

# Star Learners App and Responsive Website

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Karen Liang

# Project overview



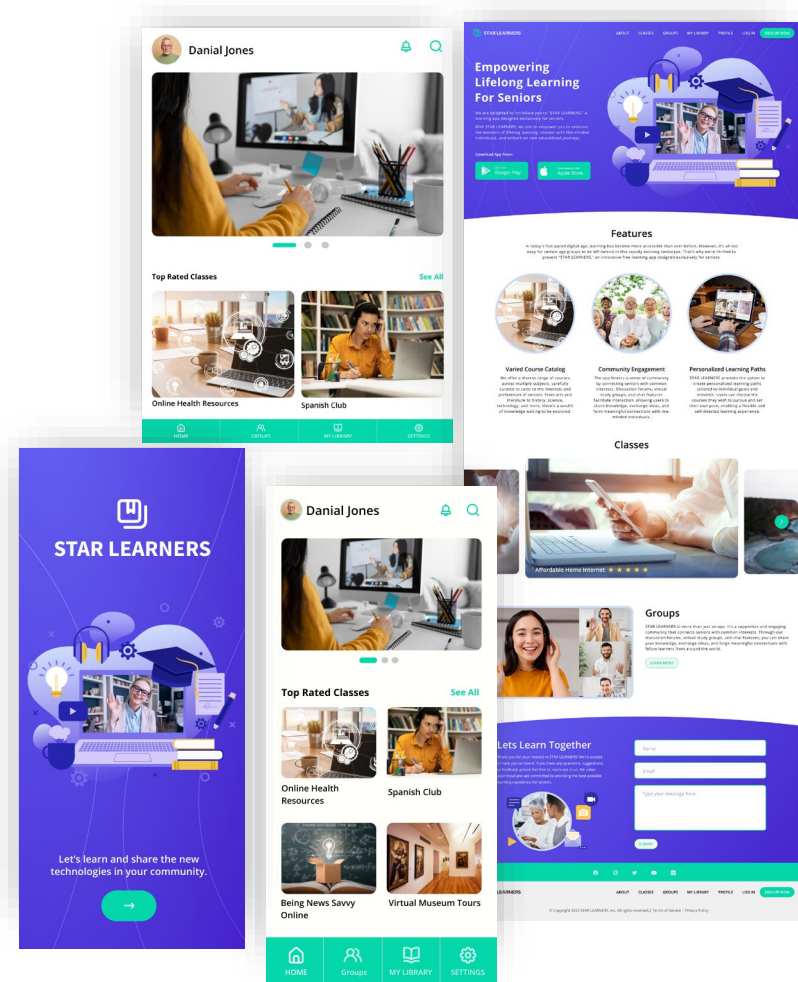
## The product:

Star Learners is a California-based organization focused on senior community. The organization needs a tool that helps senior people learn and share the new technologies in their community. Star Learners' primary target users include senior adults who are interested in online education and would like to interact with each other and sharing their experience and wisdom.



## Project duration:

July 2022 to December 2023



# Project overview



## The problem:

While seniors are generally considered “late adopters” for most technology, more and more older people are beginning to embrace the digital age. Learning how to use computers and smartphones isn't always second-nature to seniors. Some find it intimidating or just plain frustrating. Others are eager to learn how to use the devices but are concerned about the associated costs.



## The goal:

Design an app that will provide free courses to seniors who interested in gaining knowledge about new technologies, healthy living, and financial matters. Staying in touch with friends and loved ones is beneficial to the mental health of seniors, and with today's digital devices, it is easier than ever to keep connected.

# Project overview



## My role:

UX designer leading the app and responsive website design from conception to delivery



## Responsibilities:

Conducting interviews, paper and digital wireframing, low and high-fidelity prototyping, conducting usability studies, accounting for accessibility, iterating on designs, determining information architecture, and responsive design.

# Understanding the user

- User research
- Personas
- Problem statements
- Competitive audit
- Ideation

# User research: summary



I used Star Learners data to develop interview questions, which were then used to conduct user interviews. Most interview participants would like to become more comfortable with technology and share their knowledge to the community. The feedback received through research made it very clear that these communities are exploring creative new ways to meet their residents' desire for greater connectivity.

