

Signature Team Assignment

Qualitative Research Consultants Association's Website Redesign Project

Group 1

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background and Purpose

The Qualitative Research Consultants Association (QRCA) website redesign project aims to enhance the user experience and functionality of the current website. As a global network of qualitative research professionals, QRCA seeks to provide a central hub for its diverse members, including market researchers, linguists, UX/CX experts, sociologists, and ethnographers. The purpose is to advance the impact of qualitative research by fostering collaboration, sharing best practices, and offering educational resources. The website is a vital platform for QRCA members to build a community, enhance skills, and share knowledge.

1.2. Scope of the Usability Study

The usability study for the QRCA website redesign project encompasses a comprehensive evaluation of the current website's weaknesses and areas for improvement. The study includes:

- *Heuristic Evaluation:* Systematic assessment of the website based on established usability principles (Nielsen, 1994) and heuristics, focusing on navigation, clarity, and overall user experience.
- *Surveys:* Collection of quantitative data through surveys targeting QRCA members to understand their experiences, preferences, and pain points when interacting with the website.
- *Wireframing (Figma):* Creation of visual wireframes using Figma to propose tangible improvements to the website's layout, structure, and design.

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The overall goal is to transform the QRCA website into a more user-friendly, organized, and relevant platform that caters to its diverse audience, including members, researchers, sponsors, and those interested in qualitative research methods.

2. Project Overview

2.1. Objectives and Goals

The primary objectives of the QRCA website redesign project are to enhance user experience, improve website functionality, and align the platform with the diverse needs of QRCA members. The goals include:

- Usability Enhancement: Identify and address usability issues by conducting heuristic evaluations and surveys to gather user feedback.
- *Stakeholder Engagement:* Involve QRCA members as key stakeholders by seeking their input through a Google form survey with task sets.
- *Information Architecture:* Suggest ways to improve the website's organization and structure to ensure intuitive navigation and efficient access to information.
- *Wireframing and Design:* Develop visual wireframes to illustrate proposed changes, including layout, structure, and design improvements for the Annual Conference microsite.
- **Documentation:** Compile comprehensive recommendations and usability study results into a detailed handing-over document for QRCA.

2.2. Stakeholders Involved

- *QRCA Members:* The primary users of the website whose experiences and preferences guide the redesign efforts.
- *Project Team:* Responsible for the analysis, wireframing, and recommendations for the website redesign.
- Sponsor: Represents QRCA and provides guidance, feedback, and resources for the project.

2.3. Timeline

Timeline	Tasks for the Team
Sept 24 - Sept 30	• Initial meeting with QRCA sponsors for project introduction
Oct 1 - Oct 8	Requirement gathering and clarification of tasks
	• Proposal of the project approach before commencement
Oct 9 - Oct 28	Intensive Website Analysis phase
Oct 29 - Nov 4	Continued Website Analysis
	• Creation and curation of the task list
Nov 5 - Nov 15	• Development of sets for the Google form survey
	• Modification and finalization of the Google form
	Release of the Google form survey
Nov 16 - Nov 25	• Data collection from the survey
	• Preparation of wireframes for the conference microsite
	Compilation of recommendations
Nov 26 - Dec 2	• Preparation of the draft handing-over document summarizing
	usability study results
	Finalizing outstanding tasks
Dec 3 - Dec 9	• Completion of assignments for the last week
	• Ensuring all project elements are ready for handover to QRCA

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Methods Employed

• Surveys

Our implementation of surveys with the QRCA members aimed at gathering quantitative data provided invaluable insights into user experiences on the QRCA website. We gauged user satisfaction and identified pain points by formulating questions about specific tasks, such as resource searching and login processes. This quantitative approach complemented the qualitative insights from the Heuristic Evaluation, contributing to a well-rounded understanding of the website's usability.

• Heuristic Evaluation

In the Heuristic Evaluation phase, our team systematically scrutinized the QRCA website based on established usability principles (Nielsen, 1994) and heuristics. Each team member conducted an independent assessment to identify and document potential usability issues. By leveraging our expertise in usability principles, we pinpointed areas requiring improvement, focusing on aspects such as navigation, clarity, and overall user experience. This method helped us identify evident and subtle issues, providing a comprehensive understanding of the website.

• Wireframing (Figma)

Using Figma as our primary prototyping tool, we worked on the creation of wireframes for the QRCA conference microsite. These wireframes served as visual representations, offering a tangible basis for the proposed website redesign. We meticulously designed and refined the conference microsite's layout, structure, and key elements. To ensure accessibility and userfriendliness, we employed the <u>WebAim</u> color contrast checker to evaluate color combinations that align with best practices in web design and inclusivity.

