We conducted user testing of the current MVP version of our platform to validate key hypotheses and identify areas for growth.

The goal of testing is to understand how the product is perceived, which interface elements cause difficulties, and which features users consider most important for further development.

Testing hypotheses and receiving feedback from real users helps us validate our roadmap, refine development priorities, and increase the value of the product.

Stage objective

Verify whether the MVP truly solves the stated problems of users from target segments. Obtain data on actual behaviour, pain points, and activation levels.

Hypotheses to test

General hypotheses:

1. Users understand what the platform does within 30 seconds of interaction.
2. Users find a profile/project that they consider suitable in less than 5 minutes.
3. After filtering and viewing the project profile, the user submits an application.
4. Users find the interface convenient and intuitive.
5. Users trust the information in the project card/profile.

Hypotheses about functions:

- Smart filters help users find relevant projects faster.
- Extended cards and profiles inspire more trust.
- The link to GitHub influences the decision to apply to the team.
- Checklists, roles, and onboarding information help users better understand what to do.

Hypotheses to test (formulated as HMW + JTBD)

	Hypothesis	Validated through
H1	HMW help the user understand they've landed in the right place to find a team or project?	First impression, "Find Project" page, onboarding
H2	HMW ensure filters and project/people cards are perceived as useful and clear?	Filter testing, feedback on relevance
H3	HMW makes the profile and dashboard interfaces intuitive and trustworthy?	Profile navigation, "Invitations" and "Proposals" sections
H4	HMW ensure the user can complete a basic flow without guidance?	Task-based testing, observation
H5	HMW identifies which functionality is missing for real-world usage?	Post-scenario questions
H6	HMW builds trust in the platform and encourages continued engagement?	Emotional response, willingness to return

MVP testing scenario (in user test format)

Test objective:

To check the perception of the current MVP and identify UX barriers and functional gaps.

Tasks for the participant:

⚠️**Warning: you are testing the MVP interface — this is not yet a full-fledged service, but a demonstration of the platform's logic.**

1. **Go to the platform and register (via Google/Yandex or email).**
2. **Imagine that you want to find a project. Go to the Find Project section.**
3. **Familiarise yourself with the filter interface — what parameters can you select? Imagine which of them would be useful to you when searching for a project in real life.**
4. **Select any project from the list and read the description. Please note that the content of the cards is currently for demonstration purposes only — the stack**

and description are the same. Imagine that you want to apply — what would you do?

5. **Go back. Go to Find Talent. Look at the participants' profiles.**
6. **Try to find someone who would be a good fit for your hypothetical team.**
7. **Go to your profile and dashboard. What can you see here?**
8. **Look at the tabs: Invitations, Proposals, Overview.**
9. **Try opening the chat and imagine that you are chatting with a participant.**
10. **Share what you would do next — would you come back? What was missing?**

Post-test interview (questionnaire)

A. Product perception assessment

1. **When you entered the platform, did you understand what you could do? What kind of product is it?**
2. **What did you find useful in the Find Project section?**
3. **Which filters did you find most important or potentially useful? What was missing?**
4. **You looked at the project cards. How informative are they? What would you like to see there if these were real offers?**
5. **The Find Talent section — how helpful is it in understanding who to choose? What confused you?**
6. **Profile page and dashboard: how informative are they? What would you like to change?**
7. **Which sections were the easiest to interact with? Which were the most difficult?**
8. **Where did you get confused or not understand what to do?**

B. Assessment of emotions and motivation

9. **How much did you believe that you could find a real team through this platform?**
10. **Would you recommend the platform to a friend/colleague? Why?**
11. **What features do you definitely need to add so that you would actually start looking for a team?**
12. **What would need to happen for you to return to InnoSync in a week?**

Conclusions we want to draw

- **How is the current version of the MVP perceived: does it look 'real' or more like a prototype?**
- **Which interface areas cause friction?**
- **What helps or hinders belief in the platform's functionality?**
- **What next features are users waiting for first (roadmap validation)?**
- **How logical is the current architecture: user → search → filter → submission?**

👤 Participant 1 — Alina, 21, IT student, looking for an internship

Task flow:

- Signed up via Google — no issues.
- Used filters *Entry Level + Python* in Find Project — filtering seems superficial so far.
- Checked out a few cards — pleasant design.
- Got confused in Find Talent: unclear who's available.
- Profile is logical, tabs are understandable.
- Found chat quickly, but left after realizing it's just an interface.

