforms: Fills skill gaps by hiring international candidates. ▪ Networking & Collaboration: Informal avenues for candidate sourcing
Gain Creators	▪ Relevant Skills Matching with Jobs: LinkedIn highlights skills to attract employers ▪ Direct Employment via Platforms: LinkedIn provides access to English-speaking roles. ▪ International Talent with Specific Skills: Involving Projects & Internships ▪ Networking & Collaboration: Familiarity with Finnish culture helps job market integration.	▪ Relevant Skills Matching with Jobs: University Career Services for job-ready candidates ▪ Direct Employment via Platforms: Networking reveals niche expertise ▪ Networking & Collaboration: Projects & Real-Life Experiences

As seen from Table 11, this aligns pains (challenges) with pain relievers, as well as gains (opportunities) with gain creators, and summarizes how these align with the "jobs", or what students and recruiters seek to do. Their main "job" is securing a job that matches their skills and advancing their careers. For recruiters, the "job" is to find the best candidates that fit job requirements and add value to their employer branding. So, both groups have roles directed towards a common goal i.e. efficient job placements to fulfill students' needs and recruiters' requirements.

Both sides have their fair share of pain points on the recruitment front. Identified pain points for students include the language barrier that ends English speakers-only positions, non-approachability of online applications, job mismatches due to limited

understanding of international experience, and inefficiency in communication processes. Pain relievers like language support programs and networking events afford solutions for these issues by increasing inclusivity and engagement where it matters. Automated application processes and centralized listings seek to facilitate communication and reduce redundancies in a single reference point for the recruitment experience. Recruiters experience a similar pain. Now, the language barrier limits role options according to candidates' language expertise, and from its end, the job mismatch problem finds suitably qualified ones challenging. In addition, a slow hiring process can also be a reason to lose candidates and as this leads to the difficulty of managing multiple recruitment platforms, it increases costs along with loss of efficiency. Digital recruitment platforms can help ease these pains with solutions ranging from language support programs to university collaboration that bring better candidate reach, and speedier processes through automated features that reduce cycles and ease access via centralized profiling structures and premium offerings.

On the gains, skill-job matching adds value to students and recruiters as it increases employability which can be a win-win situation if used to fill specific skill gaps. It will now be used as an example of gain creators for students, where LinkedIn has a job-matching function that connects students to relevant roles, and university career services that can prepare them for jobs. In the case of recruiters, gain creators begin in the form of real-life project experiences that give them better visibility into the practical experience and thus a job role attachment and professional presence. In addition, International Talent Mobility offers students a diversity of career options, while recruiters get a wider multicultural candidate who is now preferred for jobs requiring flexibility and cultural sensitivity. Networking and Collaboration also bring as another mutual need for both students and recruiters. Internships and projects allow students to experience the Finnish job market as well as future work environments. These initiatives provide informal channels for recruiters to source candidates while helping assess a candidate's ability to adapt and their collaborative skills.

To sum up, Table 13 corresponds findings with the pains and gains existing for each stakeholder aligned with actionable solutions. This alignment strengthens a mutual model of an online hiring ecosystem that helps students to upskill at any point in time and face best-fit employers who are ready with prepared talent today.

4.4.3 Needs and Expectations of the Students and Recruiters Related to Digital Recruitment Platforms

Table 12 below summarizes the needs and expectations of the Students and Recruiters.

Table 12. Summary of the needs and expectations of the Students and Recruiters.

CVP	Needs of MBA Students	Expectations of MBA Students	Needs of Recruiters	Expectations of Recruiters
Jobs	Landing a job	Career advancement; better-paid positions Access to multiple job offerings from multiple companies & recruiters in one place	Source, screen, and recruit top talent	Screen and hire candidates more effectively
Pains (Challenges)	Suffer from the lack of Finnish language skills	International companies to offer English-speaking jobs	Candidates with excellent skillsets, including the local language	Candidates to speak both English and Finnish
	Jobs mismatching with their experience & skills	Job opportunities aligned with their skills & experience	Candidates with the right skillset, not based on nationality	Alignment of skills and experience
	Communication & response from recruiters	Feedback on job applications	Complete profiles for fast screening of candidates	Tools to streamline communication
	Faster recruitment processes	Certainty and shorter recruitment times	Shorten recruitment cycles to retain active, suitable candidates	Effective, shorter processes & recruitment cycles
	Centralized job boards, fewer job platforms to navigate	Efficiency in applications (less time via multiple channels)	Cost-effective platforms	Effective platforms with low costs for posting jobs
Gains (Opportunities)	Skillset alignment is crucial	Skills to match job requirements	Skillset alignment is crucial	Candidates with skills matching job descriptions
	Proactive in job searches	Initiative to influence potential employers	Value proactive candidates	Visible, tailored candidate profiles
	Networking and collaboration opportunities	Professional networks to increase employability	Access to informal recruitment avenues	Identify talent through networks
	International job opportunities	Work in diverse environments	International talent when local skills are unavailable	Source foreign candidates to fill critical roles
	Exposure to diverse industries and cultures	Engage with professional settings	Value candidates with multicultural experience	Candidates to manage diverse teams and adapt to cultures
Pain Relievers	A UAS support in job search & employability struggles	Tailored A UAS career services to improve job prospects	A UAS support to provide job-ready candidates	Better-prepared candidates for hiring
	JobTeaser platform offers job searches	Streamlined access to internships and thesis projects	JobTeaser platform offers candidates	Better matches through an improved, more efficient platform
	A UAS support to gain local job market knowledge	Better understanding of the Finnish labor market	A UAS support prepares students for local job requirements	Candidates with practical knowledge of local business
	Company visits, job fairs, events to interact with direct employer	A wide, diverse professional exposure	Early talent visibility (e.g. in company visits, job fairs, events, etc.)	Discover potential candidates earlier in the process
Gain Creators	A UAS support to increase employability	Increased & faster chances of finding relevant jobs	A UAS support prepares students to meet industry demands	Candidates with skills developed through A UAS studies & A UAS career services
	JobTeaser to offer curated opportunities	Relevant job offers, guidance, and planning a career path	JobTeaser to provide access to suitable candidates	Easy-to-use, free-of-charge platform for reaching candidates
	A UAS support offers exposure to the local business environment	A better understanding of Finnish market expectations	A UAS support creates job-ready candidates familiar with local market needs	Candidates with networking and local market knowledge
	Real-life projects to offer practical experience & industry exposure	Hands-on experience without irresistible commitments (preferably, paid)	Projects to allow recruiters to assess candidates' real-world skills	Insights into candidate capabilities through practical experience

As for the *Jobs, MBA students* are jobseekers. Their main jobs are identified as active, semi-active, or passive in *seeking job opportunities*. They need to *advance their career* and expect *career opportunities with paid positions* that are relevant to their work

experiences, skillsets, and interests, and finally want to *access multiple job offerings from multiple companies and recruiters in one platform*. The second key stakeholder is *the recruiters.* They need to *find top talent* to serve their companies and expect that they *can source, screen, and recruit talent more effectively*.

As for *Pains (Challenges), the jobseekers* demand to penetrate the local market, but they suffer from *the lack of Finnish language skills*. Thus, they expect *English-speaking job positions from international companies* to get their job opportunity. Yet, recruiters expect jobseekers to *speak both English and Finnish language* as most Finns do. The jobseekers' second pain is the *job mismatch* when the needs of the local or niche market do not meet the skillsets of jobseekers. As a foreigner moving to Finland, many need to *experience volunteer or unpaid internships* before their first job opportunity. Recruiters do not search on nationality, but skillset and experience, and *experience a lack of the right skillsets or the lower level of the skills*. The third pain is *communication and its approachability*, in which most active jobseekers *get no response from recruiters or feedback to match the job profile*. The recruiters, on the other hand, *deal with complete profiles*, and *reaching improper profiles takes time and more efficient tools*. The fourth pain is *the long and sometimes vague recruitment process*, which can take over two months. Jobseekers need to know the certainty of how long the recruitment stage will take and expect that they will have *some communication (responses) with the employer*. The recruiters need to *shorten the long recruitment processes* because of the pain when active candidates drop out and the clients' expectations are not met. The fifth pain is the recruitment platforms where *candidates need to go to different job boards*. The recruiter´s pains are *reaching different job boards and platforms for candidates* because of putting up job ads and sourcing candidates by paying for them, which *costs a lot*.

As for *Gains (Opportunities),* both MBA students and recruiters *prioritize skillset alignment* as an essential factor in the recruitment process. Second, *proactivity in the job search process* is a mutual expectation for MBA students and recruiters. Third, *networking and collaboration* serve as significant opportunities for both MBA students and recruiters. Fourth, *the international mobility of talent* is viewed as an opportunity by both stakeholders. Fifth, *exposure to diverse working environments and cultures* is a shared expectation between MBA students and recruiters.

As for *Pain Relievers,* the Talent Boost program at Metropolia relieves the pain of employability struggles for MBA students by *providing tailored career services*, which improve their chances of securing jobs. This helps recruiters by ensuring that students

are better prepared for the labor market, *addressing the recruiters' need for qualified candidates*. Second, the JobTeaser platform *alleviates the challenge MBA students face in finding relevant job opportunities, internships, and thesis projects*. This helps recruiters by *offering a more streamlined method of connecting with suitable candidates*, easing the hiring process. Third, the Career Guidance course *relieves the pain of navigating the local job market*. It benefits recruiters by *preparing students who are better informed and equipped for integration into local companies*. Fourth, *organized company visits and external events* at Metropolia *ease the challenge of gaining professional exposure* for students directly visible to recruiters. For recruiters, these events provide a glimpse of potential talent, *reducing the pain of searching for qualified candidates*.

As for *Gain Creators*, the Talent Boost program creates gains for MBA students by *increasing their employability through focused career development initiatives*. This benefits recruiters by giving them access to candidates who have been *trained and supported in developing the skills they need to meet industry demands*. Second, the JobTeaser platform creates gains by *offering MBA students access to curated job opportunities, internships, and thesis projects, helping them meet their career goals*. For recruiters, this platform *simplifies the process of reaching and attracting the right talent for their organizations*. Third, the Career Guidance course, through company visits and practical exposure to the job market, creates gains for MBA students by helping them *develop an understanding of the local business environment*. Recruiters benefit from this service by gaining access to candidates who are *familiar with the expectations of the Finnish labor market*. Fourth, opportunities for involvement in projects create gains for MBA students by *providing them with practical experience* that is relevant to their fields without irresistible commitments. Recruiters can gain from this by assessing potential *employees' skills and competencies through real-world applications*.

The next section will find the suggestions from collecting Data 2 and combining them with Data 1 (CSA) and the CF to develop proposals.

5 Building Proposals for Conceptualizing a Digital Recruitment Platform

This section merges the results of the current state analysis and the conceptual framework for the building of the initial proposals based on co-creation and suggestions from Data collection 2.

5.1 Overview of the Proposal Building Stage

This section overviews the initial proposal development that includes two options: (1) suggestions on how to improve the current platform (i.e. staying within the existing digital recruitment platform concept), and (2) proposing a concept for a new digital recruitment platform. The proposals are based on synthesizing the findings from the Current State Analysis (CSA) and Conceptual Framework (CF), including the points related to technological integration, user-centric design, UI/UX improvements, and data privacy concerns, in the form of the Minimum Viable Product (MVP) and Customer Value Proposition (CVP).

The proposal development was based on three key steps: first, utilizing the identified improvement areas from the CSA (from Data 1); second, integrating best practices from the literature that were merged into the CF; and third, applying a co-creation approach with stakeholders — MBA students, recruiters, and faculty members, (Data 2) — to formulate the proposal components, ensuring the stakeholder perspectives.

5.2 Findings from Data 2 (pulling together CSA, CF, and Data 2)

This section integrates the findings of the CSA, CF, and stakeholder feedback by mapping suggestions to existing pains and gains, this section highlights key areas for development, providing a structure in which proposals can be built. The findings are matched and will inform proposal building to ensure stakeholder points within the CF & CSA frameworks.

5.2.1 Findings from Data 2 for Improving JobTeaser

Table 13 below shows key stakeholder suggestions (findings of Data 2) for Proposal building-1 (for JobTeaser Improvement) to findings from CSA (Data 1) and the Conceptual framework.

Table 13. Key stakeholder suggestions (findings of Data 2) for Proposal building-1 to findings from the CSA (Data 1) and the Conceptual framework.

Stakeholders	Pains/Challenges (Stakeholders Perspectives from **Data 1**)	Inputs from literature (**CF**)	Summary suggestions from stakeholders for Proposal (**Data 2**)	Details of their suggestions (**Data 2**)
Development Area-1 from CSA (Data 1): Increasing the outreach to students and recruiters				
Students	Limited accessibility (no mobile application)	Mobile access improves engagement across devices	▪ Use JobTeaser & LinkedIn complementarily	"… focusing more on LinkedIn for professional networking, as it offers ongoing access even after graduation and connects you with a much broader network." (R19) "… the approach should be sort of combinatory or complementary, then teaching the skill of digital profiling is important because it can be applied to several platforms." (R19)
	Low awareness and engagement among MBA students; Career guidance resources focusing on BBA students	Social media integration boosts engagement	▪ Introduce face-to-face introductory sessions with each new group ▪ Offer special training to improve the digital profiling skills of MBA students	"JobTeaser is an important tool for Metropolia, as it allows us to reach all students and provide them with equal access to information about career events, job opportunities, as well as career planning, and job search." (R18) "We go and meet every group of students and give their info session about career services and the JobTeaser" (R20)
Recruiters	Low awareness and engagement among Recruiters	Social media integration boosts engagement	▪ Encourage students to apply for suitable matches found on JobTeaser and remind them of the matches from career advisors	"So basically, we have a lot of support services that are just targeted for master students, and we have different content for Masters, for international students." (R20)
	Confuses sign-up options	Simplified UX improves sign-up, aligning with a centralized strategy	▪ Finetune current JobTeaser sign-in options by providing one sign-in option for both, companies and recruiters	"… they always emphasize that career services are quite important services for the companies and the students. And our thinking is this one student local tactic. This one is one place where companies can contact us, too." (R20)
Development Area-2 from CSA (Data 1): Improving Communication & Recruitment Process				
Students	Unhelpful or irrelevant content (as perceived by some students)	AI personalization aligns content with user profiles	▪ Use email campaigns carefully ▪ Improve identification of career shifters students	"JobTeaser allows posting a variety of events and information… we use email campaigns carefully." (R20) "… the master students, they don't look at the many different work, opportunities, or possibilities during their studies. Just a few of them, if you are changing your work field." (R20)
	Limited promotion and training about JobTeaser	Social media strategies and user education boost awareness and platform utilization	▪ Provide content for marketing the JobTeaser platform ▪ Support targeted services for MBA & internationals	"JobTeaser provides content for marketing the platform, which can be leveraged to boost student engagement" (R20) "… we have a lot of support services that are just targeted at master students, and we have different content for Masters, for international students." (R20)
Recruiters	Delays in job ad approval, particularly during the summer	Automated workflows ensure timely job ad processing during peak times	▪ Appoint a dedicated person to approve job advertisement publishing year-round ▪ Simplify approval processes by improving job ad modules & resources to approve job ads, particularly during peak seasons	"The delays are often in job ad approvals, especially during summer" (R20) "JobTeaser for free, but then if I want to reach for example, Metropolia students and Haaga Helia students, I need to go first to the Haaga-Helia JobTeaser platform, and post the job offer to Haaga-Helia students. And then I need to register for the Metropolia JobTeaser platform and post for Metropolia students." (R20) "I believe there should be one dedicated person focusing on company cooperation, someone who can respond promptly, rather than just once a week, as it seems to be happening now." (R18)
	The need for better structured, clear, careful (i.e. higher quality) student candidate profiles	AI-based profile tools support clear, structured candidate profiles	▪ Provide a clearer candidate view	"LinkedIn complements JobTeaser profiles and provides a clearer candidate view." (R20)
Development Area-3 from CSA (Data 1): Addressing the Job Matching				
Students	Limited job vacancies (mostly outside Finland)	AI talent acquisition and local partnerships improve local job availability	▪ Support international opportunities by adding more local job vacancies	"The challenge is that we have quite limited offerings for the master's international students, in our context, in our value, because we don't get that many opportunities for those students." (R20)
	Job offerings focusing on BBA students; few higher-level job offerings	AI job matching improves filtering for advanced roles, catering to MBA needs	▪ Focus on senior positions	"Job postings are largely for internships or entry-level roles…, soon focusing on seniors" (R20)

Recruiters	Companies are interested to have access to the digital profiles of candidates	User-centric platform design enables direct recruiter access to candidate profiles	▪ Access to digital profiles through open job applications	"Digital profiles streamline the hiring process, allowing direct access to student profiles." (R20)
	The need for better structured, clear, careful (i.e. higher quality) student candidate profiles.	AI-based profile tools support clear, structured candidate profiles	▪ Provide a clearer candidate view	"LinkedIn complements JobTeaser profiles and provides a clearer candidate view." (R20)

As seen in Table 13 above, the first development area may require an increase in the number of students and recruiters using the system as suggested by stakeholders. Most students mentioned that the absence of a mobile application leaves them unable to access JobTeaser wherever they may be. Students were looking to address this by proposing, for example, a mobile version and using JobTeaser with LinkedIn where they often built networks. If this link could allow students to keep professional networking long after graduation, then JobTeaser would be an even more attractive offer. Introductory sessions can introduce students to the platform, along with digital profiling workshops to help them increase their presence online and visibility to recruiters. Recruiters expressed low awareness and engagement with JobTeaser, a state that was partly due to the confusing sign-in process. Simplifying this process could further fit the platform, allowing recruiters to be able to easily navigate it. Also, having career advisors mention relevant job postings would encourage students to check the platform regularly. In this way, JobTeaser can integrate better into student's job search activities and, meanwhile, improve recruiter engagement via a better user experience.