3.2. Tools and Technologies Used

• Google Forms

- Used for creating and distributing surveys to QRCA members.
- Collected quantitative data on user experiences with the QRCA website.

• Figma

- Primary tool for wireframing and creating visual representations.
- Facilitated the design and refinement of the conference microsite layout.

• WebAim Color Contrast Checker

- Employed to evaluate color combinations in wireframes.
- Ensured accessibility and adherence to web design best practices.

These methods and tools were chosen to gather comprehensive insights into the QRCA website's usability, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement.

4. Survey Results

4.1. Overview of Survey Structure

There are ten sets of questions/tasks for members of QRCA to answer/perform in the survey. The main reason for creating the survey is to evaluate how we can improve the website.

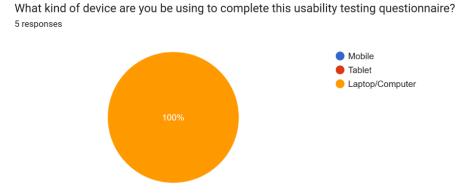
Within each set of tasks, there are 15 tasks for members to perform; we also added comment sections for members to comment on how easy or difficult the tasks are. For example, they are confused about the website's content.

4.2. Key Insights from User Feedback and the Result of Survey

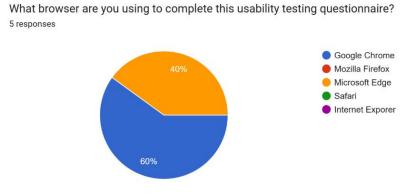
Most of the feedback we have received from the members who took the survey reveals that they cannot/complex to locate the tab/section of the content. This could be due to two reasons. The first reason might be the language used on the survey form, and it caused confusion for members. The second reason could be the locations of the tabs/sections, as sometimes we need to dig into them to find out where the sections are.

Since the five responders completed five different sets of tasks, we will show some highlights of the tasks and the ratings of those completed sets.

We received five responses; all responders used a laptop/computer to conduct the survey.



Among the five responses, three (3) indicated that members used Google Chrome to conduct the survey, while two (2) indicated that members used Microsoft Edge to conduct the survey.



The following lists show the rating of the tasks. The rating ranges from 1 to 5; 1 is the most difficult to use/locate content, and 5 is the easiest.

Set 2	
Questions/Tasks	Rating
Explore QRCA careers and who is eligible to participate.	1

Find information about QR settings and how much qualitative research is	
enough.	3
Search for a list of tips for a successful QR project.	3
Find information about what type of qualitative research will benefit new	
projects.	3
Find the starter checklist on how to choose qualitative methods.	3
Explore QRCA awards	5
Explore the Star Volunteer Program	5
Nominate a volunteer for an award	5
Access information about past Star Volunteer winners	5
Find details about QRCA Advance and Advance Elevate Program	5
Explore QRCA events and credit requirements	5
Find details about non-QRCA events and activities	5
Apply for non-QRCA activities	5
Explore thought leadership at QRCA	5
Search for star QRCA thought leader members, and if interested, submit a	
thought leader status application.	4

Analysis: The member mentioned that they could not find such a page. This might be due to the accessibility of content for new users.

Set 5

Explore options for being listed as a consultant or moderator	5
Explore information on the QRCA Field Service	1
Find advertising opportunity with QRCA	5
Discover QRCA's premium and enhanced listings	2
Explore information on QRCA analysis support	5
Explore information on QRCA design and presentation services	5
Explore information on QRCA tools and software	5
Search for partners in the QualBook directory	5
Explore options of being listed in a QualBook	5
Search for QRCA Views Magazine	4
Sign up for QRCA's newsletter	3
Explore Qcast webinars	5
Search for different membership benefits.	5
Explore membership options.	5
Find information about qualitative support partners.	5

Analysis: The member indicated that the "Field Service" tab could not be found, but the related information was found on the "Partner" page. This could be due to the inconsistency in navigation and tab visibility.

Set 6

Questions/Tasks	Rating
Register for upcoming Qcast webinars	3
Search for previous Qcast webinars	2
Register for the 2024 annual conference	5
Explore the QualBook directory	3
Post a current opening in the Career and Volunteer Center.	1
Explore the Qual Power Blog.	2
Explore Industry Partners' details.	5
Find Information about QRCA Views Magazine.	5
Find information about QCast Webinars.	5
Explore research and buyer resources.	5
Explore Conferences and Webinars Page	1
Find information about different qualitative research methods.	4
Explore reasons for becoming a QRCA member.	5
Join a committee, chapter, or SIG.	2
Shop for QRCA apparel and accessories.	5

Analysis: The member mentioned in the comment that some pages/tabs cannot be found or that it's difficult to post content. It could be due to the lack of awareness and visibility of the Career and Volunteer Center.

