

Project Plan

Spring 2026 | NMIX 4410

Jodie Lederman, Alex Cho, Evelyn Kim, Grace Oh, Aditi Chiluguri

Project Overview

What is Congo.ai?

Congo.ai is a mobile app that matches you with other UGA students in the same location based on what you need help with and what you're willing to help others with. It's designed for short, focused interactions like exam prep, resume feedback, or learning a new skill.

Project Goals

Reach Goals (Beyond Expectations)

1. Position Congo.ai as a scalable model for real-time, intent-based connections beyond UGA (e.g., conferences, transit spaces).
2. Demonstrate demand for problem-first, proximity-based networking.
3. Generate institutional or stakeholder interest through a clear product and research narrative.

Main Goals (Expected Outcome)

1. Deliver an iOS-focused MVP or high-fidelity prototype showing real-time, location-aware matching.
2. Support user profiles with editable skills and needs.
3. Include availability status (Available / Idle / Away).
4. Enable proximity-based matching within a defined radius (no exact location).
5. Use simulated or limited data to demonstrate matching if live data is not feasible.
6. Allow opt-in connections with basic notifications.
7. Validate core assumptions around usability, intent signaling, and user comfort.

Safety Goals (Minimum Viable Success)

1. Demonstrate one complete core flow: post a need → receive a nearby match → opt in to interact.
2. Enforce ephemeral connections (matches disappear unless both users save).
3. Prioritize problems over browsing people (no swiping/matching with people).
4. Protect privacy through limited location visibility and mutual consent.
5. Require institutional verification (UGA email) with role awareness.
6. Include private, non-public interaction feedback.

Challenges

Privacy and Location Sensitivity

Risk: Users may feel uncomfortable with location-based visibility.
Mitigation:

- Exact locations are never displayed; only radius-based proximity
- Location is activated only when users explicitly mark themselves as “available.”
- Clear onboarding explanations and visibility controls to reinforce autonomy

Social Hesitation & Awkwardness

Risk: Even matched users may avoid interaction.
Mitigation:

- “5-minute chat” framing to reduce perceived commitment
- Icebreaker prompts and structured first messages
- Suggested public meeting locations and online-first options

One-Time Use Perception

Risk: Users treat Congo.ai as a tool they only open once.
Mitigation:

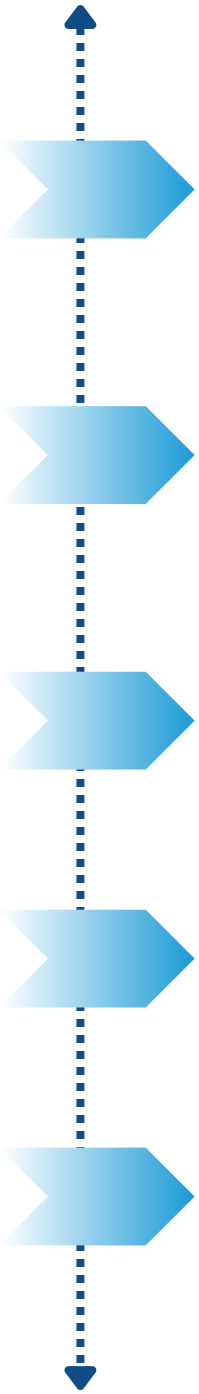
- Emphasize recurring situational needs during onboarding
- Encourage reciprocity (helping as well as receiving help)
- Explore lightweight re-engagement mechanisms without social pressure

Matching Accuracy

Risk: Poor matches reduce trust quickly.
Mitigation:

- Start with constrained categories and structured inputs
- Use AI as a decision-support layer, not an autonomous agent
- Incorporate feedback loops after each interaction

Project Timeline



Checkpoint 1 (alpha)

Tuesday, February 3rd

Checkpoint 2 (beta)

February 26

Checkpoint 3 (1.0)

March 24

Checkpoint 4 (1.1)

April 21

SLAM and Final Deliverables

May 1

Checkpoint 1

Presentation - All

Create and present slides related to checkpoint 1.

Alpha

Define MVP scope and core flows, including posting a need, availability states, and basic matching logic.

Exploratory Research - Everyone

Conduct research on campus-based missed connections, situational needs, and hesitation around real-time interaction.

Project Plan - Evelyn, Aditi

Establish Reach, Main, and Safety goals while identifying risks, constraints, and mitigation strategies. Map deliverables backward from final submission and align tasks with team roles and calendars.

PR/FAQs - Grace, Jodie

Clearly articulate Congo.ai's problem, solution, and differentiation in internal-facing language. Address privacy, safety, and intent-based matching concerns with concise, neutral messaging.

Checkpoint 2

Presentation - All

Create and present slides related to checkpoint 2.

Beta - Grace

Iterate on the Alpha prototype based on research insights. Start the Figma lo-fi prototype.

User Research - Evelyn

Conduct usability testing with UGA students using the Alpha prototype. Gather qualitative feedback to validate assumptions around comfort, clarity, and perceived value.

UX Map - Aditi, Grace

Translate research findings into a UX map that highlights emotional states, decision points, and friction. Identify key intervention moments where design reduces hesitation and improves flow.

Team Name/URL - All

Create team name and url for the rest of the semester.

Checkpoint 3

Presentation - All

Create and present slides related to checkpoint 3.

1.0 - Grace

Incorporate final usability feedback and refine microcopy, interactions, and edge cases. Ensure the MVP clearly demonstrates a complete end-to-end core flow.

Visual Design Guide + Poster - Aditi, Grace

Create a design guide and poster that clearly communicate the problem, solution, and outcome.

Website Beta - Evelyn

Design and build a project website showcasing research, process, and the MVP. Ensure narrative alignment across the website, prototype, and pitch.

SLAM Promotion Material - Jodie, Alex

Create SLAM material for final deliverables.

Checkpoint 4

Stage Presentation Beta - All

Create and present slides related to checkpoint 4.

1.1 - Grace

Iteration Based on Feedback:
Collect feedback from peers, instructors, and stakeholders to identify high-impact refinements. Implement final improvements without expanding the MVP scope.

Launch/Hand off/Social Deliverables - Jodie, Alex

Finalize a pitch deck and concise handoff documentation. Ensure materials clearly explain the product, research, and future potential.

SLAM + Final Deliverables

Operation Project - Alex

Finalize all prototypes, documentation, and visual assets. Ensure consistency across the MVP, website, and presentation materials.

Stage Presentations - All

Develop and rehearse a clear narrative demonstrating problem, solution, and impact. Prepare a live demo or walkthrough of the MVP.

Booth Presentations + One-Pager - Jodie

Design a concise one-pager summarizing Congo.ai's value and differentiation. Prepare booth visuals that communicate the concept at a glance.

Project Trailer - Evelyn

Project Website - Aditi

Publish the final project website. Verify that all content, visuals, and links are complete and accurate.

Project Workflow

Meeting Cadence

- **In-class work:** Tuesdays & Thursdays
- **Weekly team sync:** Wednesdays 4-5 pm, zoom meetings, biweekly
- **Client meetings:** Wednesdays 4-5 pm, zoom meetings, biweekly

Client communication: Managed by Project Manager & Communication Co-Leads