

Usability Testing: Remote Moderated

DemocracyLab: User Flow for Reviewing a Volunteer

Report by Hakki Erol, Hilary Zalon, Ashley Drewes

May 2021

Introduction

After reviewing the current process to Review a Volunteer in Figma, Democracy Lab's UX designers commented on a number of potential friction points.

Usability testing was performed to confirm these potential issues and identify any other challenges that our designers might have missed.

The goal is to present these findings, along with recommendations for improvements that can improve the usability of this process and increase the retention rate of DemocracyLab users.

Testing Objective & Methodology

Testing Objective

- Discover potential friction points for users during the VOLUNTEER REVIEW user flow in order to improve usability of the process and increase retention rate of DemocracyLab users.

Methodology

- Remotely moderated tests were administered via video call, with participants asked to review a volunteer after receiving an email from DemocracyLab.
- These findings were matched against comments from DemocracyLab UX Designers¹ to compile findings.

Participants

A total of 8 participants were tested between 3/18/2021 and 4/30/2021.

7 participants were identified as a “less technical” user, while 1 participant qualified as a “more technical” user.

Throughout the report, these user personas will be referred to with these icons:  

Designers also commented on this user flow and will be noted with this icon: 

Less Technical Users

Gender	Age	Profession	Country
Female	28	UX Student	Norway
Male	45	Graphic Designer	Germany
Female	31	UX Student	Germany
Female	30	UX Student	Spain
Female	30	UX Student	USA
Female	38	Speech Language Pathologist	USA
Male	34-44	Sr, Consultant	Germany

More Technical Users

Gender	Age	Profession	Country
Male	44	Web Developer	Hungary

Findings

A number of our designers' initial findings were confirmed through testing, along with new issues introduced by testers, for a total of:

3 High Priority Issues

2 Medium Priority Issues

2 Low Priority Issues

Results by Priority

High Priority

1. Link in email takes users to the project profile page; users expected to be taken to a 'volunteer review' page.
2. 'Waiting for Confirmation' section is not noticeable, doesn't match expected terminology
3. Volunteer profile page lacks actionable tasks; users wanted buttons to approve/reject volunteer.
4. Buttons on project profile page (both when logged out and logged in) are irrelevant to task and confusing.

Medium Priority

1. Users would like to see a success/confirmation message after approving - or rejecting - a volunteer.

Low Priority

1. Review 'pop-up' from 'Waiting for Confirmation' section lacks actionable buttons.
2. Users would like visible notification - on the My Projects page (Owned Projects section) that there are volunteers waiting to be reviewed.

What is included on each slide

ISSUE noted by testers and UX designers.

RECOMMENDATION based on feedback, knowledge of DLab site, and UX best practices.



Image of issue with list of testers and designers who commented.

Related heuristic, based on those listed in the [appendix](#).

Related User Feedback

Quote from (or observation of) tester related to issue.

Quote from (or observation of) tester related to issue.

Quote from (or observation of) tester related to issue.

  *Note of which tester(s) commented on issue.*

 *Note that UX designer(s) commented on this issue.*

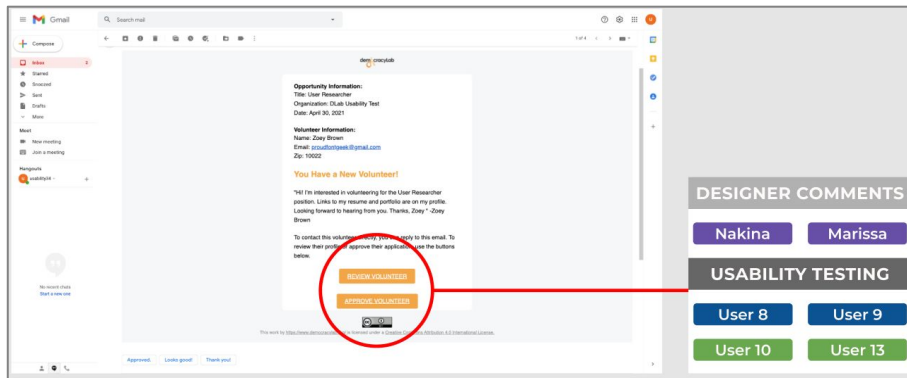
High Priority: Link in Email

Status as of 9/15/21:
**Short Term Fix
Implemented**

ISSUE: Testers expected link to take them to a volunteer review page, not the project profile page. Even though user needed to log in, they were not taken to a login screen.