In the second development area, some students commented that they receive notifications about job posts unrelated to their field and this issue can be resolved with personalized content. If the use of AI is also applied to personalize notifications for each career path, especially for those who are looking for a position change in their careers such functionality could certainly improve student satisfaction and engagement with the platform. The volume of email notifications should be limited carefully to avoid information overload, giving students the ability to focus on applicable opportunities without being overwhelmed by excess communication. During the peak recruitment time, recruiters recommended improving the job ad approval process. The suggestions came for appointing a dedicated person to improve job ad modules and thereby simplify the job ad approval process by publishing this year-round. This would avoid delays and make JobTeaser a timely and efficient recruitment tool by facilitating ad approvals. The recruiters felt that a structured template for the profiles would help students design their profiles by adding things that matter most to a company and how can a student be evaluated better by a recruiter. These changes would make JobTeaser a better

recruitment tool for recruiters instead of relying on external platforms and providing the whole recruitment experience better.

In the third development area, a concern from students is how JobTeaser largely still publishes junior roles, which may not reflect their level of skills and experience. There could be tie-ups with local companies to make vacancies available for mid-to-senior level positions to increase the relevance of the platform for MBA students. This should give students access to more appropriate opportunities that fit their career level, Job search can further be made efficient through AI-driven filters that help students in identifying roles better suited to their qualifications and goals. Recruiters said it was difficult for effective candidate searches without clearer, better-defined profiles. Incorporating AI tools that compare skills and qualifications with job requirements could help recruiters find potential candidates for certain roles immediately. Such improvements would further increase the value of the JobTeaser for recruiters by increasing the accuracy of the recruitment process and by writing profiles with relevant features.

Table 13 connects these suggested actions to the CF and CSA, summarizing the findings on how improvements in accessibility, engagement, communication, and job matching could make JobTeaser more relevant and effective for both students and recruiters.

5.2.2 Findings from Data 2 for a new digital recruitment platform

Table 14 below shows Key stakeholder suggestions (findings of Data 2) for Proposal building-2 (for a new platform) to findings from the CSA (Data 1) and the Conceptual framework.

Table 14. Key stakeholder suggestions (findings of Data 2) for Proposal building-2 to findings from the CSA (Data 1) and the Conceptual framework.

Stakeholders	Pains/Challenges (Stakeholders Perspectives from **Data 1**)	Inputs from literature (**CF**)	Proposed Actions	Details of their suggestions (**Data 2**)
1. Conceptualize a user-centric platform				
Students	A new Recruitment Platform (as using multiple platforms causes information overload)	Centralized Digital Recruitment Strategy; Cloud Infrastructure	A Tinder-like personal platform with AI elements and discreet connection and communication for direct recruitment and matchmaking	To capture their attention on a new platform, you need to offer something exceptional, something so compelling and value-adding that they would rather choose the new platform over the ones they are already familiar with using. (R19, R13, R17)
Recruiters	Incomplete profiles delay hiring; Limited tools for candidate access; Long processes lead to candidate dropout;	Centralized Digital Recruitment Strategy; Cloud Infrastructure	A single platform that offers AI elements to reduce the recruitment process, improve connection and communication	Talent Boost project, whereas I said, I was responsible, and the goal was to create a new platform for international talent and it's usually always for some reason creating a new platform. So, we kind of recognize early on that we need one platform, what is for all students, not just international students, and why? Because the companies tend to use those services that are

	Complexity in using multiple channels; High fees restrict multi-platform access			provided for every student, not just a certain target group, so that way we started right away to research possibilities of what kind of platform we would use in the future in our gala context. And I did quite a long and extensive benchmark from that platform in 2018. (R20, R17, R13) I'm not convinced that a new platform would solve our issues. I think the focus should be on how we can effectively reach out to companies that could be potential employers for our students. It depends a bit on what skills you envision advertising on this platform, but the key challenge lies in establishing cooperation with these companies and generating their interest in engaging with us. For example, we need to consider how we can encourage them to come and connect with us. (R18, R13)
2. Improving Communication & Recruitment Process				
Students	Low response rates reduce motivation; Redundant steps prolong applications	Structural Framework (ATS, Communication Tools, Job Posting Systems); Security Framework (SSO, SAML)	AI Bot communication elements can personally assist	The idea is that you don't need to upload your LinkedIn profile or a PDF; instead, you can engage in a conversation with the chatbot, which will ask you questions and help identify your skills. It can also guide you in modifying your profile and matching it with existing job opportunities by indicating what skills you possess and what you might be missing. (R18, R17, R13)
	Online applications limit engagement; Limited face-to-face contact reduces approachability	Centralized Digital Recruitment Strategy; User Interface (UI) & User Experience (UX)	Improve Digital Profile	So, the approach should be sort of combinatory or complementary, then teaching the skill of digital profiling is important because it can be applied to several platforms. (R17, R19, R13)
Recruiters	Limited roles (i.e. only niche roles) for non-Finnish speakers	Integration with Institutional Systems	AI Learning Module in Platform increases engagement and skills development	They get career guidance and support from our Finnish language lecture to increase Finnish language knowledge at the workplace. (R19, R17, R13)
3. Addressing the Job Matching				
Students	International experience does not match local needs; Limited job market; the need to accept lower roles, outside of own expertise areas	AI-Powered Talent Acquisition; Machine Learning (ML)	An AI-based tool designed to assist in building careers	An AI-based tool designed to assist students in building their careers. For example, it can help recognize their skills and assist in creating documents like CVs, LinkedIn profiles, or JobTeaser profiles. It aims to help students identify their transferable skills from previous careers. This tool is intriguing because it features a chatbot. (R18, R17, R13)
	Limited roles (i.e. only niche roles) for non-Finnish speakers	Integration with Institutional Systems	Contacting companies directly for jobs that match skills and language	It can also guide you in modifying your profile and matching it with existing job opportunities by indicating what skills you possess and what you might be missing. (R18, R17, R13)
Recruiters	Hard to find qualified candidates.	AI-Powered Talent Acquisition; Machine Learning (ML)	AI for consultants and reaching candidates directly	People are very problematic, and if there is such a tool, that's a wonderful tool that can potentially utilize AI for consultancy in a career. That's excellent, especially when it comes to helping to build a better profile for students. (R17, R18, R13)

Table 14 above shows how the stakeholders suggest development to solve pains for building Proposal 2, which is a new Tinder-like digital recruitment platform. The centralized recruitment platform enhanced with AI/ML elements would solve the challenges of students seeking skill-oriented employment and career advancement in multiple platforms, which is time-consuming and discouraging. The Tinder-like recruitment platform will alleviate job mismatch problems by matching candidates with jobs suited to their skills. Moreover, value is put in terms of a centralized interface – "Tinder-like" even for recruiter and candidate interaction that allows discreet connections – as well as an expected streamlined user experience and engagement between both parties. A further prominent recommendation consists of language and skill assistance capabilities as the results indicated that many international students are restricted to local

roles due to the language barrier therefore having such features would help broaden their access. Such system integrations would be backed by the involvement of academic faculty, helping to increase the platform's inclusivity and responsiveness. Moreover, improving networking capabilities is emphasized as an important value creator, providing students with end-user access to "hidden" job markets via direct contact with recruiters which is significant in Finland where networking constitutes a key element for employment acquisition.

The inputs from these stakeholders also point to the need for a new digital recruitment platform that will offer a more inclusive approach, AI, and user-friendly experience meeting both student and recruiter needs while major pain points of job mismatch and language barrier make the platform a recommended choice for future career prospects and talent selection.

5.3 Initial Proposal 1: Improving JobTeaser

This section describes the three development areas, namely the “Increased Outreach” to students & recruiters, “Communication & Recruitment Process,” and “job mismatching,” which constitute the improvement proposal for JobTeaser, the current digital recruitment platform, incorporating the customer value proposition and the basic pillars.

5.3.1 Proposed “Increasing the Outreach” for better use of JobTeaser

Table 15 below shows Proposed actions for “Increasing the Outreach” for JobTeaser.

Table 15. Proposed Actions for “Increasing the Outreach” for JobTeaser.

Stakeholders	Pains/Challenges	Proposed Actions
Students	Limited accessibility (no mobile application)	▪ Use JobTeaser & LinkedIn complementarily
	Low awareness and engagement among MBA students; Career guidance resources focusing on BBA students	▪ Introduce face-to-face introductory sessions with each new group ▪ Offer special training to improve the digital profiling skills of MBA students
Recruiters	Low awareness and engagement among Recruiters	▪ Encourage students to apply for suitable matches found on JobTeaser and remind them of the matches from career advisors
	Confusing sign-up options.	▪ Finetune current JobTeaser sign-in options by providing one sign-in option for both, companies and recruiters

Table 15 above shows the proposed actions to increase JobTeaser’s outreach to students and recruiters. These actions focus on accessibility, awareness, engagement, and sign-in options. The goal is to make JobTeaser easier to access and more engaging for both students and recruiters.

From the students' perspectives, to make JobTeaser more accessible for students, especially MBA students, it is recommended to develop a mobile app for JobTeaser. Currently, students rely heavily on mobile devices for convenient access to job postings, and without a mobile app, they miss out on this flexibility. Adding a mobile version of JobTeaser would allow students to stay updated on job opportunities anytime, anywhere, making it easier for them to use the platform regularly. Also, alternatively, the proposed action can offer to integrate JobTeaser and LinkedIn complementarily. This aligns with the CF's goal of putting students' needs at the center, as a mobile app is expected to increase their engagement with JobTeaser. Awareness among MBA students is another key issue. According to feedback, MBA students are often less informed about JobTeaser's services, as outreach efforts primarily target BBA students. This lack of awareness means MBA students may miss the career resources that could benefit them. To address this, career advisors would introduce JobTeaser with its features during face-to-face orientation sessions, helping each new student group understand how the platform can support their job search, and offer special training to improve their digital profiling skills. This aligns with the aim to communicate effectively with different student groups, helping them see the value JobTeaser offers.

From the recruiters' perspectives, their engagement with JobTeaser is currently low, partly due to low awareness about its full capabilities. Many recruiters are unfamiliar with how JobTeaser can help them find qualified candidates, which reduces the platform's usefulness. To address this, career advisors could encourage students to apply for suitable matches found on JobTeaser and remind them of the matches, and this would indirectly inform the recruiters so that students are applying for the relevant jobs. This approach aligns with the goal of connections between students and recruiters, making recruiters see JobTeaser as a valuable tool for hiring. Another issue is the confusing sign-up process for recruiters. The CSA showed that some recruiters find the sign-up options unclear, which can be a concern to fully using the platform. Simplifying this process is key. By finetuning the sign-up interface with one sign-in option for both companies and recruiters to make it easier to navigate, they would have a smoother entry to the platform, encouraging them to register on JobTeaser. This change supports the focus on usability, helping recruiters use JobTeaser easily.

To sum up, these proposed actions aim to make the JobTeaser platform more accessible, engaging, and useful for both students and recruiters.

5.3.2 Proposed “Improving Communication & Recruitment Process”

Table 16 below shows Proposed Actions for Improving Communication & Recruitment Process for JobTeaser.

Table 16. Proposed Actions for Improving Communication & Recruitment Process for JobTeaser.

Stakeholders	Pains/Challenges	Proposed Actions
Students	Unhelpful or irrelevant content (as perceived by some students)	▪ Use email campaigns carefully ▪ Improve identification of career shifters students
	Limited promotion and training about JobTeaser	▪ Provide content for marketing the JobTeaser platform ▪ Support targeted services for MBA & internationals
Recruiters	Delays in job ad approval, particularly during the summer	▪ Appoint a dedicated person to approve job advertisement publishing year-round ▪ Simplify approval processes by improving job ad modules & resources to approve job ads, particularly during peak seasons
	The need for better structured, clear, careful (i.e. higher quality) student candidate profiles.	▪ Provide a clearer candidate view

In Table 16 above, the first proposed action is using the email campaigns carefully with the relevant content to avoid information overload, which would help students to use this helpful and relevant content with their proper communication and this would help more to stay on effective communication. This would reduce the stress of uncertainty in their job search, aligning with feedback from the CSA on the need for appropriate communication. Also, another proposed action came to improve the identification of career changers so that the carefully targeted email campaign would help them with those students accordingly. Another point of improvement for students relates to career guidance for personalized support. Students have expressed a need for specific guidance throughout their job search. JobTeaser could address this by linking with Metropolia’s career guidance team, where advisors can support students directly through the platform. This could include content on job postings, tips for interviews, and resume feedback, providing students with a sense of direction and seeing JobTeaser as a more valuable resource. Also, this action would help JobTeaser in terms of marketing the platform.

From the recruiters’ perspectives, recruiters suggested improving the job ad approval process, particularly during the peak recruitment season, for example during the summer. The suggestions came for appointing a dedicated person to improve job ad modules and that would require simplifying the job ad approval process by publishing all through the year. This would avoid delays and make JobTeaser a timely and efficient recruitment tool by easing ad approvals on time. The recruiters mentioned that the need for a structured template, preferably a higher quality student candidate profile would help students design their profiles by adding things that value most of a company and this can a student be properly and better evaluated by a recruiter. These actions would make

JobTeaser a valuable recruitment tool for recruiters instead of relying on external platforms and providing the whole recruitment experience better.

To sum up, the study proposes the measures that would improve how JobTeaser communicates with students and recruiters alike - to ensure they are engaged when they need it as well as giving recruiters what they want.

5.3.3 Proposed “Addressing the Job Matching”

Table 17 below shows the proposed actions for addressing the job mismatching for JobTeaser.

Table 17. Proposed Actions for Addressing the Job Matching for JobTeaser.

Stakeholders	Pains/Challenges	Proposed Actions
Students	Limited job vacancies (mostly outside Finland)	▪ Support international opportunities by adding more local job vacancies
	Job offerings focusing on BBA students; few higher-level job offerings	▪ Focus on senior positions
Recruiters	Companies are interested to have access to the digital profiles of candidates	▪ Access to digital profiles through open job applications
	The need for better structured, clear, careful (i.e. higher quality) student candidate profiles.	▪ Provide a clearer candidate view

In Table 17 above, according to the students’ perspective, JobTeaser suggests jobs to students that don’t align with their skills or career goals; also, they found job vacancies are mostly outside Finland, which can make their job search feel frustrating and inefficient. To tackle this, the proposal recommends attracting more local job opportunities for international students. Also, students suggested adding skills-based filters and adding more senior positions adds, which would allow the students to refine their job searches based on relevant skills and qualifications also for more senior-level opportunities. This would make it easier for those senior students to focus only on jobs that match their abilities, saving them time and increasing their chances of finding a suitable role.

From the recruiters' perspective, recruiters using JobTeaser sometimes find it hard to locate candidates with the right qualifications for their open roles. To address this, the platform could integrate candidate-matching tools that analyze job requirements alongside candidates’ profiles, details like specific skills, experience level, and job preferences. This improvement would help recruiters connect with candidates who are better suited to the positions they’re offering. Also, feedback suggested that companies want to directly access the digital profiles of candidates through open applications.

Another point the recruiters mentioned is that they need better structured, clear, careful (i.e. higher quality) student candidate profiles. The stakeholder suggested providing a clearer candidate view through a clear structure template for the student candidate profile so that the companies and recruiters could connect the relevant skillsets to their expected applicable positions. This would better match the job listings on JobTeaser.

To sum up, the actions above may address key stakeholder needs for job relevance, accessibility, and profile quality which would better serve students and recruiters alike. This could create a job collection relevant and more accessible to the candidate profiles, to improve job matching.