# Persona 1: Thierry

## Problem statement:

Doris has a hard time staying motivated to complete coursework, also she is not used to learning in an online environment.



**Doris Graham**

**Age:** 68

**Education:** College

**Hometown:** Dallas, TX

**Family:** Married

**Occupation:** Retired

“I feel overwhelmed or intimidated by the learning materials or course content.”

## Goals

- Staying mentally stimulated and engaged in meaningful activities.

## Frustrations

- Difficulty communicating with instructors or getting timely feedback on assignments.

The creation of in-home learning application aims to enhance the quality of life for older adults by providing greater ease, safety, and engagement.

# Persona 2: Cam

## Problem statement:

Robert has limited experience with technology and struggles to navigate online learning platforms.



**Robert Smith**

**Age:** 73

**Education:** High School

**Hometown:** Hailey, ID

**Family:** Married

**Occupation:** Retired

“I aspire to stay updated and be an active participant in society by continuously learning new things.”

## Goals

- Improving digital literacy skills and gaining confidence in using technology.

## Frustrations

- Technical difficulties or challenges with using digital devices and online platforms.

The adoption of new technologies can present various barriers and challenges for older adults, such as physical limitations and financial constraints.



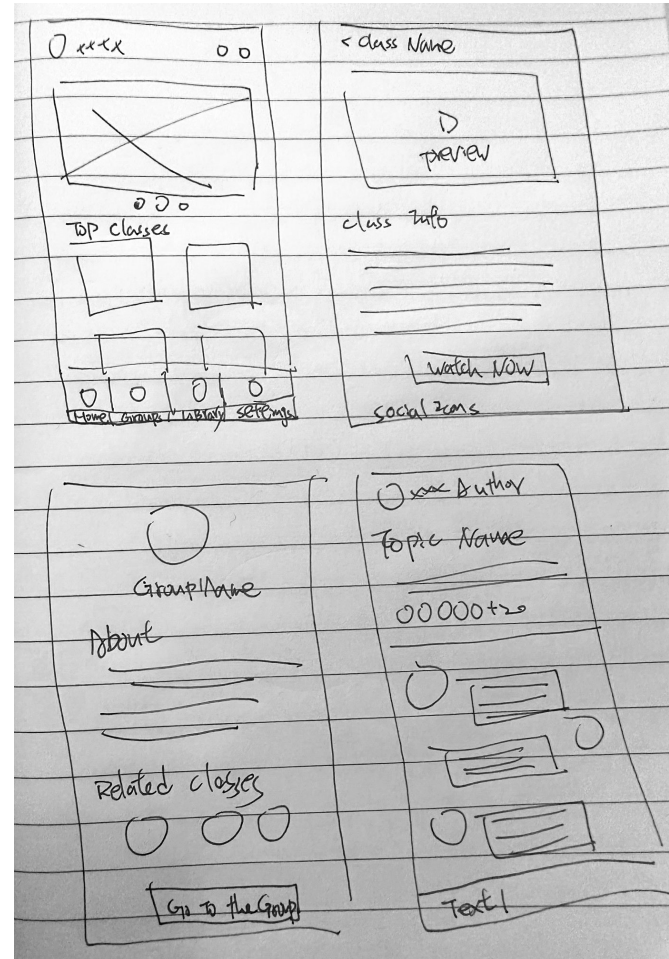
# Competitive audit

An audit of a few competitor's products provided direction on gaps and opportunities to address with the Star Learners app.