RECOMMENDATION: Take users directly to a new "Volunteer Review" page - or add approval functionality to the volunteer's profile page. If user needs to log in, bring them to a login screen and then take them *directly* to the action they clicked through to complete.

Short Term Fix: Change link in email to say 'Review on Project Profile' and move the volunteer review section higher on page.



Related heuristics:

Error Prevention

Recognition Rather than Recall

"Don't make me think."

Match Between System/Real World

Related User Feedback

Expected the 'Review Volunteer' link in the email would take her directly to a volunteer review page - not the main project page.

Was confused when he was sent to the project landing page (from email) and not a page for the volunteer who he was reviewing. Expected to be sent to the profile or application for the volunteer (mentioned in the email).

Expected link in email to take him to a page to review the volunteer for the role they are interested in. Not the project main page.



Both user personas commented on this issue.



DLab UX Designers commented on this issue.

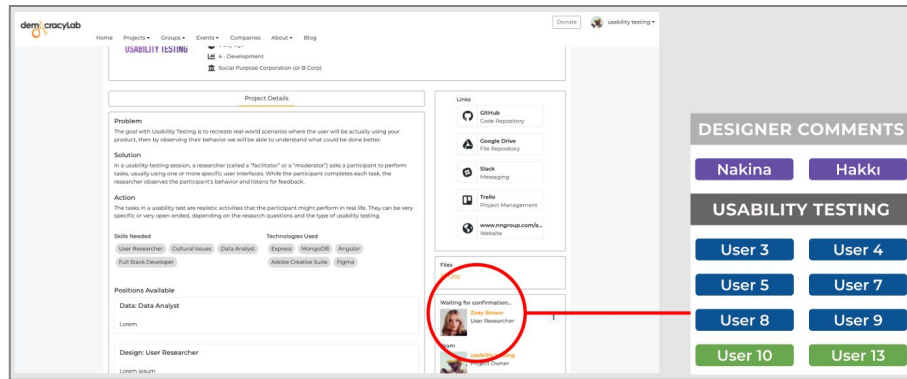
High Priority: Project Profile 'Waiting for Confirmation' S

Status as of 9/15/21:
**Short Term Fix
Implemented**

ISSUE: Once users landed here from the email, they were confused about what to do next. The 'Waiting for Confirmation' section is not visually apparent. Users expected section name to be parallel to terms used on email (Review Volunteer). Page lacked visual hierarchy to guide users to complete their task.

RECOMMENDATION: Ideally, add a 'Volunteer Review' page (or add buttons to Volunteer profile) that is accessible through a button on the project profile page.

Short Term Fix: Change name of section (to 'Review Volunteers', 'Volunteers Waiting for Review', or similar) and move up on page.



Related heuristics: Error Prevention Recognition Rather than Recall

"Don't make me think." Match Between System/Real World

Related User Feedback

- Waiting for confirmation is not noticeable
- Waiting for approval section does not easily noticeable. A notification icon/badge at the navbar would be nice.
- Waiting for confirmation is not clear. Is it for volunteers or...?
- Instead of "waiting for confirmation..." "Ready for review". "Action needed" maybe.
- Thinks this should be its own page - or moved to the top of the page - with the menu items visible (instead of hidden behind the 3 dots). Recommended highlighting the current volunteer being reviewed.
- She prefers an individual page to review volunteers. A button (review volunteers) to lead that page. And a list of volunteers on that page.