5.4 Initial Proposal 2: A New Digital Recruitment Platform as an MVP (Minimum Viable Product) platform

This section describes the proposal for a new digital recruitment platform, as visualized in Figure 17 below. Building on insights collected from the CSA and expert suggestions, this proposal integrates recruitment needs and technologies to reduce the common pain points, such as limited accessibility, language barriers, and job mismatches. The MVP is used as a structure to present a scalable product that incorporates basic elements of operational efficiency, architectural resilience, and privacy measures.

Figure 17. The initial (proposed) visualization of the new digital recruitment platform.

5.4.1 Proposed “Conceptualize a user-centric platform”

Table 18 below shows the proposed actions for “Conceptualizing a user-centric platform.”

Table 18. Proposed Action for “Conceptualizing a user-centric platform.”

Stakeholders	Pains/Challenges (Stakeholders Perspectives)	Proposed Actions
Students	A new Recruitment Platform (as using multiple platforms causes information overload)	A Tinder-like personal platform with AI elements and discreet connection and communication for direct recruitment and matchmaking
Recruiters	Incomplete profiles delay hiring; Limited tools for candidate access; Long processes lead to candidate dropout; Complexity in using multiple channels; High fees restrict multi-platform access	A single platform that offers AI elements to reduce the recruitment process, improve connection and communication

Table 18 lists the actions proposed to directly improve connection, communication, and job matching with students and recruiters via a new recruitment platform based on the suggestions of key stakeholders, which addresses the pains and challenges identified in the current recruitment platforms.

From the perspective of the students, they face information overload by searching different global and local platforms as described in Section 3.2.1, filling in different types of personal information on different platforms, and using different applications used by various recruiters. They also must advertise and sell their expertise online as most digital profiles are public and are shown to every user on the platform, even though they might not be willing to open up their profiles. As a result, the stakeholders wished for a more personalized Tinder-like recruitment platform with AI elements and discreet connection and communication for direct recruitment and matchmaking capabilities.

From the perspective of the recruiters, they face increasing costs and complexity in using multiple channels and platforms to advertise job advertisements, source, and track candidates, and connect and communicate with potential candidates. These complex environments hinder them from doing their job properly and efficiently and lead to longer recruitment processes due to delays and the complexity of functionalities by using different platforms. The recruiters wished for a single platform that would offer AI elements to reduce the pains of the recruitment process and improve connection and communication by having a centralized Digital Recruitment platform in a cloud Infrastructure environment and having real-time data access, with AI elements and machine learning.

Table 19 below shows the user interface and modules of the platform.

Table 19. Modules and Connections of the new digital recruitment platform.

Module	Description	Connections	Basic Pillars
Path	The path category consists of the different career advancement paths that the user has chosen. For example, the user chose a path as a sales assistant to become a sales director in the future.	Metropolia Recruiter Companies	AI, ML
Education	Education in the top left consists of the user's different educational backgrounds and schools that might benefit the user for career advancement opportunities. It might consist of grades, courses, etc.	Metropolia Companies	AI, ML Structural Framework
Skills	The skills category consists of different types of skillsets that can be filtered to match a certain job opportunity. It is like a skillset bank, certificates, diplomas, recommendations, etc.	Metropolia Recruiter	AI, ML
Jobs	This module shows different jobs that are currently vacant and job titles that companies offer. This helps jobseekers and recruiters forecast potential future vacancies. It also helps AI with data matchmaking.	User Recruiter	AI, ML
Companies	This module shows different company information and industries. This helps jobseekers and recruiters navigate to company information, employees, and culture fit.	User Recruiter	AI, ML
Connect	The user can connect to relevant recruiters to show their profile in hopes that when a right opportunity comes their experiences and skills match with the job description. The user will be selected from the recruiter's long list. The recruiter can accept the connection or not. The user can connect to peers for recommendations and references. It verifies the user and recruiter.	Recruiters Groups	AI, ML Structural Framework
Learn	The user can play games that help develop their skillsets and experiences. This also helps to recognize different types of skills and personalities that are needed for testing the user's cultural fit for the company.	Recruiters Metropolia	AI, ML
Notifications	The user will be notified of different updates on the platform. New job opportunities that match the profile of the user or news and updates about the company.	Recruiters Metropolia Backend	AI, ML
Communication	This tab is for instant communication with the recruiter.	Recruiters Metropolia Backend	Structural Framework
Favorites	This is where the user can save interesting topics, companies, job advertisements, certifications, etc.	User Companies Courses	Structural Framework
Profile	The profile has different settings that can personalize the user experience. The elements that are needed in updating the platform.	Users	Privacy & Security

Table 19 above describes the main functionalities of the modules and basic pillar elements based on the stakeholders' wishes. Figure 17 visualizes the top modules, which consist of education, skills, jobs, and companies, and the center module, which is the path module, the main element of the platform that is there to recognize career advancement opportunities for the user. The bottom modules consist of learn, notifications, communications, and favorites, and the connection module, which is again one of the most important modules as the user can selectively connect with the recruiters. The profile module will have different settings. However, even though the modules are described in the initial proposal, their only purpose is to visualize the main elements of the architectural mechanism of the platform. It might help identify the main functionalities of the platform.

To sum up, the new recruitment platform aims to connect students and recruiters by addressing their common challenges, which are information overload, repetitive data entry, and discreet recruitment processes that ensure privacy and the importance of the network. The proposal suggests a centralized, cloud-based, AI-powered platform for real-time data access and streamlined operations, benefiting both parties.

5.4.2 Proposed “Improving Communication & Recruitment Process”

Table 20 below shows the proposed actions for Improving Communications and Recruitment Process.

Table 20. Proposed Actions for “Improving Communications and Recruitment Process.”

Stakeholders	Pains/Challenges (Stakeholders Perspectives)	Proposed Actions
Students	Low response rates reduce motivation; Redundant steps prolong applications	AI Bot communication elements can personally assist
	Online applications limit engagement; Limited face-to-face contact reduces approachability	Improve Digital Profile
Recruiters	Limited roles (i.e. only niche roles) for non-Finnish speakers	AI Learning Module in Platform increases engagement and skills development

Table 20 above, the actions proposed to improve the communication and shorten the recruitment process for students and recruiters on the new recruitment platform, are suggestions of key stakeholders in the finding, who need help and assistance in improving digital profiles to enhance skills development and better matchmaking with job positions and company fit.

From the perspective of the students, the new platform can improve the overall recruitment process by connecting directly, discreetly, and selectively to reliable recruiters, where they are better approached through direct communication. The students also need better visibility in the overall recruitment process and for them to see the progress of their application, they need to directly connect with the recruiters through jobs that they are interested in applying or job prospects, that they are interested to be sourced. Artificial intelligence and machine learning deliver different functionalities that enhance the user experience by providing bot communication elements that can personally assist the students, AI forecast capabilities for users, and AI-based matching tools.

From the perspective of the recruiters, they face candidates with incoherent digital profiles, which makes it harder for them to match with the job positions effectively. They also have an extremely short timeline to scan all CVs manually, which makes it difficult to scan jobseekers, who are career shifters, in niche industries, or candidates who are entering the country who have Finnish language challenges. These challenges can be fixed by incorporating AI Learning modules in the platform to increase skills development such as language skills, and personal skills and this can also enhance engagement in using the platform. The learning module is shown in Table 20 and visualized in Figure 17.

Tables 21-24 below visualize the user experience and the process of use of the platform.

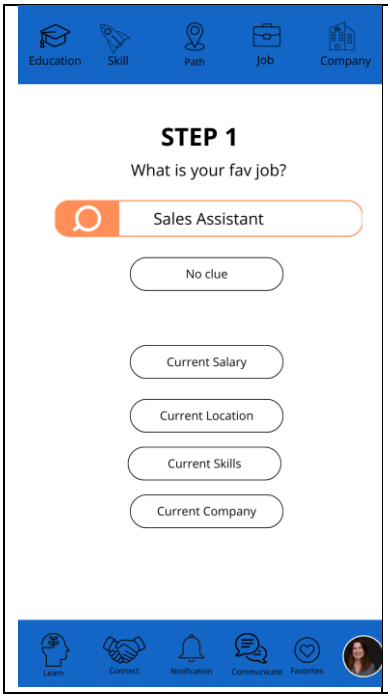
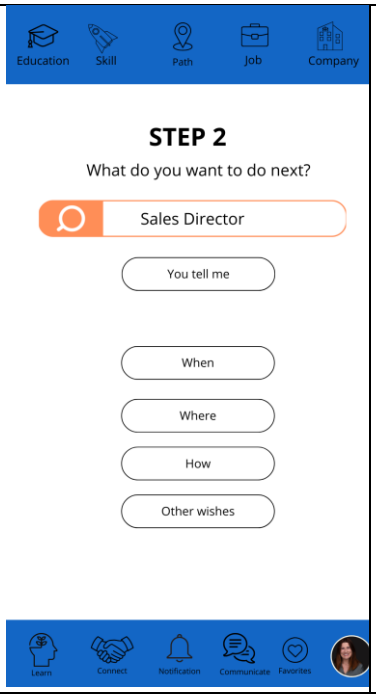
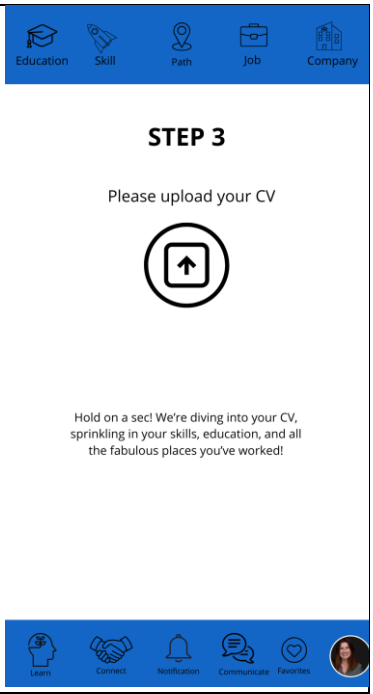
		
STEP 1: User selects current position from path: Sales Assistant. The user can also put their current salary, location, current company, and job tasks /skills that are currently used in the company	STEP 2: User selects future position from path: Sales Director. The user can also put their future salary, location, future company, and job tasks /skills that want to use in the company.	STEP 3: The user downloads a CV or can also opt to link to a LinkedIn profile to extract digital profile information.
S: AI-based interview training system R: AI integration and combination of current tools & applications	S: AI forecast capabilities for users R: AI assistant in skills matching with jobs	S: AI-based CV helper and resume builder and AI counselor
Integrating Social Media Strategies; User Interface (UI) & User Experience (UX)	AI-Powered Talent Acquisition; Analytics & Feedback Tools	AI & ML Integration; Integration with Institutional Systems; GDPR Compliance

Table 21. Steps 1-3 process the user journey.

Table 21 above describes the three first steps of the user experience that outline the user journey by visualizing the current situation of the jobseeker in step 1 and the targeted future position in step 2. In steps 1 and 2, the user can add inputs such as salary, location, company, and job positions, which will be categorized by AI in selected modules. The user can also opt to download their CV or connect their LinkedIn profile. These processes will use AI tools from the conceptual framework by enabling career mapping and skills assessment, which ensures a tailored approach to career development. The AI assistant helps in matching the user's current skills with job requirements, while the CV helper streamlines the resume creation process, enhancing the user's chances of successful job applications and career planning efforts.

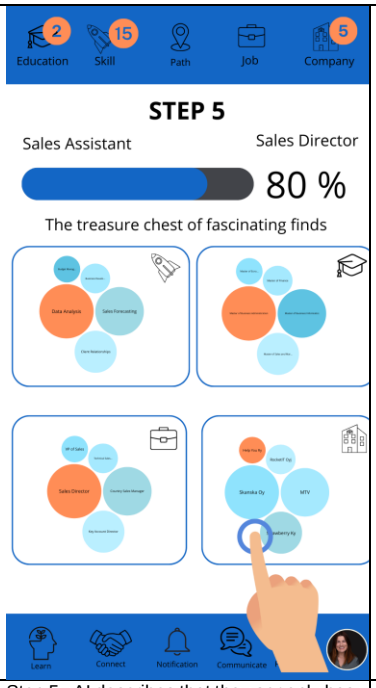
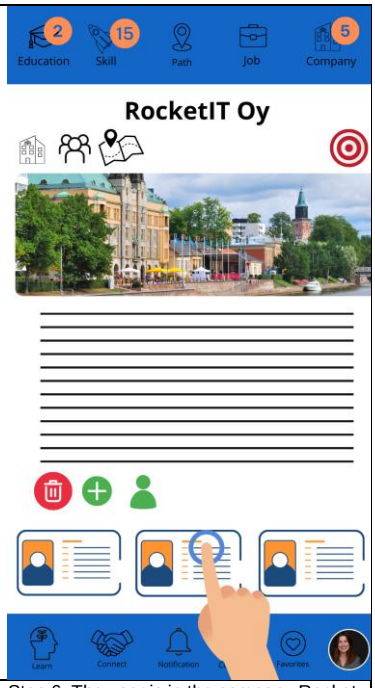
		
STEP 4: AI selects, extracts, and organizes data in categories: Skills, Jobs, Education, and Company. The user can check the categories, which will be linked to the path chosen. This path is from a sales assistant to a sales director.	Step 5: AI describes that the user only has 80% of skills that match the Sales Director. AI selects elements in different categories and provides information. AI provides that the user is missing a master's degree. AI provides that the user is missing experience as a Sales Director and shows other job titles that match the user´s skills and previous experiences. AI shows companies that have Sales Director job vacancies. The user selects the available company, which is the Rocket IT company.	Step 6: The user is in the company Rocket IT dashboard and sees various information about the company and different types of open positions. User selects job vacancies: Sales Director, which is available.
S: Digital Profile Improvement R: AI-based CV helper and resume builder and AI counselor	S: AI-base tool designed to assist in building careers R: AI for consultants and reach candidates	S: Bot communication elements that can personally assist R: All types of company information are available for users; Activation of a profile gives access to information; connecting to users gives more information; The more connections, the more information.
AI & ML Integration; Integration with Institutional Systems; GDPR Compliance Centralized Digital, Recruitment Strategy; User Interface (UI) & User Experience (UX)	AI-Powered Talent Acquisition; Machine Learning (ML)	Structural Framework (ATS, Communication Tools, Job Posting Systems); Security Framework (SSO, SAML)

Table 22. Step 4-6 process user journey.

Table 22 above describes the three next steps from 4-6 of the user experience by utilizing the power of AI and Machine learning in selecting, extracting, and organizing data into relevant modules such as skills, education, jobs, and companies. This structured approach allows users to easily navigate through their pathways. This way, AI ensures that the users can access and understand their options clearly. In step 5, AI assesses the user´s current qualifications against the requirements of the Sales Director position, revealing that the user possesses 80% of the necessary skills and highlighting gaps, such as lack of Master's Degree and experience. It provides data insights to the user and suggests positions that are aligned with their current skills. Ai streamlines job positions

by identifying companies with open sales positions or positions that are available in a certain company. Step 6, the user can access the company´s information such as open job vacancies, and relevant company information such as the type of employees working in the target company. These functionalities, which are mostly AI-driven processes empower the user to data-driven career decisions, streamline their job searches with the assistance of AI, and improve their career direction.