Interview:

1. Yes, understood right away: it's about finding teams and projects.
2. Convenient to filter by skills.
3. Important: level and stack. Missing interface language filter.
4. Clear, but boring. Would like to see why a project is interesting, what tasks to expect, who's already on the team (maybe this will be available later).
5. Unclear who has which soft skills — everyone looks the same.
6. Dashboard is convenient, especially *Overview*.
7. Easiest section: Find Project. Hardest: Find Talent.
8. Got lost on how to "apply" — no clear flow.
9. 6/10 — has potential but still "raw".
10. Yes, especially if there are projects for interns with labels and more detailed descriptions.
11. Need project verification to feel safe applying.
12. Would love project recommendations and auto-matching.

👤 Participant 2 — Artyom, 27, freelance backend developer

Task flow:

- Registered via email — quick.
- Went to Find Project, tested filters, clicked around.
- Noted cards look too similar — lacks uniqueness and real links.
- Found dashboard tabs useful.
- Tried to start a chat, but interface gave no response.

Interview:

1. Understood, but not immediately. Would add a short tutorial.
2. Vacancies, stacks clearly visible. Many filters for customization and precision.

3. **Important: project type and skills. Missing sorting by payment.**
4. **Lacks a section on conditions: payment, communication format, duration.**
5. **Find Talent feels like a lifeless catalog.**
6. **Everything is clear. *Proposals* are convenient.**
7. **Easiest: filters. Hardest: user navigation.**
8. **Expected filters in Find Talent too.**
9. **7/10 — likely to trust.**
10. **Yes, but more for the future.**
11. **Need a way to mark who's open to work.**
12. **Would like invite-only projects and AI assistance for search.**

👤 Participant 3 — Nadya, 24, Junior UX Designer, hackathon participant

Task flow:

- **Used Yandex to register — okay.**
- **Noticed nice card design in Find Project.**
- **Struggled to filter correctly in Find Talent.**
- **Dashboard felt "empty", wanted more interactivity.**
- ***Proposals/Invitations* tabs work but are confusing — too similar in layout.**

Interview:

1. **Yes, quickly realized it's a platform for finding teams and projects.**
2. **Very cool that you can see tech stack and goals.**
3. **Would use all suggested filters — seem useful. Would like a project goal filter: "startup", "hackathon", etc.**
4. **Cards are simple but good for a start. Would love to see participant reviews.**
5. **Would like to see participants' design portfolios.**
6. **Profile is okay but too "tech-focused".**
7. **Easiest: filtering. Hardest: what to do after viewing a card.**
8. **The "apply" button is hard to find.**
9. **6/10 — more like a "showcase" now, but high potential.**
10. **Yes, recommend to UX friends as an emerging platform.**
11. **Display projects with open tasks and add mockups/videos.**
12. **Tags like "urgent", "looking for designer" would be great.**

👤 Participant 4 — Sasha, 30, PM at a startup

Task flow:

- **Registered via Google.**
- **Noted usefulness and variety of filters: *Team Size 4–6*, *Full Stack*, *React*.**
- **Found project info lacking — no repo links, goals.**
- **Looked for devs in Find Talent — unclear who's active.**

- **Liked the *Overview* tab.**

Interview:

1. **Yes, looks like LinkedIn for projects.**
2. **Find Project is a good start, but needs more data.**
3. **Liked skill selection, but missed filters for language (English/Russian) and project duration.**
4. **Want to see goals, team motivation, stages.**
5. **Find Talent needs a filter like "ready to start now".**
6. **Dashboard is fine — would like a project status or timeline.**
7. **Easiest: viewing cards. Hardest: finding participants.**
8. **Unclear how to invite to a team.**
9. **8/10 — almost convinced, especially for hackathons.**
10. **Yes, if it develops a bit more.**
11. **Add status: available/busy.**
12. **Show user activity (like GitHub).**

👤 Participant 5 — Roman, 19, Data Science student

Task flow:

- **Signed up via email.**
- **Noticed *Academic* filter in Find Project.**
- **Confused about where to click to "apply" for a specific role.**
- **Didn't open Find Talent — "just browsing for now".**
- **Didn't get the chat — thought it was support.**

Interview:

1. **Yes, everything is clear.**
2. **Find Project is very useful and has great potential once real filtering is added.**
3. **"Team size + project type" combo helps understand scale. Missing soft skills filters — like transparent communication.**
4. **Need a "ask the team" button and info on communication: task tracker, meetings, deadlines.**
5. **Didn't explore profiles — too little info, not intuitive.**
6. **Profile and dashboard are okay. Everything in one place is convenient.**
7. **Easiest: project filtering. Hardest: understanding chat — other tools are more convenient, but integration is nice.**
8. **Unclear how to invite or select team members (who's active).**
9. **6/10 — not confident yet.**
10. **Will recommend after real projects appear.**
11. **Add labels: "university", "grant-funded".**
12. **Integration with ORCID or Google Scholar.**