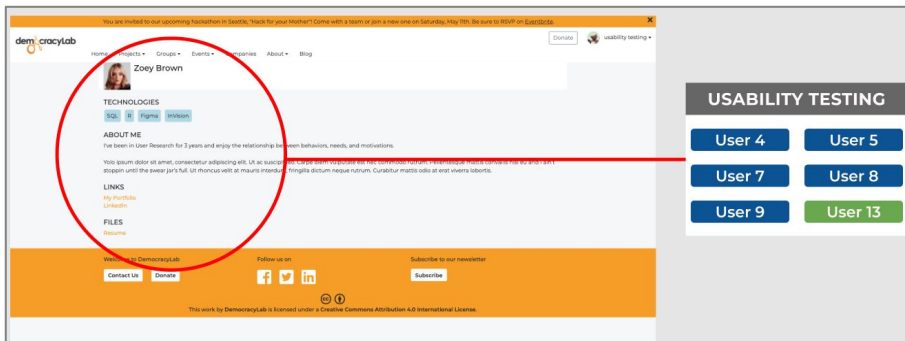
LT MT Both user personas commented on this issue.

UXD DLab UX Designers commented on this issue.

High Priority: Volunteer Profile

Status as of 9/15/21:
In Progress

- ISSUE:** Once user found section and clicked on volunteer to open their profile page, they did not know what to do next. They were expecting clear approve/disapprove buttons.
- RECOMMENDATION:** Offer the menu options (that are currently available the kebab menu of the 'Waiting for Confirmation' section) directly on the volunteer profile page so user can approve/contact volunteer from that page.



Related User Feedback

Would have preferred to see an Approve/Disapprove button on the Volunteer Profile page.

Thinks info provided on volunteer is helpful but doesn't see where to Approve or Disapprove. Eventually finds it after fumbling around and going back to product page, but would have preferred to see Approve/Disapprove button with volunteer info.

Would like more visible green/red buttons to easily see where to approve of volunteer.

LT **MT** Both user personas commented on this issue.

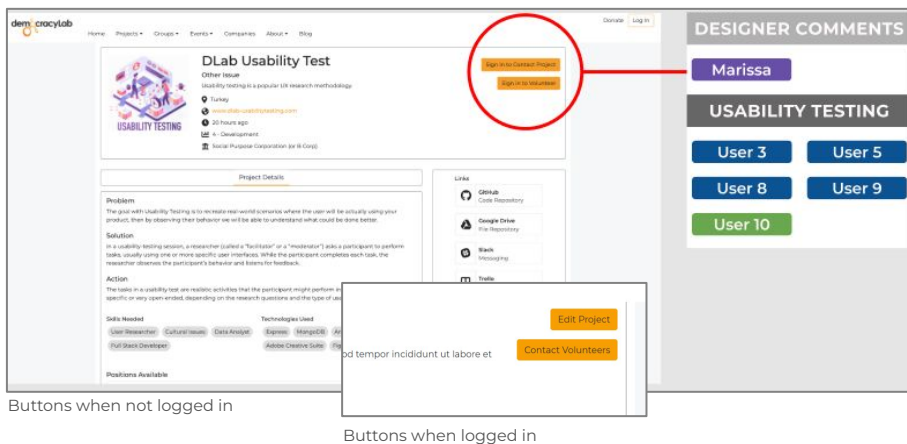
Related heuristics: **Error Prevention** **Flexibility & Efficiency of Use**

Match Between System/Real World

High Priority: Buttons of Project Profile Page

Status as of 9/15/21:
In Progress

- ISSUE:** Users saw buttons on the project profile page that were not relevant to the current task, whether not logged in ('Sign in to Contact Project' & 'Sign in to Volunteer') or logged in ('Edit Project' and 'Contact Volunteers'). Some users clicked on 'Contact Volunteers' to review/ approve. Users were looking for a 'Review Volunteers' button.
- RECOMMENDATION:** Add a 'Review Volunteers' (or similar) button to top right of project profile page if volunteers are pending approval. Take users to log in screen (and then directly to intended destination) if they need to log in.