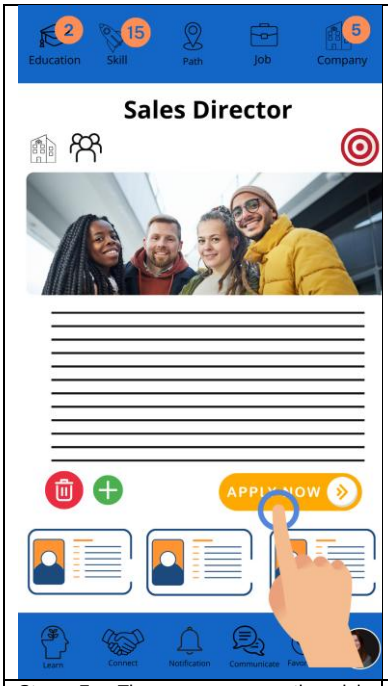
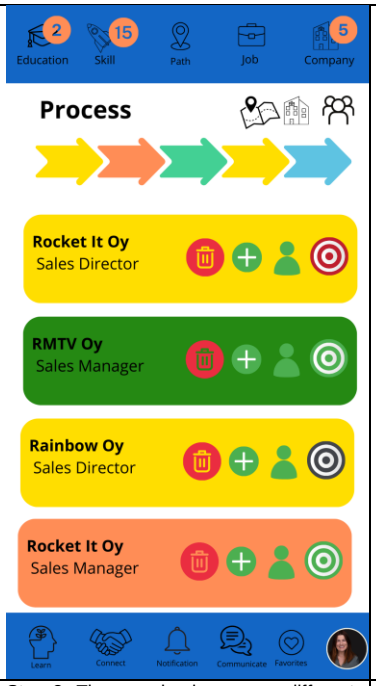
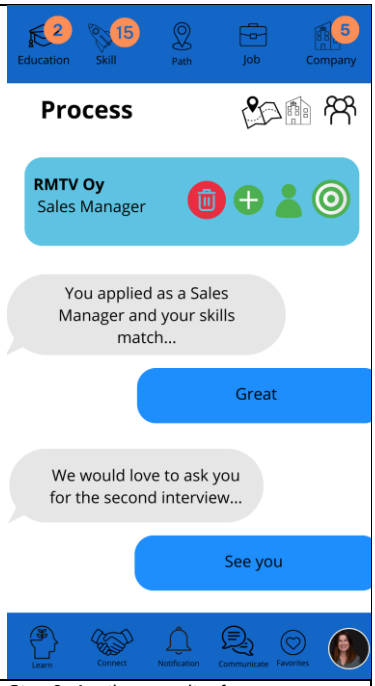
		
Step 7: The user sees the job advertisement for a Sales Director position. Even though the user knows that her skills do not match totally, the user selects apply.	Step 8: The user is shown now different sales positions in different companies to which she has applied. There is also a progress bar that shows at what stage the user is in the recruitment process. The user might also see positions of different companies where she has not applied. This data goes to the recruiter who oversees recruitment and her recruiter contacts that she has given permission to see her profile.	Step 9: Another recruiter from a company called RMTV Oy contacted her with an offer of Sales Manager that matches her profile. She speaks with the recruiter, goes through the recruitment process, and accepts the job position. The user is still connected with relevant recruiters for future career advancement opportunities.
S: LinkedIn provides access to English-speaking roles. R: Direct connection with recruiters; Path builders; and Skills recognizers	S: Network for hidden job opportunities by direct connection with recruiters R: Identifying best-fit candidates, matching talent to job needs, and improving employer branding	S: Improve matching with companies offering jobs that match skills and language R: AI Learning Module in Platform to increase engagement and skills development
AI & ML Integration; User Interface (UI) & User Experience (UX)	AI-powered talent acquisition; User Interface (UI) & User Experience (UX); Analytics & feedback tools, GDPR Compliance, Transparent Consent Protocols	Academic Faculty Involvement; Integration with Institutional Systems

Table 23. Step 7-9 process user journey.

Table 23 above describes the three next steps from 7-9 through the job description and recruitment process. It empowers the decision-making of the user by applying to a job position knowing that their skills do not match the required position in Step 7. Step 8 is

presented with different opportunities by the actions of the user in the platform, by actively applying, the user chooses to target companies that are not a match; by selecting a recruiter connection, the user is targeted by a position that matches with their current skill set. It also visualizes positions that are not open in the market and positions that are just open in the platform. Step 9 describes that the user is sourced by a recruiter and describes the communication elements of the platform. AI elements are incorporated into these processes to improve the recruitment experience by improving matching, efficient recruiter connections, skills recognition compliance, and transparency through the recruitment process. These elements provide and ensure an improved user experience.

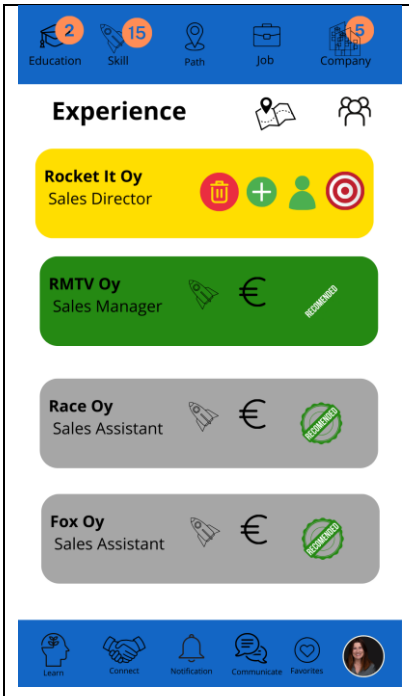
	Step 10: The user can always visit her path/process dashboard. She can see where she is currently and her past positions. She can see what she has opted for the future, as a sales director and she can see what skills or education level she is still missing. She might opt to study in Metropolia as a master's Level. R: A single platform that offers AI elements to reduce the recruitment process, improve connection and communication Centralized Digital Recruitment Strategy; Cloud Infrastructure

Table 24. Step 10 Experience.

Table 24 above describes the last dashboard of the user experience, where the centralized digital recruitment platform can incorporate AI-driven personalized career recommendations for the user. AI can provide recommendations, and it can uncover different patterns in modules that may not be immediately apparent, guiding the user toward in-demand positions and skills in another field or pathway. AI can also link the recommendations to relevant online courses or training programs that align with the suggested skills or qualifications, such as the master's degree at Metropolia.

To sum up, these actions improve communication and streamline the recruitment process on a new platform, incorporating feedback from key stakeholders. It offers direct connections to trustworthy recruiters, better visibility on the recruitment process and

application tracking, and enhances AI and machine learning tools and AI learning modules that can help develop necessary skills boost engagement on the platform and enhance career advancement and job matching.

5.4.3 Proposed “Addressing the Job Matching”

Table 25 below shows the proposed actions for Addressing Job Matching.

Table 25. Proposed Actions for “Addressing Job Matching.”

Stakeholders	Pains/Challenges (Stakeholders Perspectives)	Proposed Actions
Students	International experience does not match local needs; Limited job market; the need to accept lower roles, outside of own expertise areas	An AI-based tool designed to assist in building careers
	Limited roles (i.e. only niche roles) for non-Finnish speakers	Contacting companies directly for jobs that match skills and language
Recruiters	Hard to find qualified candidates.	AI for consultants and reaching candidates directly

Table 25 above lists the actions proposed to address job mismatch in current platforms for the students and recruiters. The findings identified the challenges in skill-based job matching, which the new platform can address by implementing AI/ ML tools designed to improve career-building assistance, matchmaking with companies and job positions, and better reach for candidates, these are the pains that the stakeholders have identified and need improvement.

From the perspective of the students, the current recruitment platforms promote experience-based digital profiles that have a linear career advancement progress without interruption in the work timeline. These interruptions might include people who are currently studying, career shifters, and people who enter a new country with no network or have difficulty learning the local language, which resembles the profiles of most students in the data collection 1. They face job mismatch due to opportunities in local needs, limited roles for English speakers, and international job roles in niche industries. The new platform can address these concerns by implementing AI/ ML tools to assist in career building and integration with institutional systems and improve matchmaking with companies offering jobs that match the skills and language preferences of key stakeholders. The learn, education, skills, and connect modules shown in Table 19 and visualized in Figure 17 are some of the key functionalities to adhere to these challenges.

From the perspective of the recruiters, they mentioned recruiting and matchmaking would be easier if they could access clear and attractive candidate profiles because they only have less than 10 seconds to scan a profile, and sometimes digital profiles and CVs differ extensively so it is hard to find qualified candidates. The new platform can address

these concerns by implementing AI/ ML tools for consultants and reach candidates better, with an option to match with relevant skills and experiences. The path, skills, job, and company module can help connect recruiters with qualified candidates.

To sum up, the proposed actions aim to address the job mismatch challenges for students and recruiters through a new AI/ML-driven platform. The platform will help people with non-linear work histories (such as international students, for example), enhancing their career-building opportunities and improving job matches by considering skills and language preferences. This also helps the recruiters with better matching of qualified candidates by integrating AI-based matching tools.

5.5 Summary of the Initial Proposals

This section presents the summaries of two proposals. Proposal 1 proposes improving the JobTeaser platform by addressing limitations in accessibility, user engagement, and visibility among MBA students. Proposal 2 conceptualizes a new digital recruitment platform proposed as an MVP that integrates AI for skill matching, personalized job search, and augmented networking tools. The new platform promises a scalable, secure, and user-centric experience that meets the needs of both students and recruiters.

The first proposal, “Improving JobTeaser”, summarizes the perspectives of students and recruiters in Table 26 below, incorporating the relevant elements from the basic pillars of a digital recruitment platform.

Table 26. Initial Proposal-1 for Improving JobTeaser.

Development Areas	Stakeholders	Pains/Challenges	Proposed Actions
Increasing the outreach to students and recruiters	Students	Limited accessibility (no mobile application)	▪ Use JobTeaser & LinkedIn complementarily
		Low awareness and engagement among MBA students; Career guidance resources focusing on BBA students	▪ Introduce face-to-face introductory sessions with each new group ▪ Offer special training to improve the digital profiling skills of MBA students
	Recruiters	Low awareness and engagement among Recruiters	▪ Encourage students to apply for suitable matches found on JobTeaser and remind them of the matches from career advisors
		Confusing sign-up options.	▪ Finetune current JobTeaser sign-in options by providing one sign-in option for both, companies and recruiters
Improving Communication & Recruitment Process	Students	Unhelpful or irrelevant content (as perceived by some students)	▪ Use email campaigns carefully ▪ Improve identification of career shifters students
		Limited promotion and training about JobTeaser	▪ Provide content for marketing the JobTeaser platform ▪ Support targeted services for MBA & internationals
	Recruiters	Delays in job ad approval, particularly during the summer	▪ Appoint a dedicated person to approve job advertisement publishing year-round ▪ Simplify approval processes by improving job ad modules & resources to approve job ads, particularly during peak seasons
		The need for better structured, clear, careful (i.e. higher quality) student candidate profiles.	▪ Provide a clearer candidate view
Addressing the Job Mismatch	Students	Limited job vacancies (mostly outside Finland)	▪ Support international opportunities by adding more local job vacancies
		Job offerings focusing on BBA students; few higher-level job offerings	▪ Focus on senior positions
	Recruiters	Companies are interested to have access to the digital profiles of candidates	▪ Access to digital profiles through open job applications
		The need for better structured, clear, careful (i.e. higher quality) student candidate profiles.	▪ Provide a clearer candidate view

As shown in Table 26, the first proposal to improve JobTeaser relates to suggestions from the students and recruiters, by supporting a structured text such that pains could be solved while value-adding elements are combined. This proposal offers to improve JobTeaser with three development areas: outreach, communication, and job matching specifically towards the needs of students and recruiters. The aim is to increase engagement on the platform, simplify processes, and make listings more relevant.

From the students' perspective, those in MBA programs, JobTeaser could become much more useful with a few practical changes. Right now, without a mobile option, students may miss opportunities simply because it’s harder to access on a mobile device through the browser. Adding a mobile version would make it easier for students to stay connected to job postings and updates regularly. Also, integrating LinkedIn complementarily would be a good option on JobTeaser. Another issue is that many MBA students don’t know much about JobTeaser, as most outreach is aimed at BBA students. Career advisors could solve this by introducing JobTeaser during MBA orientation with each new group and offering special training on digital profiling skills. This would help MBA students see how JobTeaser can be useful for them and make them use it when looking for jobs. To

improve the communication and recruitment process, the career center could use email campaigns carefully relevant to the target identifiers of the career changers and provide content for marketing JobTeaser as a recruitment platform among the students. To improve the job mismatch, the career center could add more local job opportunities and focus on the senior-level positions for the senior students. These proposed actions would benefit the students as well as the JobTeaser platform to increase outreach, improve the communication and recruitment process, and reduce the challenge of job mismatch.

From the recruiters' perspective, some recruiters aren't fully aware of how JobTeaser can help them find qualified candidates. Career advisors could encourage students to apply for suitable matches found on JobTeaser and remind them of the matches. This would make recruiters engaged with JobTeaser and help them use it more. The sign-up process for recruiters could also use some improvement. Right now, it's a bit confusing, which can discourage recruiters from fully using the platform. Simplifying the sign-up steps by finetuning current JobTeaser sign-in options by providing one sign-in option for both, companies and recruiters. Another concern is that job ads are delayed during the peak season and to make it a smooth process, Metropolia could appoint a dedicated person to approve job advertisement publishing all over the year. Also, to better find the relevancy to the right candidates, recruiters suggested a clearer candidate profile using a clear structure template, which would also help to reduce the job mismatch. Companies also would like to access directly to the student candidate profile through open job applications. These proposed actions could increase the outreach to the recruiters, increase the communication and recruitment process, and reduce the job mismatch.

In brief, the proposed actions in the first proposal aim to address the aspect of user needs on the platform, allowing JobTeaser to better serve as an efficient and convenient digital recruitment platform.

The second proposal, "Conceptualizing a new digital recruitment platform," summarizes the perspectives of students and recruiters in Table 27 below, incorporating the relevant elements from the basic pillars of a digital recruitment platform.

Table 27. Initial Proposal-2 for conceptualizing a new digital recruitment platform.

Development Areas	Stakeholders	Pains/Challenges	Proposed Actions
Conceptualize a user-centric platform	Students	A new Recruitment Platform (as using multiple platforms causes information overload)	A Tinder-like personal platform with AI elements and discreet connection and communication for direct recruitment and matchmaking
	Recruiters	Incomplete profiles delay hiring; Limited tools for candidate access; Long processes lead to candidate dropout; Complexity in using multiple channels; High fees restrict multi-platform access	A single platform that offers AI elements to reduce the recruitment process, improve connection and communication
Improving Communication & Recruitment Process	Students	Low response rates reduce motivation; Redundant steps prolong applications	AI Bot communication elements can personally assist
		Online applications limit engagement; Limited face-to-face contact reduces approachability	Improve Digital Profile
	Recruiters	Limited roles (i.e. only niche roles) for non-Finnish speakers	AI Learning Module in Platform increases engagement and skills development
Addressing the Job Mismatch	Students	International experience does not match local needs; Limited job market; the need to accept lower roles, outside of own expertise areas	An AI-based tool designed to assist in building careers
		Limited roles (i.e. only niche roles) for non-Finnish speakers	Contacting companies directly for jobs that match skills and language
	Recruiters	Hard to find qualified candidates.	AI for consultants and reaching candidates directly

As for the new digital recruitment platform, it uniquely incorporates the stakeholders' needs such as a *centralized platform* that improves hiring efficiency, transparency, and real-time feedback and communication between the stakeholders. It is *private and personal for its users* while utilizing AI/ML elements in operational and architectural mechanisms, improving the structural framework in the architectural mechanism and improving privacy and security features for user consent and discreet communication and connection as well as data protection from cyberattacks. The proposed platform also connects with the universities and recruiters through an API or by developing a tailored website application.

For recruiters, by implementing AI in the early stages of recruitment, recruiters can manage candidate data more efficiently and Metropolia can benefit from the data as they implement different curriculums for their students based on their students' future employers´ needs. The use of AI can help in identifying jobs or talent prospects and match job positions with relevant candidates effectively.

For students as jobseekers, they can implement recommendations and alter CVs and cover letters to match the job description and company fit. The automation processes and candidate recommendation and selection will help speed up the recruitment process significantly and improve matchmaking effectively.

- AI / ML in crawling from different jobsites for different job advertisements
- AI/ML in tracking public company information and its employees.
- AI/ML in forecasting the types of employees and culture fit

- AI and ML will improve resume parsing and sorting applications
- AI/ML to identify different subjects such as skills, education, jobs, and companies

Figure 18 below shows the process of use, which was described in Section 5.4.

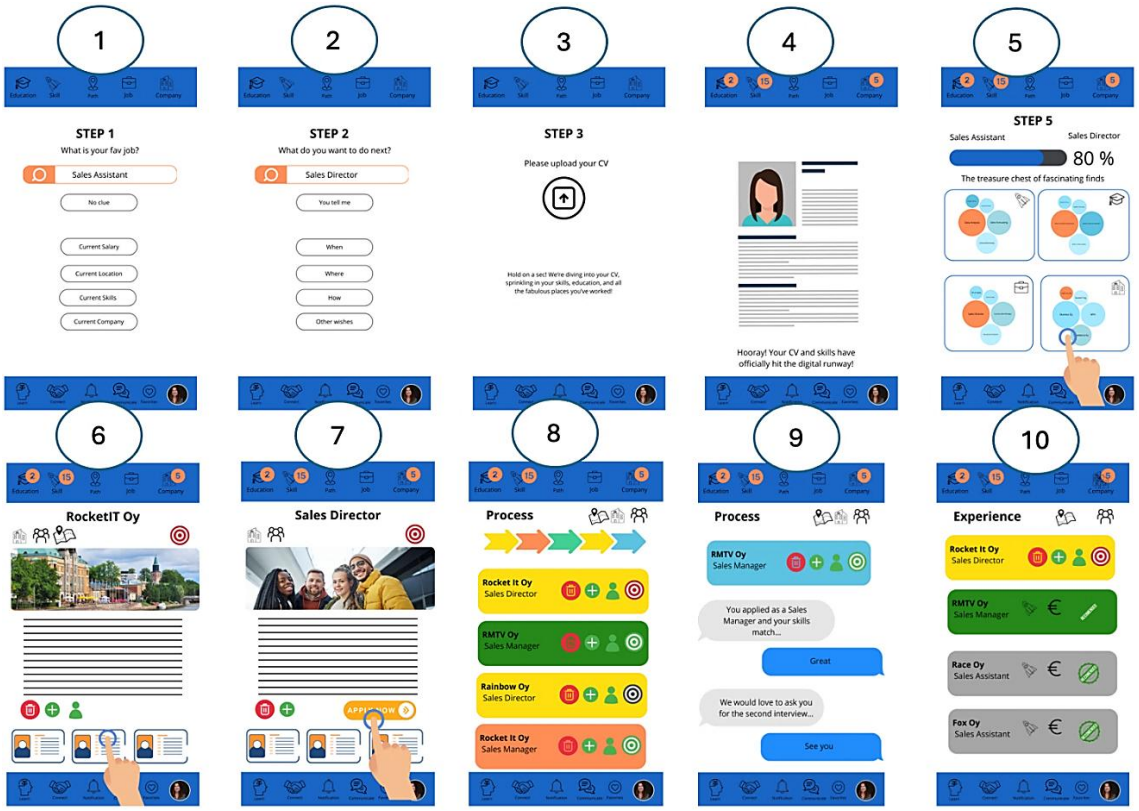


Figure 18. An overview of the user journey in the MVP Prototype (Initial proposal).