Competitive audit								
Competitive audit goal: Identify and understand the effectiveness of products and features currently used to offer senior online courses.								
General information								
Competitor type	Location(s)	Product offering	Price	Website	Business size	Target audience	Unique value proposition	
seniorplanet	Direct	Online	A website Learning Community for Older Adults	\$	seniorplanet.org	Medium	people aged 60 and over	Connecting Older Adults to Tech, and
eomega	Direct	Online	a website for Live & On-Demand courses	\$	www.seniorlifestyle.com	Small	a community of lifelong learners	Omega provides hope and healing for individuals and society
aarp.org	Indirect	Online	a website that connects the senior community	0	www.aarp.org	Large	AARP members	empowering Americans 60 and older to choose how they live as they age.
Competitive audit								
First impressions								
Desktop website experience			App or mobile website experience		Features		Accessibility	
seniorplanet	Great		Great		Outstanding		Good	
eomega	Needs work		Okay		Okay		Outstanding	
aarp.org	GOOD		Good		Outstanding		Needs work	
Competitive audit								
JX (rated: needs work, okay, good, or outstanding)								
Navigation			Visual design			Content		
seniorplanet	Outstanding		Brand identity			Tone		Descriptiveness
eomega	Needs work		Outstanding			Clean, conversational tone that aligns well with		Outstanding
aarp.org	Good		Okay			Formal, to-the-point language. Could be more		Okay
			Good			Formal but friendly. Works with		Good

# Ideation

I did a quick ideation exercise to come up with ideas for how to address gaps identified in the competitive audit. My focus was specifically on **courses and community features**.

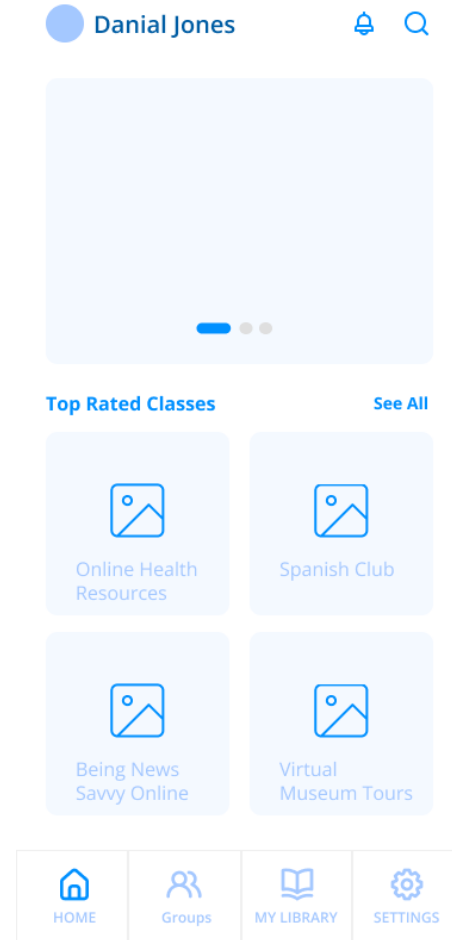




# Digital wireframes

After ideating and drafting some paper wireframes, I created the initial designs for the Star Learners app. The primary emphasis of these designs is to provide users with free courses, enabling them to acquire new knowledge and skills.

Utilizing expansive visuals to present the course catalog in a user-friendly manner, enhancing both visibility and accessibility.