Buttons when not logged in

Buttons when logged in

Related User Feedback

Took some time to search the page for hints, was confused by 'Sign In to Contact Project' or 'Sign in to Volunteer' buttons. Clicked 'Contact Volunteers'.

He clicked on contact volunteers first when he is trying to review/approve volunteers.

Would like to see a button on top right of main project page that says something like 'Needs Approval'.

LT MT Both user personas commented on this issue.

UXD DLab UX Designers commented on this issue.

Related heuristics: Error Prevention "Don't make me think."

Match Between System/Real World

Medium Priority: Success/Confirmation Message

Status as of 9/15/21:
In Progress

ISSUE: Would like visual confirmation after volunteer is approved (or rejected).

RECOMMENDATION: Add success/confirmation message to let user know that volunteer has been approved (and moved to 'Team'). Or rejected.

No image available since confirmation does not currently exist.

Related User Feedback

Would like success/confirmation message after approval.

 *More technical users commented on this issue.*

 *DLab UX Designers commented on this issue.*

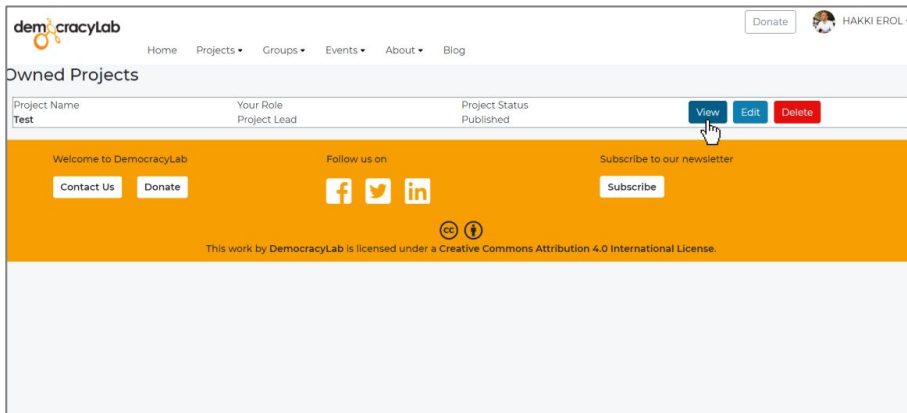
Related heuristic: Visibility of System Status

Low Priority: My Projects Page Notification

Status as of 9/15/21:
Not Yet Started

ISSUE: Lack of visible notification/messaging that there are volunteers waiting for review/approval.

RECOMMENDATION: Add clear notification/messaging that there are volunteer(s) needing review.



RELATED USER FEEDBACK

Maybe a notification about the volunteers applied to the project next to each project should be good.

She did not see the notification message at the top. Maybe a notification under each project or a status button might be better.

LT *Less technical users commented on this issue.*

UXD *DLab UX Designers commented on this issue.*

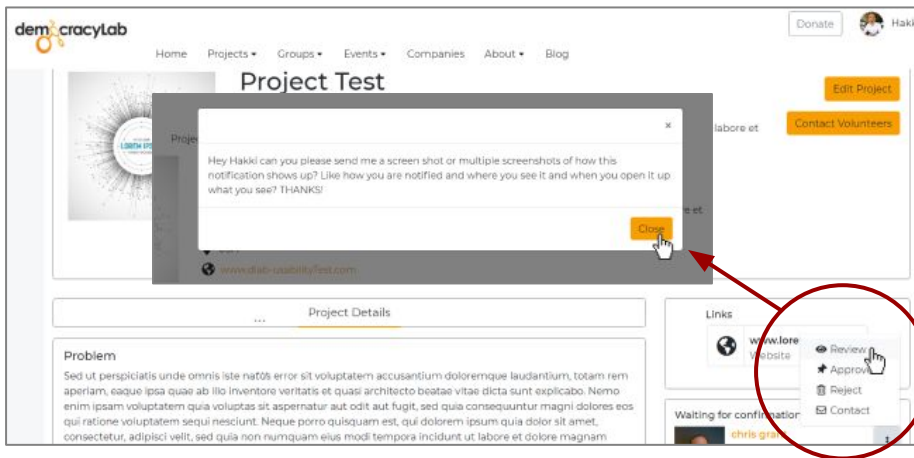
Related heuristic: **Visibility of System Status**