Summing up, the two proposals will be validated through discussions and receiving suggestions from the stakeholders in the last round of Data Collection 3 about the developments to the initial proposals in the next section.

6 Validation of the Proposals

This section reports on the results of the feedback and validation and points to further developments to the initial proposals, presented in Section 5. First, this section overviews the validation stage to display the logic of its creation. Second, it discusses findings from Data 3. Third, it reports on the development of the initial proposals with subsequent presentations of the final proposals.

6.1 Overview of the Validation Stage

This section reports on the proposal's validation results developed in Section 5. This study aims for a strong validation by involving three experts' suggestions/evaluations. During the initial proposal building, the stakeholders' suggestions were utilized from Data collection rounds 1 and 2, along with the available knowledge and existing best practices from the literature. The validation round asked for the final inputs from stakeholders (Data 3).

The goal of validation was to seek expert judgment of the initial proposals, and they included (1) Experts' evaluations of Proposal-1 for Improving JobTeaser, the existing digital recruitment platform; and (2) Experts' evaluations of Proposal-2 for conceptualizing a new digital recruitment platform.

The validation stage followed two steps. First, the identified development areas in the initial proposals were discussed, and the expert inputs´ were collected as the basis for the inputs to the final proposals. Second, the study creates two proposals based on these final inputs from the experts. These final proposals are based on the experts' evaluations and are visible in improving the presented solution.

6.2 Developments to the Initial Proposal 1 (Improving JobTeaser)

Proposal-1 "Improving JobTeaser" focused on the three development areas, (1) Increasing the outreach to students and recruiters, (2) Improving the Communication & Recruitment Process, and (3) Addressing Job matching.

6.2.1 Developments to "Increasing the Outreach" for better use of JobTeaser

Table 28 below shows the inputs from the validation round for Increasing the Outreach" for better use of JobTeaser.

Table 28. Expert suggestions (findings of Data 3) for “Increasing the Outreach” for better use of JobTeaser.

Stakeholders	Pains/Challenges	Proposed Improvements (Initial Proposal-1)	Feedback from Experts on Validation	Description of the feedback by experts (in detail)	Proposed Development of the Initial Proposal-1
Students	Limited accessibility (no mobile application)	▪ Use JobTeaser & LinkedIn complementarily	Developing a mobile application by its students as a project	“A mobile application may well now present it, which will, for example at least stages be developed by its students as a project.” (R21)	▪ Integrate LinkedIn as a combinatory or complementary tool ▪ Develop a mobile version of the JobTeaser platform
	Low awareness and engagement among MBA students; Career guidance resources focusing on BBA students	▪ Introduce face-to-face introductory sessions with each new group ▪ Offer special training to improve the digital profiling skills of MBA students	Visits be face-to-face with the group Show how to build your profile here Aiming to get them to visit JobTeaser more	“…Yeah, this is quite high on my priority list for what to do next with JobTeaser. The idea would be to organize face-to-face visits with new student groups. For example, we could get everyone signed up during the session and show them how to build their profiles directly. .” (R23) “…So, instead of focusing on what we are currently trying to do, which is encouraging students to visit JobTeaser more. …” (R23)	▪ Introduce face-to-face introductory sessions with each new group ▪ Offer special training to improve the digital profiling skills of MBA students ▪ Encourage students to visit JobTeaser more
Recruiters	Low awareness and engagement among Recruiters	▪ Encourage students to apply for suitable matches found on JobTeaser and remind them of the matches from career advisors	Not agree; but validate with another solution as putting JobTeaser for the kind of relevant jobs	“…you think we should directly promote the job opportunities already available on JobTeaser to students.” (R23)	▪ Advertise the relevant jobs more to engage both students and recruiters
	Confusing sign-up options.	▪ Finetune current JobTeaser sign-in options by providing one sign-in option for both, companies and recruiters	Appointing a company coordinator	The researchers explained that the company should fill it out a little bit later, they would want to know to put the job directly and the registration process you only need the number, the company info or contact, website address, and then you should also show the progress milestone of the registration steps. There will only be three processes for the company to sign in. Then the expert responded, “We are hoping to get a company coordinator resource to also work with JobTeaser and develop the company experience and cooperation.” (R23)	▪ Finetune current JobTeaser sign-in options by providing one sign-in option for both, companies and recruiters by appointing a company coordinator

As seen in Table 28 above, experts’ feedback on the “Increase the outreach” for JobTeaser proposed the development points to make the platform more reachable and attractive to students and recruiters as well.

From the students’ perspectives, students struggle with JobTeaser’s lack of a mobile app. Experts supported a mobile version but also stressed that some MBA students are not very aware of JobTeaser and do not use the tool much. In response, they recommended introducing face-to-face sessions for the new student groups with career advisors to promote JobTeaser more actively, and they supported the idea of offering special training to improve their digital profiles.

From the recruiters' perspectives, experts agreed with the need for deeper engagement with companies on JobTeaser. Experts recommended that career advisors act more actively to engage both groups. That way, it could increase the awareness of both groups of stakeholders. In addition, the sign-up process for companies and recruiters was perceived as too complex, which discouraged some recruiters from working with JobTeaser. Experts agreed with simplifying the registration steps so that Metropolia could finetune the current JobTeaser sign-in options and provide one sign-in option for both, companies and recruiters, as well as appointing a company coordinator. These developments could increase the outreach for better use of JobTeaser to both students and recruiters alike.

These improvements were incorporated into the final proposal to make JobTeaser a useful tool, for both students and recruiters.

6.2.2 Developments to "Improving the Communication & Recruitment Process"

Table 29 below shows the inputs from the validation round for Improving the Communication & Recruitment Process of JobTeaser.

Table 29. Expert suggestions (findings of Data 3) for Improving the Communication & Recruitment Process of JobTeaser.

Stakeholders	Pains/Challenges	Proposed Improvements (Initial Proposal-1)	Feedback from Experts on Validation	Description of the feedback by experts (in detail)	Development of the Initial Proposal-1
Students	Unhelpful or irrelevant content (as perceived by some students)	▪ Use email campaigns carefully ▪ Improve identification of career shifters students	Confirmed.	"I definitely agree already." (R23)	▪ Use email campaigns carefully ▪ Improve identification of career shifters students
	Limited promotion and training about JobTeaser	▪ Provide content for marketing the JobTeaser platform ▪ Support targeted services for MBA & internationals	Workshop about JobTeaser and its good use and digital profiling	The researchers explained that yes. So, it's what would be great to have these relevant events when the first, what are first students in a semester… this is how JobTeaser works. Go with them through the platform this is how you do that and if you make your profile very visible and very good… helps you connect these jobs. Then the expert responded, "Yeah… this is actually quite high on my priority list for what to do next with the JobTeaser." (R23) "It would be nice to make a JobTeaser introduction like 30 minutes, maybe 45 minutes… it would be nice to repeat this session somewhere in mid or end of October…" (R21)	▪ Introduce JobTeaser during the orientation twice (in August and October) ▪ Workshop about visible digital profiling on JobTeaser
Recruiters	Delays in job ad approval, particularly during the summer	▪ Appoint a dedicated person to approve job advertisement publishing year-round	▪ Confirmed	"I believe there should be one dedicated person focusing on company cooperation, someone who can respond promptly, rather than just once a week, as it seems to be happening now." (R18)	▪ Appoint a dedicated person to approve job advertisement publishing year-round

		▪ Simplify approval processes by improving job ad modules & resources to approve job ads, particularly during peak seasons		The researchers explained that the administrator can put two types of questions that a company can ask to verify that the student is applicable for the job, that would be great. Then the expert responded, “Yeah. OK.” (R23)	▪ Simplify approval processes by improving job ad modules to approve job ads, particularly during peak seasons
	The need for better structured, clear, careful (i.e. higher quality) student candidate profiles.	▪ Provide a clearer candidate view	Metropolia offers relevant training & personalized connection with all inputs	The researchers explained that if they have a link in connection, it's also in the input elements for the students and the CV is…if you can put in the profile of the students when they have their contact information...It's Metropolia’s e-mail. So, it's easier to contact directly the students...applied to…through…CV…Then the expert responded, “Yeah.” (R23)	▪ Offer relevant training & personalized connection for a clearer candidate profile

As seen in Table 29 above, for "Improving the Communication & Recruitment Process", experts agreed to the following recommendations.

From the students' perspective, the platform often showed the job content misaligned to their needs. Experts discussed that possibly the career advisors could try and provide more content and more target job advertisements to specific student groups; for example, the career center could use email campaigns targeted more specifically, to avoid excessive communication, and improve the identification of career goals, for example, those who would like to change their careers. Also, experts discussed a better utilization of two face-to-face orientation sessions (one session in August & another session in October, for international students who would arrive later in Finland) to help each new student group familiarize themselves with JobTeaser features and thus utilize the platform better. These sessions could be extended with a workshop for building a digital profile to improve their chances with recruiters and potential employers.

From the recruiters' perspective, the needs included speeding up job ad approvals and clearer student candidate profiles. As noted by some of them, there were times when waiting for approvals, particularly during peak recruitment times, made it difficult for recruiters to fill positions in time. Experts agreed that ad approvals could be handled by a dedicated person assigned to do so year-round. Also, they agreed that clearer and higher student candidate profiles could help recruiters and suggested relevant training on how to build a structured candidate profile, meaning the style and structure in candidate profiles. These actions would help recruiters communicate with students on time and have more clearly structured candidate profiles for the recruitment process.

These developments could make JobTeaser easier or more helpful for students and recruiters.

6.2.3 Proposed “Addressing the Job Matching”

Table 30 below shows the inputs from the validation round for Addressing the Job Mismatching of JobTeaser.

Table 30. Expert suggestions (findings of Data 3) for Addressing the Job Mismatching of JobTeaser.

Stakeholders	Pains/Challenges	Proposed Improvements (Initial Proposal-1)	Feedback from Experts on Validation	Description of the feedback by experts (in detail)	Development of the Initial Proposal-1
Students	Limited job vacancies (mostly outside Finland)	▪ Support international opportunities by adding more local job vacancies	Republish the various local job vacancies from other sources including JobTeaser job ads onto OMA	“…may republish the jobs from, for example, academic job or student job or monster or whatever or wherever they found these vacancies because for companies it in a way it doesn't matter where these vacancies come from… this just physically copied it to our OMA to catch the attention of the students…” (R21) “And you can actually get these JobTeaser job ads also seen a similar way in Oma” (R23)	▪ Republish the local job vacancies from other sources, including JobTeaser job ads onto the OMA Metropolia platform
	Job offerings focusing on BBA students; few higher-level job offerings	▪ Focus on senior positions	Advertise those kinds of jobs more to them	“You think, we should directly promote the job opportunities already available on JobTeaser to students. OK” (R23)	▪ Advertise the relevant jobs more to the senior students
Recruiters	Companies are interested to have access to the digital profiles of candidates	▪ Access to digital profiles through open job applications	Big polls of candidate open profiles that make attractive to companies	“To recruiters who sign up for the platform or not… we make it kind of mutually interesting. Students can see all sorts of advertisements… So, it makes sense to come and look at the JobTeaser. … we have attracted a big pool of candidate profiles and then it makes it attractive for companies to come and search. So, we have a kind of richness on both sides…” (R21)	▪ Access to digital open profiles through open applications
	The need for better structured, clear, careful (i.e. higher quality) student candidate profiles.	▪ Provide a clearer candidate view	Metropolia offers relevant training & personalized connection with all inputs	If they have a LinkedIn connection, it's added in input elements for the students, and the CV is not really that important. But if you can put in the profile of the students when they have their contact information. If it´s not a number. It's at least the Metropolia e-mail…Then the expert responded, “Yeah.” (R23) “Small companies will never do it...They will just drop it totally and put it on LinkedIn. So, we need to find a compromise…” (R21)	▪ Offer relevant training & personalized connection for a clearer candidate profile

As seen in Table 30 above, the third development area discussed the job match.

From the students’ perspectives, they see mostly international job postings outside Finland and hence it becomes difficult to land a local job. Some experts proposed that republishing (i.e. copy-pasting) job offerings from other channels in the country onto JobTeaser or OMA Metropolia may be an option to consider. This would allow for local jobs to be viewed by students, which in turn would increase student interest in the

platform. But the experts stressed that such an approach would need further internal consolations, to check for any possible drawbacks. Also, MBA students felt that many of the offered jobs were entry-level roles directed to BBA students rather than MBA students. They suggested that universities would also attract mid-to-senior-level job ads, which are a better match for MBA students' skillsets. These actions could help students find relevant jobs better aligned with their skillsets.

From the recruiters' perspectives, recruitment agencies have indicated that they are interested in seeing better-quality digital profiles of student candidates and having full access to their CVs. Experts agreed with the need for increasing the JobTeaser profiles database and providing easier review access to recruiters, to assist recruiters in filtering and quickly finding qualified and best-fit candidates. These actions could also reduce the job mismatch with better visible personalized candidate profiles and more profiles available.

These suggestions aim to make JobTeaser more useful for both students and recruiters by focusing on relevant job matches and clear candidate profiles.

6.3 Developments to the Initial Proposal 2 (A new digital recruitment platform as MVP)

Proposal-2 for "A new digital recruitment platform as an MVP" focuses on three areas, (1) Conceptualizing a user-centric platform, (2) Improving the Communication & Recruitment Process, and (3) Addressing the Job Mismatch.

6.3.1 Proposed "Conceptualizing a user-centric platform"

Table 31 below shows the inputs from the validation round for Conceptualizing a user-centric platform.

Table 31. Expert suggestions (findings of Data 3) for Conceptualizing a user-centric platform.

Stakeholders	Pains/Challenges	Proposed Actions (Initial Proposal-2)	Feedback from Experts on Validation	Development of the Feedback by experts (in details	Development of the Initial Proposal 2
Students	A new Recruitment Platform (as using multiple platforms causes information overload)	A Tinder-like personal platform with AI elements and discreet connection and communication for direct recruitment and matchmaking	Validated, to have Tinder-like personal platform, but not too ambitious: Students and Teachers also have difficulty finding school projects	"This kind of project or Job Tinder would be very useful because I think maybe the situation for companies and students is the same maybe they have a job open, and they don't find candidates and candidates don't find the jobs and it is the same situation is also for school projects." (R22)	Add elements to University API to connect teachers and students together.

				"This makes this quite ambitious to yes." (R23)	
Recruiters	Incomplete profiles delay hiring; Limited tools for candidate access; Long processes lead to candidate dropout; Complexity in using multiple channels; High fees restrict multi-platform access	A single platform that offers AI elements to reduce the recruitment process, improve connection and communication	Validated on AI elements to the platform: Meeting, connection, and feelings. Good reasons why recruiters use the application	"… recruiters, they only have Excel, and in Excel, you are only numbers, and the selection is based on the Excel or whatever and kind of meeting people in personal or in face to face or getting more information and kind of even having your feelings kind of in the process wouldn't harm." (R22) "If we think about all the companies and recruiters and all the applications and everything that's in the world right now. So why would they now want to have another app?" (R23)	Add elements to select connections, improve data about companies, employees, applicants, and content

As seen in Table 31 above, experts agreed that the proposal of a new Job Tinder-like platform may be useful and doable by using AI elements, however, it is too ambitious. They described that it is useful in connecting, communicating, and matching jobs with jobseekers and recruiters and added that the University might also need this type of platform internally, for example, for finding students for school projects.

Experts even suggested that building such a platform could start as an internal project for the University to find students for projects, before moving to a bigger scale.