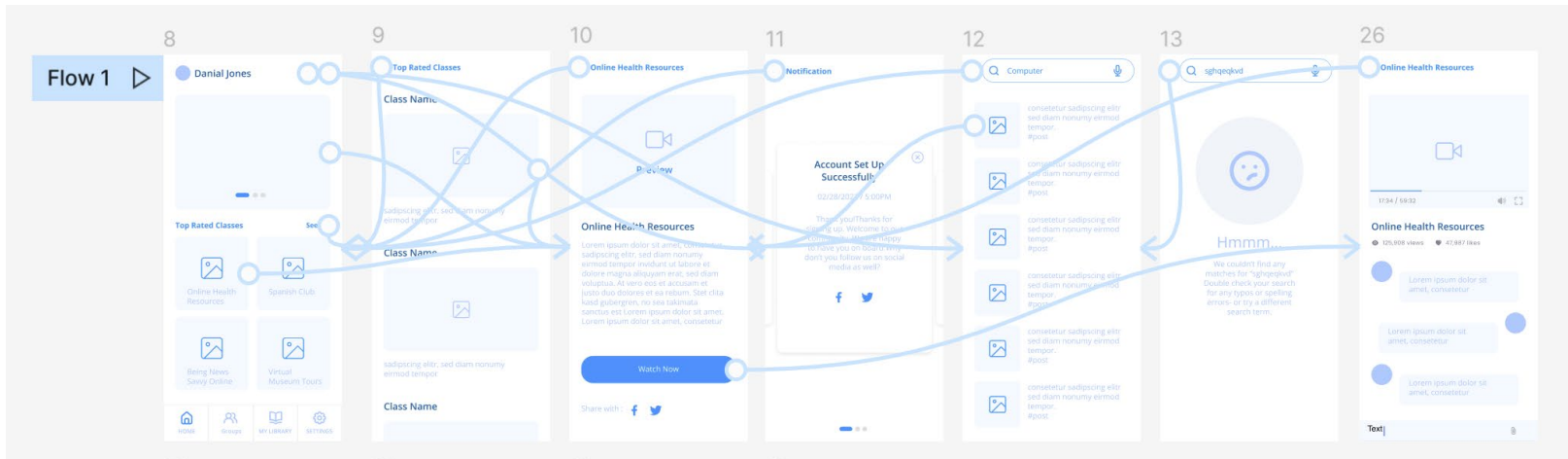
Easy access to app features



# Low-fidelity prototype

To prepare for usability testing, I created a low-fidelity prototype that connected the user flow of viewing an selected class.

View [Star Learner's low-fidelity prototype](#)



# Usability study: parameters



## Study type:

Unmoderated usability study



## Location:

USA, California, remote



## Participants:

9 participants



## Length:

30-60 minutes

# Usability study: findings

These were the main findings uncovered by the usability study:

1

## Classes

People desire convenient access to find and view the learning classes they prefer.

2

## Join Groups

People have a desire to participate in groups alongside their friends.

3

## Sign In

People are averse to intricate sign-in procedures.

# Refining the design

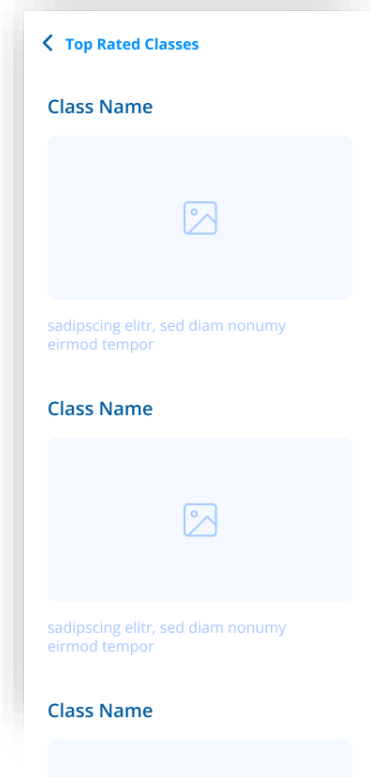
- Mockups
- High-fidelity prototype
- Accessibility



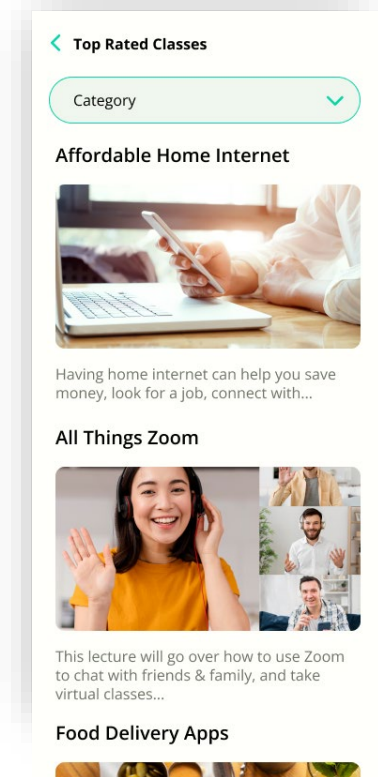
# Mockups

Based on the insights from the usability studies, I implemented design modifications, such as adding a class category filter, to enhance the user experience on the top-rated classes screen. This new feature allows users to easily browse and explore all the available classes based on their preferred categories.