S	Set 8

Search for industrial-focused features	1
Search for luminaries features	1
Search for School of Thought features	1
Search for Tech Talk features	1
Search for Toolbox features	1
Search for Travelwise features	1
Search for trends feature	1
Search for the Spring Archive	1
Search for the Summer Archive	1
Search for the Fall Archive	1
Search for the Winter Archive	1
Search for Views Podcast	1
Search for QRCA Connections	1
Search for Connections Newsletter	1
Access information about VIEWS Magazine.	1

Analysis: This particular result is considered an outlier and should be removed from the analysis to ensure the accuracy and validity of our findings.

Set 9	
Questions/Tasks	Rating

1
5
1
1
1
1
5
3
4
4
1
1
5
5
4

Analysis: The member indicated that some content cannot be found on the website. This could be due to the visibility of the content.

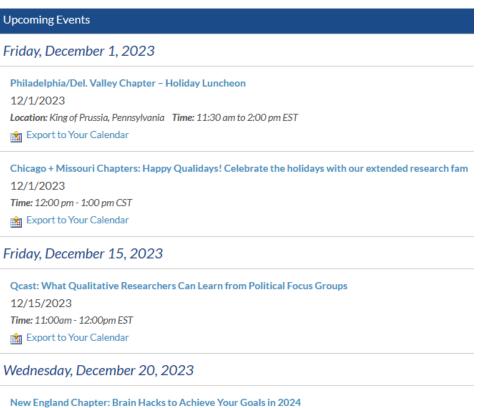
5. Heuristic Evaluation Results

5.1. Summary of Key Findings

The issues identified by the team while analyzing the website's pages are as follows:

- The events calendar lacks visual appeal and is challenging to navigate:

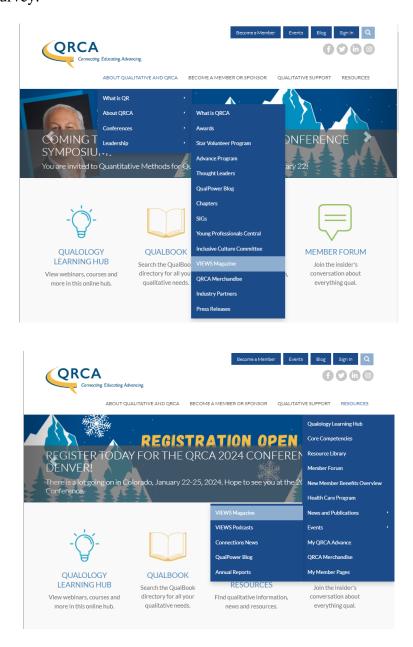
https://www.qrca.org/events/event_list.asp



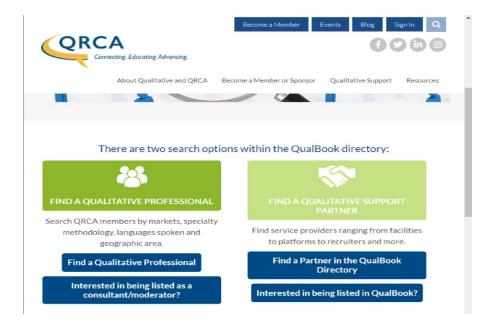
New England Chapter: Brain Hacks to Achieve Your Goals in 2024 12/20/2023 Time: 11:30 am - 12:30 pm EST Export to Your Calendar

- Navigation features an excessive number of tabs, some of which are redundant: https://www.grca.org/
 - E.g., in the navigation screenshot provided, VIEWS Magazine has nested two levels down in 2 separate navigation tabs. Considering its significance as the primary digital platform for showcasing the latest information, this page should have a more

prominent representation. This issue was also observed and reported in the user survey.



- Buttons exhibit inconsistent styling, with foreground and background colors merging on hover.
 - Qualbook page buttons show low contrast between the foreground and background when hovered over: https://www.grca.org/page/qualbook_home