Experts also suggested adding a section for showing case previous experiences (a portfolio section). Adding a portfolio element, where they can showcase their work, will improve students´ chances for direct communication with faculty members and teachers looking for student groups for different innovation or cultural projects.

From the recruiter's perspective, visibility to the student's portfolio and work project by allowing access to different types of uploadable media might enhance the out-of-the-box recruitment and more tools to analyze the candidate and their fit for the job and company requirements.

To sum up, adding portfolio elements and uploadable media content could increase engagement in the platform, which attracts students, recruiters, and university faculty members.

6.3.2 Proposed "Improving Communication & Recruitment Process"

Table 32 below shows the inputs from the validation round for the Improving Communication & Recruitment Process.

Table 32. Expert suggestions (findings of Data 3) for Improving Communication & Recruitment Process.

Stakeholders	Pains/Challenges	Proposed Actions (Initial Proposal-2)	Feedback from Experts on Validation	Development of the Feedback by experts (in details	Development of the Initial Proposal 2
Students	Low response rates reduce motivation; Redundant steps prolong applications	AI Bot communication elements can personally assist	Validated and described a detailed element for easy browsing and media module: Swipe left or right to find work-related projects	"Light portal to swipe left, and right kind of to have the jobs and even maybe to also the subjects for the innovation projects, and then it would be easy for students to build a profile." (R22)	Add Media elements to candidate profiles
	Online applications limit engagement; Limited face-to-face contact reduces approachability	Improve Digital Profile	Validated and adding portfolio: Adding portfolios in digital profiles Visualizing missing skills	"Candidate creates a CV or profile for him or herself. Would it be also possible that, let's say, the artist people, they typically have some kind of portfolios, coding people they have this let's say?" (R22) "Just small steps, but it's good. I think it's definitely important to match skills and identify what's missing." (R23)	▪ Add Portfolios in skills modules Add AI matchmaking elements
Recruiters	Limited roles (i.e. only niche roles) for non-Finnish speakers	AI Learning Module in Platform increases engagement and skills development	Validated for a new type of matchmaking system: Connections of jobs, projects students	"Let's say the jobs and or the projects and students would find themselves, I think there would be a need for this kind of system." (R22)	Add AI matchmaking elements and AI-assistant

In Table 32 above, experts agreed that innovative elements such as swiping left and right for easy browsing were an interesting and potentially useful approach. Experts also confirmed the importance of adding portfolios to the application, which is also visible to teachers seeking skilled students in project-based programs and direct in-platform communication for groups.

From the perspective of the students, the new platform can improve the recruitment process by connecting directly to reliable recruiters and UAS faculty members, where they are better approached through direct communication. Adding a portfolio and visualizing matching and missing skills improves their digital profiles and employability.

From the perspective of the recruiters, candidates with incoherent or low-experienced digital profiles make it harder to match, but with portfolios and media. It gives more flexibility and more selections of various types of matching systems. These elements can be connected through University API or different modules and submodules.

Tables 33-36 below visualize the added elements and functions of the user experience and process of use of the platform.

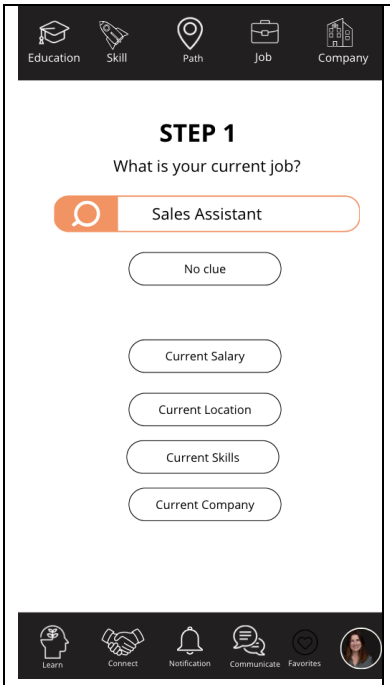
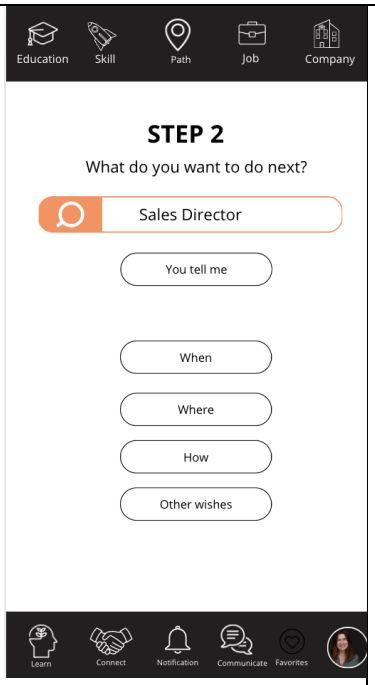
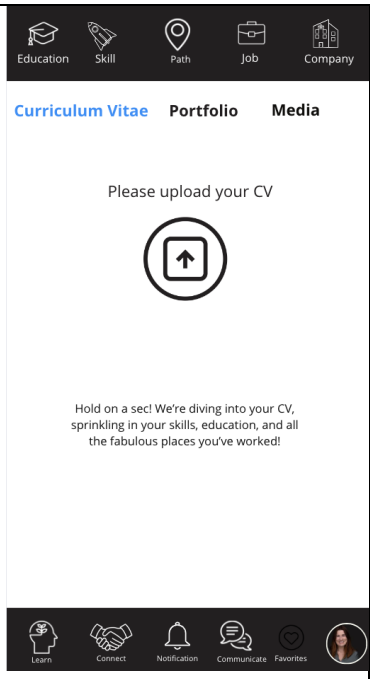
		
STEP 1: User selects current position from path: Sales Assistant. The user can also put their current salary, location, current company, and job tasks /skills that are currently used in the company	STEP2: User selects future position from path: Sales Director. The user can also put their future salary, location, future company, and job tasks /skills that want to use in the company.	STEP 3: The user downloads a CV or can also opt to link to a LinkedIn profile to extract digital profile information.
S: AI-based interview training system R: AI integration and combination of current tools & applications	S: AI forecast capabilities for users R: AI assistant in skills matching with jobs	S: AI-based CV helper and resume builder and AI counselor
Integrating Social Media Strategies; User Interface (UI) & User Experience (UX)	AI-Powered Talent Acquisition; Analytics & Feedback Tools	AI & ML Integration; Integration with Institutional Systems; GDPR Compliance
		Add Portfolio and Media

Table 33. Steps 1-3 process the user journey with added elements.

Table 33 visualizes the first two steps in the new platform. Additionally, experts suggested adding portfolio and media elements, which could give more selection for recruiters to find out-of-the-box candidates.

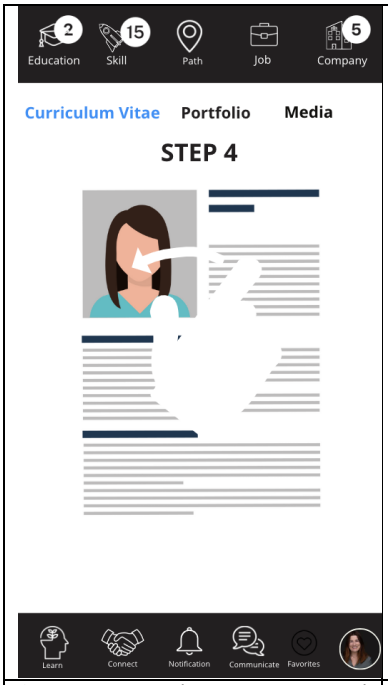
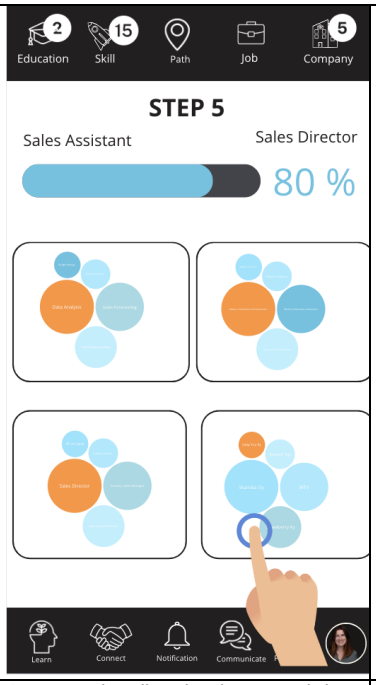
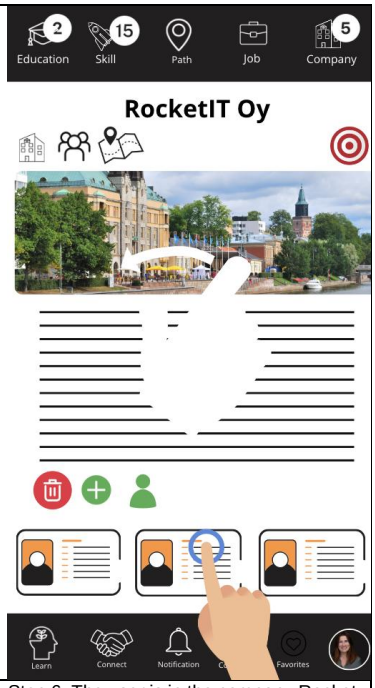
		
STEP 4: AI selects, extracts, and organizes data in categories: Skills, Jobs, Education, and Company. The user can check the categories, which will be linked to the path chosen. This path is from a sales assistant to a sales director.	Step 5: AI describes that the user only has 80% of skills that match the Sales Director. AI selects elements in different categories and provides information. AI provides that the user is missing a master's degree. AI provides that the user is missing experience as a Sales Director and shows other job titles that match the user´s skills and previous experiences. AI shows companies that have Sales Director job vacancies. The user selects the available company, which is the Rocket IT company.	Step 6: The user is in the company Rocket IT dashboard and sees various information about the company and different types of open positions. User selects job vacancies: Sales Director, which is available.
S: Digital Profile Improvement R: AI-based CV helper and resume builder and AI counselor	AI-base tool designed to assist in building careers R: AI for consultants and reach candidates	S: Bot communication elements that can personally assist R: All types of company information are available for users; Activation of a profile gives access to information; connecting to users gives more information; The more connections, the more information.
AI & ML Integration; Integration with Institutional Systems; GDPR Compliance Centralized Digital, Recruitment Strategy; User Interface (UI) & User Experience (UX)	AI-Powered Talent Acquisition; Machine Learning (ML)	Structural Framework (ATS, Communication Tools, Job Posting Systems); Security Framework (SSO, SAML)
Added Swipe, Add Portfolio, and Media		Add Swipe

Table 34. Steps 4-6 process the user journey with added elements.

Table 34 above visualized the swipe actions in Steps 4 to Step 6. This makes the selections easier to navigate.

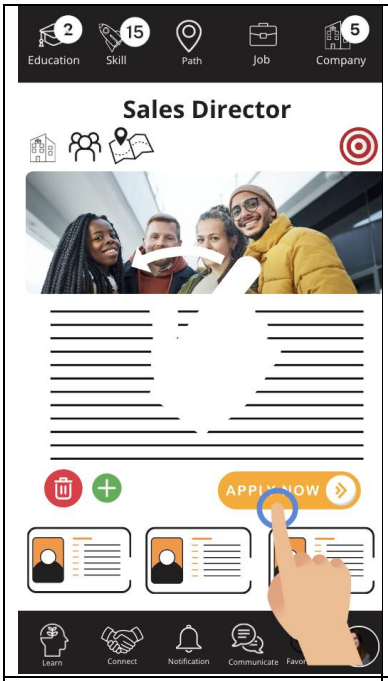
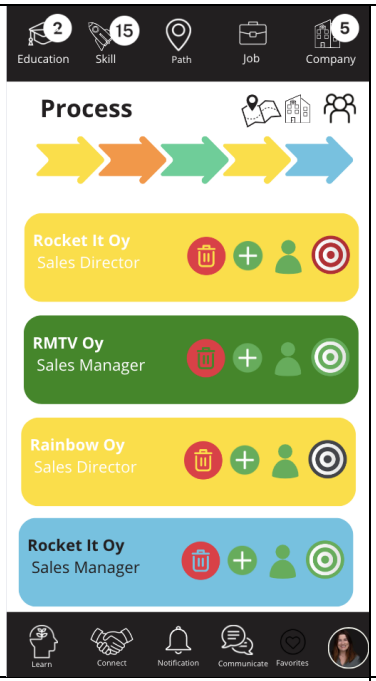
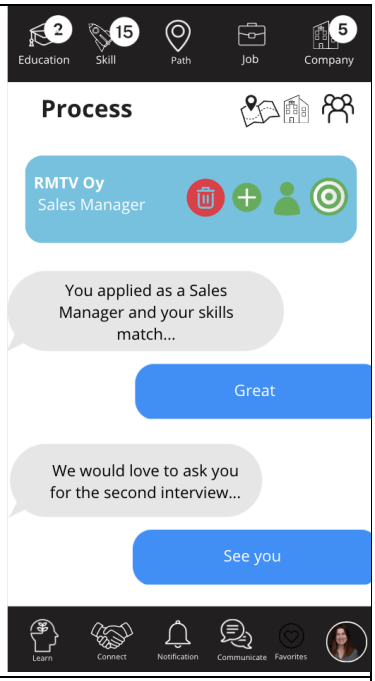
		
Step 7: The user sees the job advertisement for a Sales Director position. Even though the user knows that her skills do not match totally, the user selects apply.	Step 8: The user is shown now different sales positions in different companies to which she has applied. There is also a progress bar that shows at what stage the user is in the recruitment process. The user might also see positions of different companies where she has not applied. This data goes to the recruiter who oversees recruitment and her recruiter contacts that she has given permission to see her profile.	Step 9: Another recruiter from a company called RMTV Oy contacted her with an offer of Sales Manager that matches her profile. She speaks with the recruiter, goes through the recruitment process, and accepts the job position. The user is still connected with relevant recruiters for future career advancement opportunities.
S: LinkedIn provides access to English-speaking roles. R: Direct connection with recruiters; Path builders; and Skills recognizers	S: Network for hidden job opportunities by direct connection with recruiters R: Identifying best-fit candidates, matching talent to job needs, and improving employer branding	S: Improve matching with companies offering jobs that match skills and language R: AI Learning Module in Platform to increase engagement and skills development
AI & ML Integration; User Interface (UI) & User Experience (UX)	AI-powered talent acquisition; User Interface (UI) & User Experience (UX); Analytics & feedback tools, GDPR Compliance, Transparent Consent Protocols	Academic Faculty Involvement; Integration with Institutional Systems
Add swipe		

Table 35. Step 7-9 process user journey.

Table 35 describes the added swipe action in Step 7. However, Steps 8 and 9 stay as it is without changes and validated by the experts.

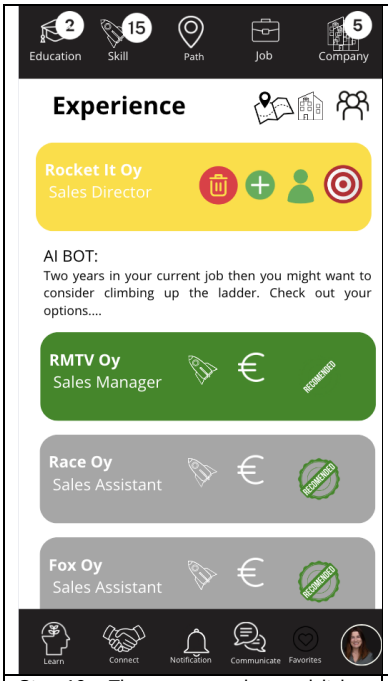
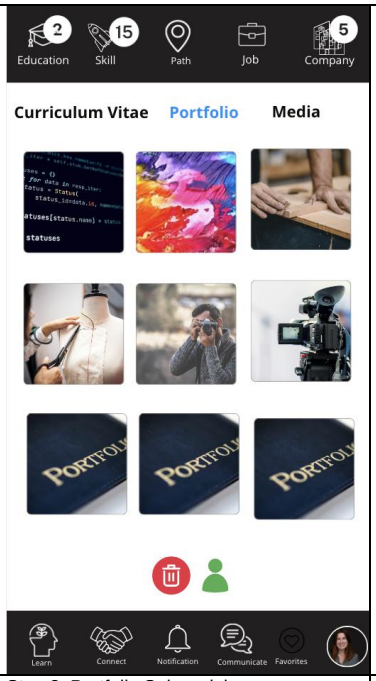
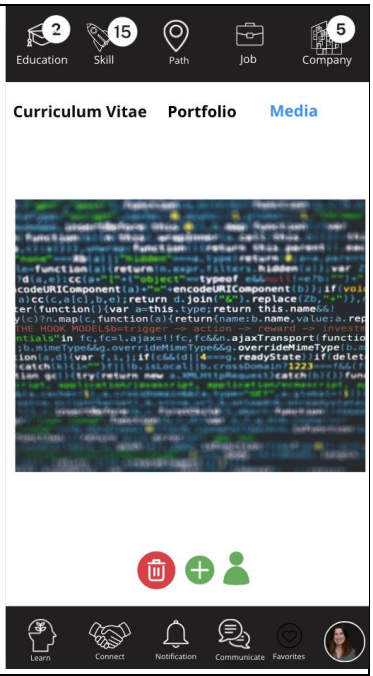
		
Step 10: The user can always visit her path/process dashboard. She can see where she is currently and her past positions. She can see what she has opted for the future, as a sales director and she can see what skills or education level she is still missing. She might opt to study in Metropolia as a master's Level.	Step 3: Portfolio Submodule The user can add more documents in the skills module where the CV, Portfolio, and media are saved safely in a vault.	Step 3: Media Submodule The user can add different types of media such as photos, videos, and documents.
R: A single platform that offers AI elements to reduce the recruitment process, improve connection and communication	Light portal to swipe left, and right kind of to have the jobs and even maybe to also the subjects for the innovation projects, and then it would be easy for students to build a profile." (R22)	Light portal to swipe left, and right kind of to have the jobs and even maybe to also the subjects for the innovation projects, and then it would be easy for students to build a profile." (R22)
Centralized Digital Recruitment Strategy; Cloud Infrastructure	AI-powered talent acquisition; User Interface (UI) & User Experience (UX); Analytics & feedback tools, GDPR Compliance, Transparent Consent Protocols	Academic Faculty Involvement; Integration with Institutional Systems. Transparent Consent Protocols
	Add Portfolio and Media	Added Swipe, Add Portfolio, and Media

Table 36. Step 10 with added submodules for Step 3.