## Before usability study



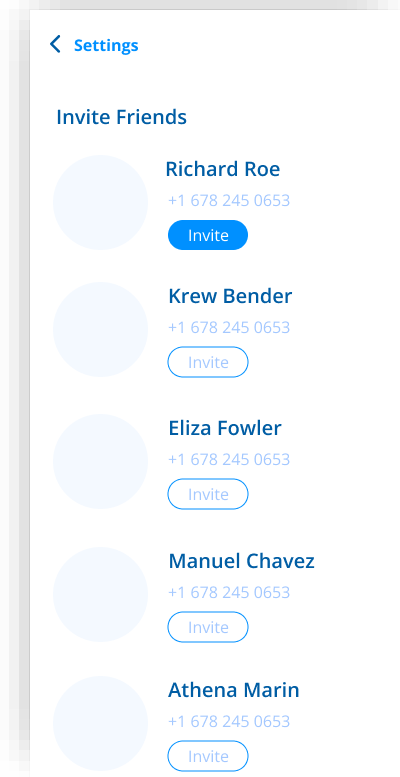
## After usability study



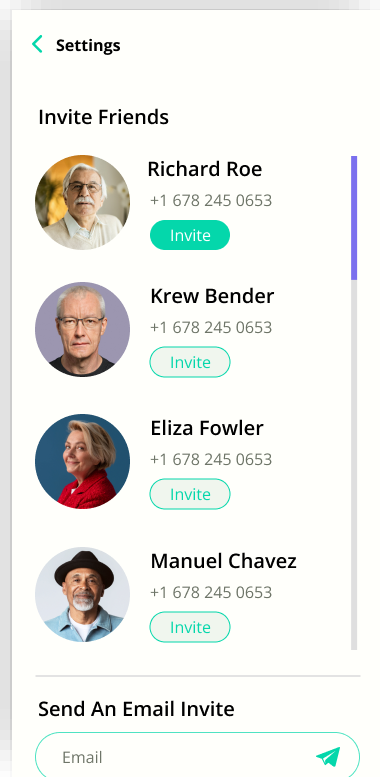
# Mockups

I integrated an email invite feature to facilitate the process of adding new friends. Users can now send email invitations to their contacts, making it convenient to expand their social network and connect with others on the platform.

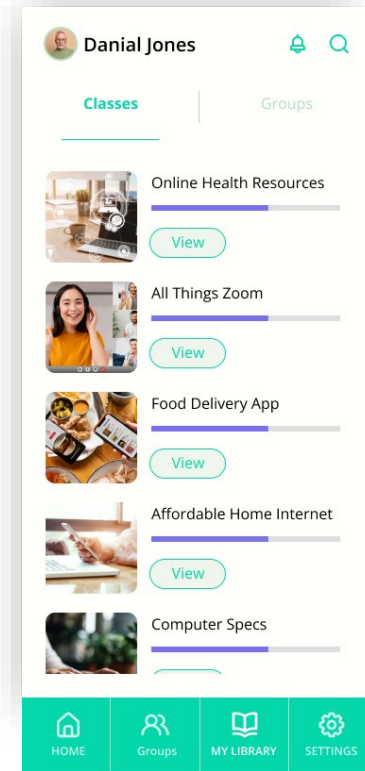
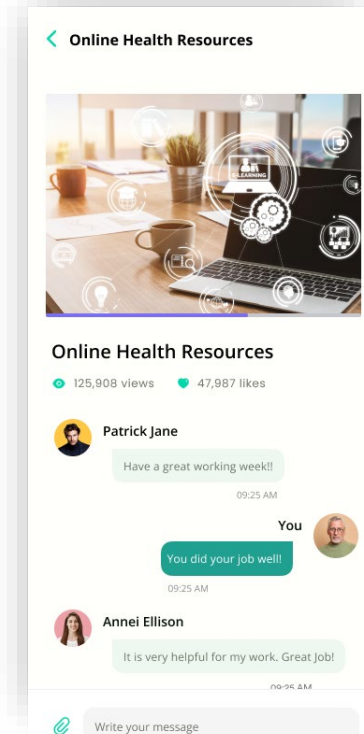
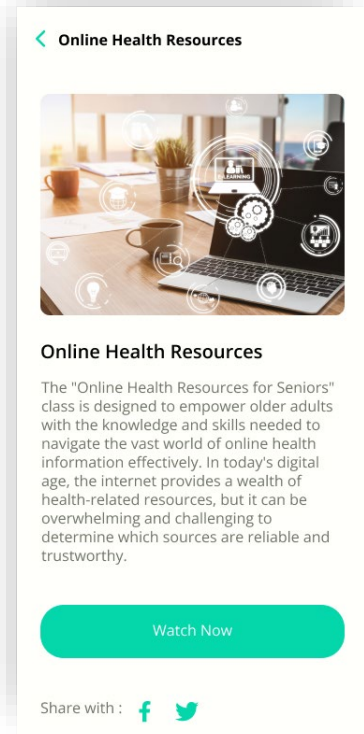
## Before usability study