Low Priority: Review 'Pop-Up' from Kebab Menu in 'Waiting for Confirmation' section

ISSUE: Pop-up message from volunteer is only visible if user clicks on 'Review' from "kebab" menu in 'Waiting for Confirmation' section. Many users clicked on volunteer name and were taken to volunteer's profile page (without even seeing message). Pop-up only has 'Close' button. No link to profile or ability to approve/reject.

RECOMMENDATION: 'Review' link should open volunteer profile with option to see this message some other way.

Short Term Fix: Add link to volunteer profile.



RELATED USER FEEDBACK

There should be approve and reject buttons on the review pop-up.

LT *Less technical users commented on this issue.*

UXD *DLab UX Designers commented on this issue.*

Related heuristic: Match Between System/Real World

Additional Commentary

Less Technical Users LT

General feedback for the process:

He didn't know he needed to be logged in to complete the task. Would have preferred a pop-up or to be sent to log-in page if he needed to log in.

Elements they liked:

Likes volunteer profile page layout and info, links provided.

More Technical Users MT

General feedback for the process:

The process is "not as easy when not familiar with the UX."



Appendix

Appendix: File Links

Link to Figma Files

User Comments by Persona and Step

<https://www.figma.com/file/n7k8qPEzIFPFDp0DGYC6I/createProjectUsabilityUserComplaints-Sorted-by-Issue?node-id=0%3A1>

Issues:

<https://www.figma.com/file/COue3ltgHoFzhoRRgTW2f2/usabilityData?node-id=0%3A1>

Link to Google Sheet:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1sjBH-pzCm9j0nrCWwOe7ZVMFZg0wAqwu6n2TSiEyWZM/edit?usp=sharing>

Appendix: Heuristics

Issues fall under the following heuristic¹ categories:

Jakob Nielsen's

10 Usability Heuristics for User Interface Design

Visibility of system status

The system should always keep users informed about what is going on, through appropriate feedback within reasonable time.

Match between system and the real world

The system should speak the users' language, with words, phrases and concepts familiar to the user, rather than system-oriented terms. Follow real-world conventions, making information appear in a natural and logical order.

User control and freedom

Users often choose system functions by mistake and will need a clearly marked "emergency exit" to leave the unwanted state without having to go through an extended dialogue. Support undo and redo.

Consistency and standards

Users should not have to wonder whether different words, situations, or actions mean the same thing.

Error prevention

Even better than good error messages is a careful design which prevents a problem from occurring in the first place. Either eliminate error-prone conditions or check for them and present users with a confirmation option before they commit to the action.

Recognition rather than recall

Minimize the user's memory load by making objects, actions, and options visible. The user should not have to remember information from one part of the dialogue to another. Instructions for use of the system should be visible or easily retrievable whenever appropriate.

Flexibility and efficiency of use

Accelerators — unseen by the novice user — may often speed up the interaction for the expert user such that the system can cater to both inexperienced and experienced users. Allow users to tailor frequent actions.

Aesthetic and minimalist design

Dialogues should not contain information which is irrelevant or rarely needed. Every extra unit of information in a dialogue competes with the relevant units of information and diminishes their relative visibility.

Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors

Error messages should be expressed in plain language (no codes), precisely indicate the problem, and constructively suggest a solution.

Help and documentation

Even though it is better if the system can be used without documentation, it may be necessary to provide help and documentation. Any such information should be easy to search, focused on the user's task, list concrete steps to be carried out, and not be too large.

Plus... Steve Krug's "Don't make me think."

Follows the basic belief that users should be able to accomplish their intended tasks as easily and directly as possible.