Table 36 above describes that Step 10 has not changed through validation, but new sub-elements were added based on the experts' suggestions. Portfolio and media submodules help students who can show their skills through different projects, and it will also help recruiters select students with no work experience, but with a unique skillset. These elements add to the recruiters' options for selections and make the overall recruitment process easier, and the selection of candidates improves.

To sum up, the communication and recruitment process could be improved by different communication and media elements and a portfolio connection to UAS and recruiters.

6.3.3 Proposed “Addressing the Job Matching”

Table 37 below shows the inputs from the validation round for Addressing the Job Matching.

Table 37. Expert suggestions (findings of Data 3) for Addressing the Job Matching.

Stakeholders	Pains/Challenges	Proposed Actions (Initial Proposal-2)	Feedback from Experts on Validation	Development of the Feedback by experts (in details	Development of the Initial Proposal 2
Students	International experience does not match local needs; Limited job market; the need to accept lower roles, outside of own expertise areas	An AI-based tool designed to assist in building careers	Validated, that AI elements are doable, but understanding it makes mistakes. AI assistance in building content, but with the right keywords	“I know this AI is a bit limited, but I have been working a bit lately kind of using it to build courses and make even content I think the AI is a very good assistant, but sometimes it makes mistakes, but I think it should be. Of course, if you have the right keywords, it can classify and build that kind of profile for you. So, I think it could be kind of doable and I think it is something that is done at the moment.” (R22)	Build AI-based matchmaking tools
	Limited roles (i.e. only niche roles) for non-Finnish speakers	Contacting companies directly for jobs that match skills and language	Validated to match people through skills: Matchmaking with people who do not fit with the job or company profile	“It would be refreshing to get, let's say, people out-of-the-box people.” (R22) “Focus on the hidden job opportunities within Metropolia’s projects. These projects might offer internship possibilities, but how could we collect and organize this information internally? It would create a sort of limited audience, making it easier to use the platform to find suitable students within Metropolia for these opportunities.” (R23)	Add AI matchmaking and ML categorizing
Recruiters	Hard to find qualified candidates.	AI for consultants and reaching candidates directly	Validated, but more selection than limitation: More selection for recruiters in finding candidates	And so, kind of a good idea, not to limit too much what is suggested and to whom(R22)	Add AI matchmaking and ML categorizing

Table 37 above shows the validation outcomes for implementing AI elements for matchmaking, forecasting, and assistance. Experts agree that these are doable functions, but awareness that mistakes in implementation can happen also needs human interactions and conventions. The experts also stated the importance of a broader than a limited concept in using AI/ ML functionalities.

From the perspective of the students, the out-of-the-box approach with portfolios of creative projects can give visibility to the talents and skills of students who have less experience in the job market but already have extensive knowledge and practice in delivering skilled-based competencies. This enhances the matchmaking of jobseekers that do not fit with the job and company profile, and it also improves the current experience-based digital profiles.

From the recruiter's perspective, scanning profiles in different ways can implement their reach to various types of interesting candidates, especially candidates with the skillsets, but not job experience, candidates who are career shifters, and candidates who differ from the typical roles. This development aims to have more options and selections for the recruiters' tools that can be implemented to their longlist.

To summarize, the proposed actions addressed job mismatch challenges and recruiters through AI/ML-driven platforms are doable by focusing on selection rather than limitation and adding portfolios to improve the profiles of candidates that are out of the box.

6.4 Summary of the Final Proposals

The study suggests two final proposals: one for improving JobTeaser and the other for conceptualizing a new digital recruitment platform.

Table 38 below summarizes the final proposal-1 for Improving JobTeaser.

Table 38. Summary of the Final Proposal-1 for Improving JobTeaser.

Development Areas	Stakeholders	Pains/Challenges	Proposed Development Actions
Increasing the outreach to students and recruiters	Students	Limited accessibility (no mobile application)	▪ Integrate LinkedIn as a combinatory or complementary tool ▪ Develop a mobile version of the JobTeaser platform
		Low awareness and engagement among MBA students; Career guidance resources focusing on BBA students	▪ Introduce face-to-face introductory sessions with each new group ▪ Offer special training to improve the digital profiling skills of MBA students ▪ Encourage students to visit JobTeaser more
	Recruiters	Low awareness and engagement among Recruiters	▪ Advertise the relevant jobs more to engage both students and recruiters
		Confusing sign-up options.	▪ Finetune current JobTeaser sign-in options by providing one sign-in option for both, companies and recruiters by appointing a company coordinator
Improving Communication & Recruitment Process	Students	Unhelpful or irrelevant content (as perceived by some students)	▪ Use email campaigns carefully ▪ Improve identification of career shifters students
		Limited promotion and training about JobTeaser	▪ Introduce JobTeaser during the orientation twice (in August and October) ▪ Workshop about visible digital profiling on JobTeaser
	Recruiters	Delays in job ad approval, particularly during the summer	▪ Appoint a dedicated person to approve job advertisement publishing year-round ▪ Simplify approval processes by improving job ad modules to approve job ads, particularly during peak seasons
		The need for better structured, clear, careful (i.e. higher quality) student candidate profiles.	▪ Offer relevant training & personalized connection for a clearer candidate profile
Addressing the Job Matching	Students	Limited job vacancies (mostly outside Finland)	▪ Republish the local job vacancies from other sources, including JobTeaser job ads onto the OMA Metropolia platform
		Job offerings focusing on BBA students; few higher-level job offerings	▪ Advertise the relevant jobs more to the senior students
	Recruiters	Companies are interested to have access to the digital profiles of candidates	▪ Access to digital open profiles through open applications
		The need for better structured, clear, careful (i.e. higher quality) student candidate profiles.	▪ Offer relevant training & personalized connection for a clearer candidate profile

As seen in Table 38 above, the final proposal for improving JobTeaser suggests some actionable changes to better serve both students and recruiters, addressing specific areas for development to make the platform more accessible, useful, and user-friendly.

From the students' perspectives, first, increasing JobTeaser's reach to students could make the platform easier to access. Most students struggle with limited access because there is no JobTeaser mobile app. To solve this, the proposal suggests a mobile version of JobTeaser and/or, linking JobTeaser with LinkedIn as a combinatory or complementary tool to increase ease of use. Also, since career resources on JobTeaser are often aimed at BBA students, MBA students seem to leave. Introducing face-to-face sessions for each new MBA student group or each new student group, and special training on student candidate profile-building could raise awareness and encourage regular platform use, and career advisors encourage students to visit the JobTeaser platform more often. These actions could increase the outreach for better use of JobTeaser to students. Second, the proposal aims to improve the communication and recruitment process on JobTeaser with job ads more relevant for students. Currently, some content doesn't meet MBA students' needs, so the career center would use email campaigns carefully because excessive and sometimes irrelevant content could cause information overload, which would require unnecessary communication, that could create a waste of time and lack of confidence about the job prospects and content. For this, the career advisors could improve the identification of candidate types, for example, the career shifter type, and so the email campaign with relevant content could offer to the targeted career type with targeted content. Also, workshops and/or training during orientation could help students get to know JobTeaser, set up their profiles well, and connect with job ads that match their career goals. This hands-on support would be done two times, for example, one session in August, and another session in October, especially for international students, who sometimes would enter Finland late in October. These sessions would help students make the most of the platform. These actions could improve communication with the JobTeaser platform and job prospects, and potentially with employers and recruiters. Third, the proposal addresses job-matching challenges by increasing access to local job listings. Most jobs on JobTeaser are international or entry-level, which doesn't always match the needs of MBA students. To solve this, the proposal suggests adding more local listings from external sources by republishing, for example, copy-paste the link, onto JobTeaser and/or Metropolia's OMA system. This would give students more options that might better suit their qualifications.

From the recruiters' perspectives, first, the experts suggested increasing their awareness and engagement on JobTeaser. The career advisors advertise more of the relevant job openings to engage both groups. Also, the sign-up as a recruiter was complex which discouraged some recruiters from using with JobTeaser, experts found. They also suggested simplifying the registration process, and a company coordinator would be appointed to maintain to finetune current JobTeaser sign-in options by providing one sign-in option for both, companies and recruiters. These actions could increase the outreach for better use of JobTeaser to the recruiters. Second, simplifying the communication and recruitment process on JobTeaser is also important, especially when ad approvals are delayed during busy hiring seasons. To address this, the proposal suggests having a dedicated person handle ad approvals year-round while improving the job ads modules to approve these peak-time approvals on time. Also, helping students create clear, structured profiles could make it easier for recruiters to quickly find the right candidates, so offering relevant training and personalized networking for the personalized needs of the job prospects is recommended. These actions could improve the communication and recruitment process faster and on time, which would, in turn, make recruiters increase their awareness and engagement on the JobTeaser platform, also, they would find structured student candidate profiles, which could help recruiters find the qualified and best-fit candidates on time. Third, the recruiters suggested seeing fully digital profiles of student candidates, finding the right candidate more easily and faster on their end. Experts advised increasing the JobTeaser profiles database and giving easy review access to recruiters and companies through open applications. That might assist recruiters in quickly finding qualified and best-fit candidates. It was also suggested by the experts to have sessions like workshops and training regarding profile building, and finally, student candidate profiles would give a visible structured digital profile. This would help, in turn, recruiters view candidate profiles and reduce job versus skill mismatching. These actions could reduce the job mismatch and in turn, the recruiters would find the qualified and best-ft candidates with open personalized candidate profiles and more profiles through open applications.

In brief, the first proposal aims to make JobTeaser a practical and efficient tool for students and recruiters, helping both groups connect and meet their career goals. This proposal supports staying within the existing digital recruitment platform concept with the expected implementation of these proposed development actions.

Table 39 below summarizes Proposal-2 for conceptualizing a new digital recruitment platform as an MVP offer.

Table 39. Summary of the Final Proposal-2 for Conceptualizing a New Digital Recruitment Platform as an MVP offer.

Development Areas	Stakeholders	Pains/Challenges	Proposed Development Actions
Conceptualizing a user-centric platform	Students	A new Recruitment Platform (as using multiple platforms causes information overload)	▪ Add elements to University API to connect teachers and students together.
	Recruiters	Incomplete profiles delay hiring; Limited tools for candidate access; Long processes lead to candidate dropout; Complexity in using multiple channels; High fees restrict multi-platform access	▪ Add elements to select connections, improve data about companies, employees, applicants, and content
Improving Communication & Recruitment Process	Students	Low response rates reduce motivation; Redundant steps prolong applications	▪ Add Media elements to candidate profiles
		Online applications limit engagement; Limited face-to-face contact reduces approachability	▪ Add Portfolios in skills modules ▪ Add AI matchmaking elements
	Recruiters	Limited roles (i.e. only niche roles) for non-Finnish speakers	▪ Add AI matchmaking elements and AI-assistant
Addressing the Job Matching	Students	International experience does not match local needs; Limited job market; the need to accept lower roles, outside of own expertise areas	▪ Build AI-based matchmaking tools
		Limited roles (i.e. only niche roles) for non-Finnish speakers	▪ Add AI matchmaking and ML categorizing
	Recruiters	Hard to find qualified candidates.	▪ Add AI matchmaking and ML categorizing

As seen in Table 39 above, the proposal for conceptualizing a new digital recruitment platform proposes actionable changes to start smaller with less ambition in terms of UAS internal use by finding and connecting students to teachers with different innovation project proposals. However, there is already similar ambitious a Tinder-like recruitment platform that has been developed in Finland and Europe. The visual interface of the MVP is validated shown in Section 5.4 by validation experts, but experts added suggestions such as Portfolio and swipe left and right, which is shown in Figure 19.

Figure 19. An overview of the user journey in the MVP Prototype (Finally Proposed).

Experts agreed that the proposal for a new Tinder-like platform makes an interesting approach, which uses AI to potentially connect jobseekers and recruiters and address the challenges in finding students for projects. The first initial stage could be to test the platform internally on a smaller scale at the UAS because students often struggle to connect with the job market due to a lack of experience and networks. Adding a portfolio feature could improve connectivity with the faculty, allowing teachers to seek student groups for projects, which benefits the recruiters to have visibility of student portfolios and media uploads, providing better tools for evaluation.

Experts also agreed that improving the communication and recruitment process can be done by introducing swiping for easy browsing, portfolios to improve digital profiles for candidates with less work experience, and direct communication for groups. For recruiters, it is also important to address the challenges of low-quality profiles by offering flexible and diverse matching options. This implementation could combine UAS API and various modules in the platform.

Experts also agreed that exploring AI/ML opportunities could be a promising step for building more effective tools for addressing job mismatch challenges. Experts however highlighted the need for special development of using AI in matchmaking, forecasting, and assistance that may lead to errors, where human oversight is important and necessary. Experts also suggested considering a more holistic approach than a limiting approach in using AI/ML functionalities. Experts also hoped that a new platform could enhance the employability of candidates, which is why portfolios can be useful to showcase the skills and improve searches for suitable candidates in the new platform.

6.5 Proposed “Action Plans” for the Proposals

Table 40 below summarizes the proposed action plans for Proposal 1 (Improving the JobTeaser platform).

Table 40. Proposed “Action Plans” for Proposal-1 (Improving JobTeaser).

Stages	What	Why	How	Who	When
Discovery	Conduct user research (interviews with students, recruiters, and faculty)	Identify user needs, platform gaps, and improvement areas	Collect insights through semi-structured interviews	Researchers, Stakeholders	Q3-Q4, 2024
	Analyze current JobTeaser practices	Assess platform engagement levels and pinpoint areas for improvements	Review platform to identify low engagement points		
	Review competitor platforms (e.g. LinkedIn)	Benchmark features and services that increase engagement and usability	Analyze competitor strengths and user experience		

Design	Develop a structured email campaign and UI/UX improvements	Increase visibility, accessibility, and information dissemination for all users	Design email templates and create intuitive navigation prototypes	JobTeaser UAS admins, Career Advisors, Marketing	Q1, 2025
	Create clear, structured student profile templates	Simplify profile assessment for recruiters, improving candidate relevance	Design standardized templates emphasizing skills, experience, and media elements	JobTeaser UAS admins, Career Advisors, Marketing	
	Develop marketing content for orientation sessions and user training	Increase platform familiarity and reduce onboarding issues	Prepare materials for face-to-face and online training	JobTeaser UAS admins, Career Advisors, Marketing	
Development	Integrate LinkedIn profile links	Facilitate easier recruiter access to student backgrounds and networks	Enable LinkedIn profile linking for students' JobTeaser profiles	JobTeaser UAS admins, JobTeaser developers	Q3-Q4, 2025
	Add candidate feedback and progress tracking in the registration	Streamline onboarding, improve user experience, and reduce drop-off rates	Implement a progress bar and offer clear feedback at each registration step	JobTeaser UAS admins, IT team	
	Simplify sign-up options for recruiters and students	Reduce confusion and improve engagement	Consolidate sign-in methods for recruiters and students	JobTeaser UAS admins	
Deployment	Launch orientation workshops with personalized JobTeaser tasks	Facilitate new users' understanding and engagement	Conduct sessions during student orientation; offer refresher workshops	Career advisors, faculty	Q4, 2025 Q1, 2026
	Enable quarterly performance reviews for user engagement and platform improvement	Regularly monitor platform effectiveness and user satisfaction	Schedule quarterly review sessions, analyze engagement metrics, and gather feedback	JobTeaser UAS admins, Career Advisors	Q1, 2026
	Introduce JobTeaser improvements at annual networking events	Expand platform reach and gain visibility with potential users and industry partners	Promote JobTeaser's new features during events	JobTeaser UAS admins, Career Advisors	Q2, 2026-onwards

Table 40 above presents the proposed action plans to improve JobTeaser, which are divided into four stages — Discovery, Design, Development, and Deployment — each with the different needs of the platform to make it work better for students and recruiters.