## After usability study



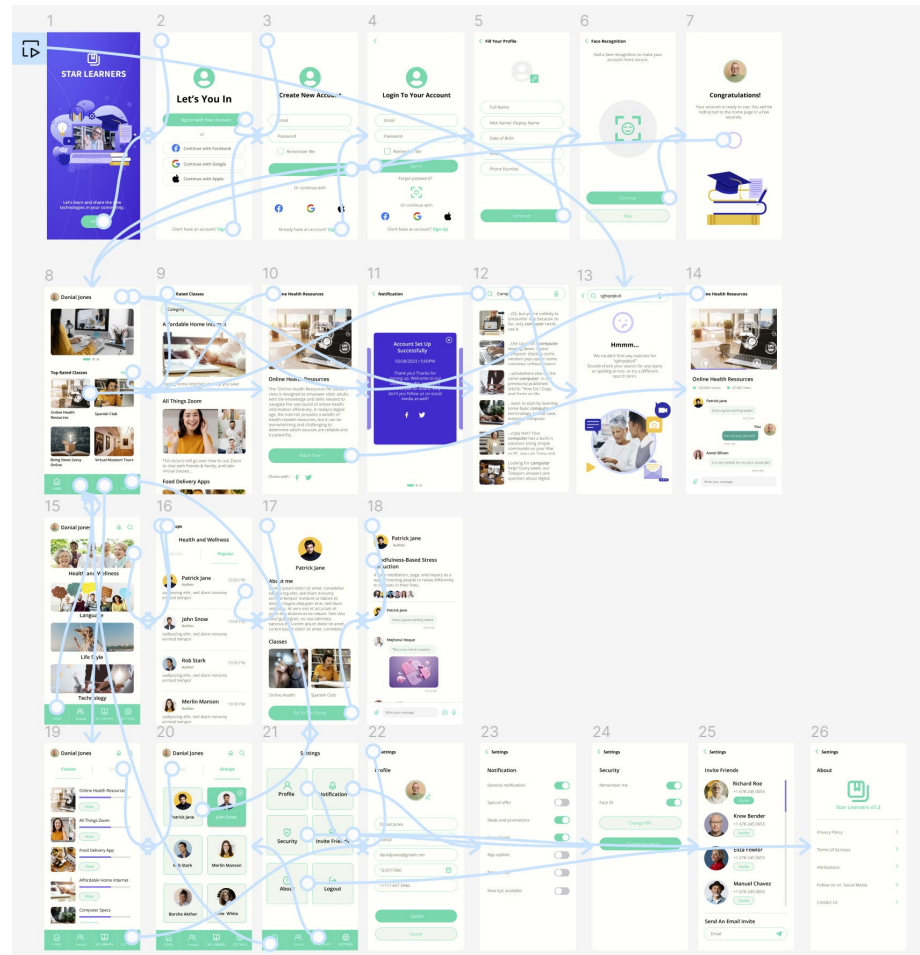
# Mockups



# High-fidelity prototype

The high-fidelity prototype followed the same user flow as the low-fidelity prototype, including design changes made after the usability study.

View the [Star Learner's high-fidelity prototype](#)



# Accessibility considerations

1

Ensure that the app's text is legible by using a sufficiently large font size and high contrast between text and background. This helps users with visual impairments or age-related vision changes to read the content easily.

2

Keep the app's layout clean and uncluttered, with clearly defined sections and intuitive navigation. Avoid complex or confusing designs that may make it challenging for seniors to understand and interact with the app.

3

Provide clear and concise instructions throughout the app to guide seniors on how to use different features and navigate the app's functionalities. Use simple language and avoid jargon or technical terms.