👤 Participant 6 — Dina, 26, product manager, supports NGOs

Task flow:

- **Easy registration.**
- **Loved the variety of filters — high customization by stack, team size, etc.**
- **Cards are nice but too similar. Lacks visuals, links, goals.**
- **Profile is clear, but dry.**
- **Didn't try to find team members — "not my case."**

Interview:

1. **Platform for teams — immediately clear.**
2. **Filters are sharp, cards readable. Looking forward to deeper filtering.**
3. **Stack and Experience were most useful. Missed GitHub links or star ratings.**
4. **Interested, but afraid applications disappear — want verification.**
5. **Would like to see "active" users and skill verification.**
6. **Tabs work. Want to see my role. Some fields need to be more detailed — powerful tool like this should give full info.**
7. **Everything's fine, except chat — old UI, prefer other tools.**
8. **Missing "contact now" button and detailed descriptions in places.**
9. **7/10 — almost a real product.**
10. **Likely to recommend to NGOs and activists as a promising platform.**
11. **Labels: "volunteering", "social project".**
12. **Warmer visual identity.**

👤 Participant 7 — Ilya, 23, frontend developer, looking for open-source projects

Task flow:

- **Registered quickly.**
- **Viewed 2 projects — wanted to see repo links and real code.**
- **Filters are helpful, but missing "by technology".**
- **Found chat quickly. Concept is interesting.**

Interview:

1. **Everything's clear.**
2. **Great filters. Compact cards.**
3. **Cool to choose a stack. Would like a filter by task type — design, code, data analysis. Currently unclear what tasks are.**
4. **Missing a tag or section showing the requester is legit — not a scam.**
5. **Find Talent lacks info — want quality teammates.**
6. **Dashboard is okay — would love CI status, commits.**
7. **Easiest: Find Project. Hardest: knowing who's active.**
8. **Want chat tabs if built into the platform.**

9. 7/10 — good base.
10. Yes, if they improve open-source use case.
11. GitHub integration, activity, stats.
12. Repositories in cards and *Open Source* filter.

Conclusions we have drawn

1. How is the current version of the MVP perceived: does it look 'real' or more like a prototype?

The average perception rating is 6.71/10.

Some areas (e.g., filters and project cards) inspire confidence, but overall there is a lack of 'liveliness' and real activity. However, considering that this is an MVP, most test participants recognised significant progress.

2. Which interface areas cause friction?

- *Find Talent — it is difficult to understand who is active, which causes confusion.*
- *Chat — not intuitive, not everyone found it necessary.*
- *There was a lack of visual differences between some cards.*

3. What helps or hinders belief in the platform's functionality?

Helps:

- **Convenient and very diverse filters were noted by most participants.**
- **The dashboard and Proposals/Overview tabs were also recognised as a very convenient summary.**
- **The ability to assemble a team based on stack and skills.**

Hinders:

- **No verification of projects and participants.**
- **Lack of external links, activity, and reviews.**
- **No confirmation of responses and invitations.**
- **Little information about team motivation and conditions of participation.**

4. What next features are users waiting for first (roadmap validation)?

- **Participant and project verification system**
- **Tags: 'urgently seeking,' 'hackathon,' 'volunteering,' 'grant,' 'university.'**
- **Integrations: GitHub, ORCID, Google Scholar**
- **Auto-selection/recommendations for projects**
- **Visibility of user and team activity**
- **Expanded information in cards: goals, tasks, stages, participants**
- **Division by task type: code, design, management**
- **Filters by communication, language, interaction format**

5. How logical is the current architecture: user → search → filter → submission?

- **The structure as a whole is perceived as logical**
- **Filtering is convenient, especially in Find Project**
- **The main barrier is the lack of a clear final action: how to apply or invite**

General conclusion

Overall, the product is perceived as a promising and valuable platform that can significantly improve the process of finding teams and collaborating on projects in the future. Despite some issues and features that are still under development, all test participants recognised the core value of the idea and expressed interest in its further development. Most participants described their experience as positive and stated that they would recommend the platform, especially if key improvements were made. This confirms the correct direction of product development and highlights the existence of a solid foundation for further development.