The Discovery Stage identified what users needed and how the platform provided that to them. Interviews and surveys of students, recruiters, and faculty users provided insights into the current use of the platform, and challenges. They also identified practices and competitor platforms like LinkedIn to determine the development areas for improvement. Currently scheduled for Q3/Q4 2024, this stage provided insight into user needs and prepared the foundation for improvement areas in subsequent stages.

Using the insights collected from Discovery, the Design Stage creates workable answers. The action here is creating an email campaign to increase platform exposure, designing clear profile templates so recruiters can do quick assessments of candidates, and developing training materials for easy involvement. With these actions, the goal is to make the platform more user-friendly and engaging. This work will be led by the JobTeaser UAS administrators and career staff and is targeted for completion in Q1 2025.

The Development Stage is concerned with new features and improving existing ones. The improvements include the integration of JobTeaser profiles with LinkedIn to provide

recruiters easy access to professional history, feedback, and progress monitoring to encourage students to complete their profiles, as well as updated sign-up options for both students and recruiters. These tasks will be handled by JobTeaser UAS administrators, which is planned for Q3 and Q4 of 2025. This last part is intended to help users maximize their time on the platform, especially in the initial stages of setting up.

The Deployment Stage aims to put the improvements into practical action and keep users interacting regularly. Some examples of activities here are the orientation workshop to introduce new students to the platform and the feedback from quarterly performance reviews on usage. Secondly, the new features of JobTeaser will be marketed at annual networking events to improve its visibility and reach. Continuous process during Stage 2, which runs Q4 of 2025 through Q1 of 2026 led by career advisors to support the stakeholders.

In brief, these activities of stages are proposed to address challenges, which makes it a more viable platform for students and recruiters alike. The proposed action plan structures to provide one step after another, leading to a result that meets users better.

Table 41 below shows the Proposed “Action Plans” for Proposal-2 (Conceptualizing a New Digital Recruitment Platform as an MVP offer).

Table 41. Proposed “Action Plans” for Proposal-2 (Conceptualizing a New Digital Recruitment Platform as an MVP offer).

Stage	What	Why	How	Who	When
Discovery	Research student, recruiter, and faculty needs and challenges	Understand platform requirements and validate core functionalities	Conduct interviews, and surveys, and analyze existing platforms to identify gaps and improvement opportunities	Core team (Business, data, recruitment experts)	Q1, Winter 2025
	Outline platform objectives, expected outcomes, potential employability impact, and initial funding sources	Define platform goals, align with user needs, and identify funding opportunities	Document insights, and expected benefits, and apply for initial funding through educational/government programs	Core team with stakeholders	
Design	Create wireframes and high-fidelity (HI-FI) prototypes	Visualize platform structure, functionality, and design; refine through user feedback	Use UI/UX design tools to develop wireframes and HI-FI prototypes; conduct internal testing	Core team, UI/UX designer, students in design/media	Q1, Spring 2025
	Design modules and connectivity, integrate budget considerations	Ensure all essential features are accessible, user-friendly, and financially feasible	Iteratively refine designs with stakeholder feedback and review cost projections	Core team, UI/UX designer, core team	
Development	Select development stack and form development team, seek funding for technical requirements	Lay technical foundation and align with project goals; secure necessary funds for AI/ML and infrastructure	Choose a technology stack; build partnerships with universities for expertise and funding	Core team, AI/ML, coding, cybersecurity experts	Q2, Summer 2025
	Integrate AI/ML for matchmaking, forecasting, and candidate assistance; develop additional funding options	Improve platform functionality with AI/ML; fund additional features through partnerships, subscriptions	Develop and test AI/ML functionalities; implement swiping, communication tools, and modules	Core Team, Development team, coding, AI/ML experts	

Deployment	Launch the beta version within the university and gather user feedback	Test platform usability, gather feedback, and measure initial impact	Deploy the beta version; monitor usage data, gather feedback, and adjust features	Core Team, Development team, university community	Q3-Q4, Fall 2025
	Promote beta at the Vantaa City Integration Event, explore sponsorships	Increase visibility and attract potential external users and partners for funding support	Present platform demo and highlight benefits to potential sponsors and users	Core team, Vantaa City event organizers	Early 2026

Table 41 presents that there are five stages in building a new innovative platform. The first stage is the discovery stage, which we are now as it was described in section 5.5. This stage covered research of students, recruiters, and faculty insights about their needs and challenges. It also allows us to validate the core functionalities of the future platform as we analyze the existing platforms to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement. We have also gathered a detailed proposal by outlining objectives and expected outcomes and its potential impact on employability.

Before implementing these next stages, the core team of developing this project is essential to form. The core team might consist of three to four members with different background knowledge that are in the Business, data, and recruitment experts in the Myyrmäki Campus, a UI/UX designer from the Arabia Campus, and cybersecurity and coders from the Karamalmi campus. Lastly and most importantly AI/ML experts.

The next stages are design, development, and deployment. These can be implemented as action stages in building the new recruitment platform. The second stage of the action plan is the design stage, where we start creating wireframes and HI-FI prototypes of the platform, emphasizing UI/UX design. This allows us to design all the modules that are needed in the platform and its connectivity while working with stakeholders to iterate and test the design and give feedback. This stage has a lot of internal testing. Suggestions for working with students in design and media background studying in Arabia Campus is an asset. The implementation timeframe is Q1, spring of 2025.

The third stage of the action plan is the selection of a stack and development team by considering partnerships with universities. Building the platform's focus is on integrating AI/ML functionalities for matchmaking, forecasting, candidate assistance, and evaluation. It also implements design features such as swiping functionalities, communication tools, and modules. This stage has a lot of internal testing. Suggestions for working with students in the Karamalmi campus with coding, cloud infrastructure, device, and cybersecurity experience. The implementation timeframe is Q2, summer of 2025.

The fourth stage is the deployment stage, by launching a beta version within the university and encouraging students and faculty members to use it. This will help us monitor the platform usage. Gather feedback and analyze data to measure its effectiveness and how it improves employability. This implementation timeframe is Q3-Q4, Fall of 2025. This recruitment platform project will be reviewed quarterly to assess the performance of the application and user satisfaction by continuously gathering feedback and future updates. The beta version of the platform can be marketed in the Integration Event organized by Vantaa City in 2026, where the platform can be viewed by potential users beyond university limits, attracting international and immigrant users and potential employers to try the platform.

This type of innovation project needs funding options, which must also be considered in the first stages of project initiation. This type of funding can be explored through educational institutions, and government programs focusing on workforce development. Partnerships with local businesses that benefit from access to the platform and are willing to sponsor its development. Also implementing different subscription models or premium features for users.

7 Conclusion

This section summarizes the key findings of this study and suggests further steps for the case organization. Afterward, the section proceeds with an evaluation of the Thesis.

7.1 Executive Summary

The purpose of this thesis was to conceptualize a digital recruitment platform for MBA students at Metropolia University of Applied Sciences. The platform concept aimed to simplify student-employer connections, but the thesis also included improving upon the existing recruitment tool, JobTeaser, and current practices for visibility, skill matching, and job attractiveness as the main challenges. The thesis is part of Metropolia's interest in increasing student employment through utilizing digital platforms.

The thesis used the applied action research approach and qualitative research methods, such as semi-structured interviews with two groups of stakeholders — MBA students and recruiters, but also involved Metropolia´s staff and faculty members as experts at the later stages of the thesis. The data collection followed three steps where (i) interviews in Data 1 were conducted with users, students, and recruiters, (ii) discussions in Data 2 about the platform concept based on the perspectives of students and recruiters, and finally (iii) validation with experts as Data 3 for building the final proposal.

The literature review focused on identifying best practices and existing theoretical knowledge related to digital recruitment platforms, including operational mechanisms, platform architecture, data privacy/security, and developing a market fit via the minimal viable product. The Current State Analysis (CSA) analyzed the current recruitment platform used in Metropolia, JobTeaser, which identified accessibility, engagement & communication issues, and some skill-job matching. The findings from the CSA, together with existing knowledge from the literature, guided the proposal building by identifying where the improvements were needed. This proposal was built within the logic of a Minimum Viable Product (MVP), which focused on simplicity, user-centric design, and value creation for students and recruiters.

The thesis outcomes include two proposals: (1) Improving the JobTeaser platform, and (2) Conceptualizing a new digital recruitment platform if the intent is to develop a new platform for its students.

The first proposal outlines three development areas for the JobTeaser platform: (1) increasing outreach to students and recruiters by proposing mobile application and user-centric design; (2) improving communication and recruitment process, such as career-specific content, and AI-supported, automated workflows; (3) reducing the job mismatch through AI-recommended job matching, targeting positions suited to MBA skillsets. The proposed developments are meant to increase awareness and engagement, simplify the recruitment process, and better connect students and recruiters with suitable content and skillsets.

The second proposal attempted to outline a new digital recruitment platform, a Tinder-like app, with the goals of increasing user engagement, simplifying the recruitment process, and building student candidate profiles that better meet recruiters´ needs. This proposal incorporates AI tools, improved UI/UX features, and data analytics to help recruiters efficiently access suitable candidates while providing students with a comfortable job search experience.

Both proposals address key stakeholder needs identified through the CSA, focusing on job accessibility, awareness, engagement, job fit, and simplified recruitment processes that align with real-world needs. Both proposals were validated using internal experts in Metropolia (management, and recruitment experts). It was clear from the feedback that the new platform's user-centric and AI-driven features would more than likely resolve the challenges of not just job matching but also accessibility, awareness, and engagement. Stakeholders validated both proposals and suggested “beta testing” to refine feature elements before practically starting to develop. This served as a feedback loop to define whether the proposals were realistic and in line with Metropolia’s aims.

If implemented, this digital recruitment platform concept could improve Metropolia’s digital recruitment process, and job-matching accuracy, and increase students’ visibility to potential employers. This improvement might reach Metropolia as a digital champion university, restating its student employability and business engagement promise.

7.2 Thesis Evaluation

The thesis’s objective was to create a concept for a digital recruitment platform that would address the challenges faced by MBA students at Metropolia University of Applied Sciences regarding accessibility & engagement, communication & recruitment process, and job match between students and recruiters. This study intended to create a user-

centric platform concept that could fulfill their needs with better job matching, improved accessibility and engagement, communication and recruitment process, and providing these services in a personalized way. The thesis findings provide a structure to think about the concept of a digital recruitment platform for user awareness, engagement and communication, recruitment process, job matching, and personalized services. The study highlighted certain issues and potential improvements through data analysis, from the participant feedback and the research literature for each suggestion.

The research process provided insights into recruitment challenges faced by students and recruiters through semi-structured data collection and analysis. Using the current state analysis and conceptual framework, the study identified some areas for development within the recruitment platform. In this thesis, 12 MBA students were interviewed, but actual data (reliable, yet restricted) could reach out about their experiences with JobTeaser. As such, the results may not be considered reliable, but they can illustrate to a certain degree, the awareness and experiences of Master's level students in Business.

This study employed qualitative research methods such as semi-structured interviews and discussions with MBA students and recruiters to explore user needs in the digital recruitment platform. However, using a mixed-method research approach — combining quantitative surveys with interviews — could balance views. Including quantitative data might further enrich the analysis of user needs for an insight into user experiences and platform effectiveness.

The quality of this thesis is considered through four key evaluation criteria: validity, reliability, logic, and relevance. The study shows *validity* by aligning with existing theories on digital recruitment platforms that are consistent between the study's practical findings and theoretical concepts. The careful selection of research tools (i.e. interviews and literature comparisons) relevant to the study's focus improved construct validity. Also, external validity could benefit from a participant base. The platform's concept applicable beyond an academic concept includes external industry recruiters.

The consistent data collection methods and systematic content code method supported *reliability.* Transparent data handling ensures accurate documentation of findings, as noted by Quinton and Smallbone (2008). The clear methods used in interviews contributed to reliability across stakeholders' perspectives.

The study followed *a logical structure*, with each stage dependent on prior findings. This helped clarify the link between identifying recruitment challenges, exploring relevant theories, and proposing developments. This logical structure of this research supports the process recommended by Thietart (2001) to show clarity and coherence. This structure helps readers to follow the research process to understand how findings link to proposed developments.

This thesis, reports a gap in digital recruitment by proposing developments, are specifically for MBA students. The findings align with the case organization's interest, (i.e. digital champion, the increasing need for personalized job matching, and increased user engagement). Aligning research objectives with real-world needs is considered relevant (Thietart 2001), and this is used here to understand user-centric recruitment requirements.

Two limitations in the study are found to its relevance and impact. First, while the study identified the importance of communication between students and recruiters, future studies of cross-functional communication among recruiters, career advisors, and platform developers could produce further findings for future recruitment processes. Second, while the thesis follows a conceptual base, further study could include usability testing to assess its practical functionality and accessibility, as suggested by Creswell (2018). For this, future research could improve the platform’s practical relevance and applicability within a digital recruitment space.

To summarize, this study provides a structured method for conceptualizing a digital recruitment platform that identifies the needs of MBA students and recruiters. The findings highlight a user-centric platform concept that suggests practical improvements in awareness & engagement, communication & recruitment process, and job matching. While the research might achieve its objectives, increasing the scope could further improve its relevance and universality.

7.3 Closing Words

This thesis has highlighted the pivotal role a digital recruitment platform can play in connecting students and recruiters efficiently. It addresses the key challenges of employability, accessibility, awareness, and engagement and puts forward a practical concept that seeks to bridge opportunity with talent in ways that matter.

Here the solutions and concepts are proposed to meet the real needs of both students looking for relevant career paths, and recruiters who need better mechanisms to identify candidates who will do well in those roles. Using the perspectives of end-users, this study proposes improvements that can facilitate a streamlined recruitment system for all stakeholders.

As this study comes to an end, it leaves a basis for further development and research into the future of recruitment in the digital space. These insights are shared not only to support developments but also to inspire continued research to improve how digital recruitment platforms serve academic institutions and professional communities.

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ATTACHMENT to the Master´s Thesis

WRITTEN STATEMENT
on the use of AI-based tools in this thesis

by M M Mofiz Uddin & Mae Lehto, students of BI Master´s Degree Programme

Thesis title: Conceptualizing a Digital Recruitment Platform for MBA Students at Metropolia University of Applied Sciences

According to the *"Guidance for addressing the use of AI-based tools in studies at Metropolia Business School (for written submissions)"* from August 2023, I make this statement on the use of AI-based tools in my submitted Master´s thesis.

1) Which AI-bases large language models or other AI-based tools I used
ChatGPT, Grammarly, Canva and Turnitin

2) In which parts of the thesis which tools were used, and for which tasks *(please make a list)*
- *Grammarly for transcription of interviews and grammar errors*
- *ChatGPT and Canva for meaning, definitions and processes*
- *Grammarly for checking grammar, correct grammar as well as check plagiarism.*
- *Turnitin to check plagiarism*

3) What portion of the text was helped with these tools, for each use
- ChatGPT was used to understand meaning, definitions and processes
- Canva was used to understand meaning, definitions and processes
- Grammarly was used to find spelling mistakes, corrections as well as plagiarism
- *Turnitin to check plagiarism (7% similarity found)*

4) Which prompts were asked, exactly *(please indicate the page number in the text where used)*
- *Grammarly was used in citations when fixing grammar in video transcriptions. These texts where used in section 4, 5 and 6.*
- *Prompts used in Canva where translate the text from English to Finnish, simplify the language, summarize the sentences used in section 4,5 and 6.*

5) Here, We describe what continues an ethical and reliable use of AI-based tools that I used *(use, for example, the recommended documents from "MBS Guidance" referred to above)*
- *We used AI for understanding definitions and process, which was not familiar as well to check and correct grammar mistakes. All the words in the thesis are written with my own words without relying on AI-based tools.*

6) Here, we describe how ethically and reliably I used the AI-based tools in my thesis submission

This written statement makes part of my thesis and is done to help in evaluation and assessment.

Vantaa 20.11.2024
(Data and place)

_____
(Signature) M M Mofiz Uddin

_____
(Signature) Mae Lehto