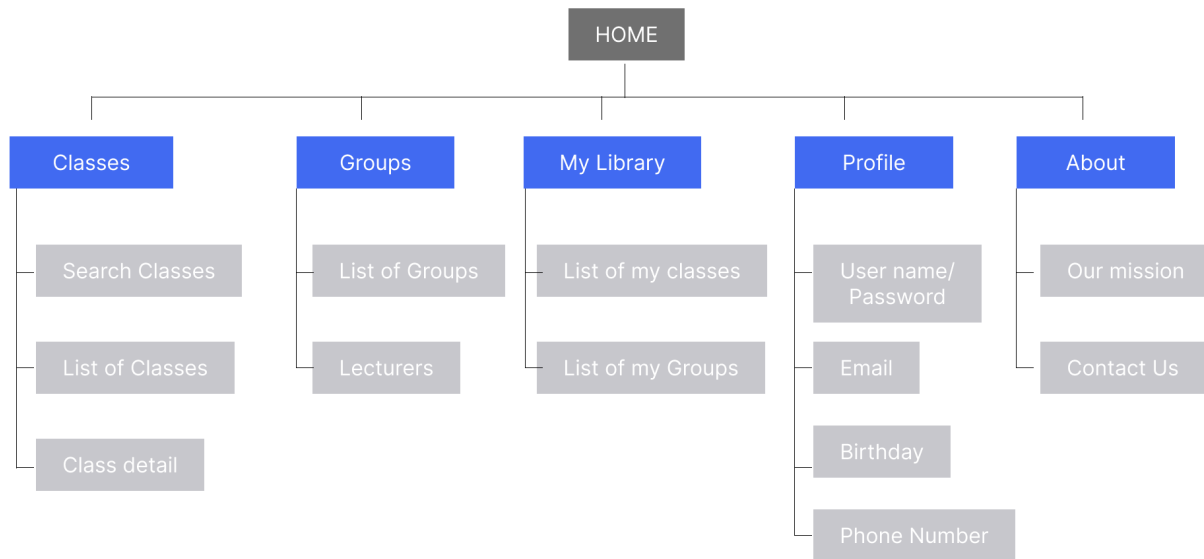
# Responsive Design

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- Information architecture
- Responsive design

# Sitemap

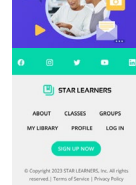
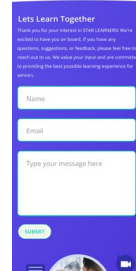
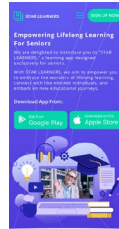
With the app designs completed, I started work on designing the responsive website. I used the Star Learners sitemap to guide the organizational structure of each screen's design to ensure a cohesive and consistent experience across devices.



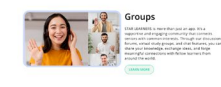
# Responsive designs

The designs for screen size variation included mobile, tablet, and desktop. I optimized the designs to fit specific user needs of each device and screen size.

## Mobile website



## Tablet



## Desktop





# Going forward

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- Takeaways
- Next steps

# Takeaways



## Impact:

Star Learners has the potential to positively impact seniors' personal growth, mental stimulation, social connections, and access to educational opportunities. By tailoring the content to meet their specific needs, it can effectively support their lifelong learning journey.



## What I learned:

Designing for seniors requires a deep understanding of their needs, preferences, and limitations. I likely learned the importance of conducting user research and incorporating user feedback to create a user-centered design that addresses their specific requirements.

# Next steps

1

Conduct usability testing with senior users at different stages of the design process. Collect feedback on the app's usability, accessibility, and overall user experience. Iterate and refine the design based on user feedback to continuously improve the app's usability and effectiveness.

2

Maintain effective communication and provide clear design specifications, assets, and guidelines to facilitate the development process.

3

Encourage user feedback and actively collect insights to identify areas for further improvement. Continuously iterate and update the app based on user feedback and evolving needs.

# Let's connect!



Thank you for your time reviewing my work on the Star Learners app! If you'd like to see more or would like to get in touch, my contact information is provided below.

Website: [karenliang.com](https://karenliang.com)