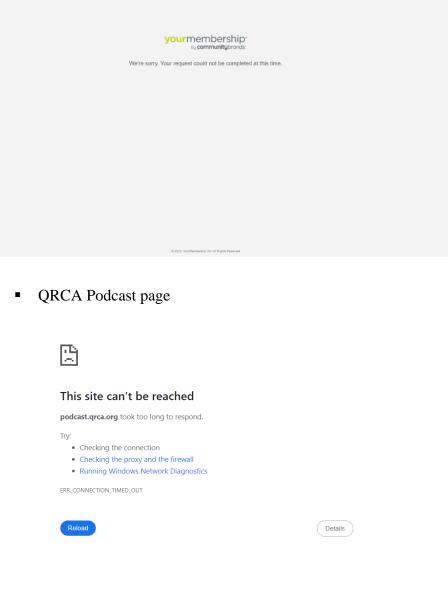


o 2024 Annual Conference Website button text and background color merge when

hovered over.	
Connecting, Educating Advancing. ABOUT QUALITATIVE AND QRCA BECOME A MEMBER OR SPONSOR	Become a Member Events Blog Sign In Q () () () () () () () () () () () () () (
REGISTER Online registration is available until: 1/22/2024 « Go to Upcoming Event List	
VISIT 2024 CONFERENCE CENTRAL	
QRCA conferences provide immersive opportunities for qualitative professionals to enhance their value through workshops and easy access Conference is the ideal venue to reach leading qualitative practitioners who are seeking resources to maximize the full power of their qualitat and discuss partnering opportunities with support services. Elite sponsorships add exceptional value in driving interest, increasing top-of-min	ive. Exhibit space is located in the Marketplace where attendees discover
Registration	
Official registrants are invited to attend all social events, meals, and most of the educational content. The Annual Meeting, Town Hall, and Cha conference must have a full registration and badge to enter the Marketplace and workshops. Evhibit Space	pter and SIG meetings are for QRCA members only. All attendees at the

- YourMembership server experiences random disruptions, leading to slow page loading times.
 - Screenshots of errors found when loading a page on the QRCA website are shown below. These are different kinds of errors whose root cause needs to be identified and resolved.

QRCA Main homepage



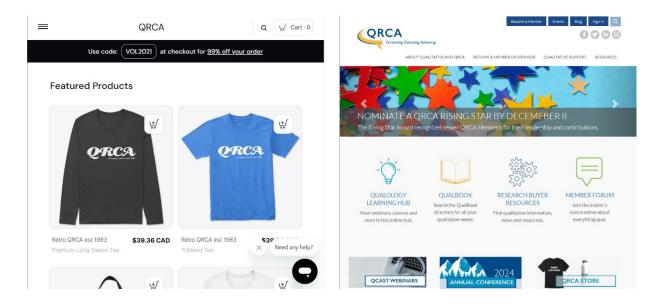
QRCA redirection on clicking on the QualPower Blog article tags results in errors.

An error occurred on the page.
Homepage
We apologize for the inconvenience.
C 2023, YourMembership Inc. All Rights Reserved

- Forms, like the YCast speaker registration page, have misalignments in their pagination.

Become a Member Events Blog Sign Out Q
ABOUT QUALITATIVE AND QRCA BECOME A MEMBER OR SPONSOR QUALITATIVE SUPPORT RESOURCES
Interested in speaking at a future Ycast?
 Please enter a value in the Email Address field. Please enter a value in the Company field. Please enter a value in the City field. Please enter a value in the Location field. Please enter a value in the Address Line 1 field. Please enter a value in the Zip/Postal Code field. Current Page Unvisited Valid Missing or invalid required
information
Speaker Information First Name * Northeast
Last Name * Students

- The QRCA merchandise website has a theme that is inconsistent with the leading site.



6. Corresponding Recommendations

Recommendation (based on issues identified)	Benefit	Impact on Usability
Redesign the calendar interface for improved aesthetics and user-friendly navigation, ensuring it aligns with the website theme. A way to do this would be to list or display just the event title and clicking on that would	Improved Aesthetics: Enhances the visual appeal of the calendar, making it more engaging for users. User-Friendly Navigation: Streamlined navigation ensures users can quickly	Boosts user engagement by providing an aesthetically pleasing and easily navigable calendar, resulting in a positive overall experience.
display the information about the event in a pop-up or an accordion collapse.	locate and interact with calendar events.	
Streamline the navigation by consolidating redundant tabs and reorganizing content for a more intuitive and user- friendly structure.	Intuitive Structure: Simplifies the website structure, making it easier for users to locate relevant information. Reduced Cognitive Load: Fewer tabs and a streamlined structure reduce cognitive	It improves the overall user experience by minimizing confusion, helping users efficiently navigate the site, and finding information quickly.

	load, enhancing user	
	understanding.	
	Consistent User	
	Experience: Standardized	
Standardize button styling for	button styling ensures a	Enhances visual clarity and
consistency, ensuring clear	uniform look and feel across	user interaction, creating a
differentiation on hover to	the site.	cohesive and predictable
enhance user experience and	Clear Interaction Signals:	interface and improving
visual clarity.	Clear differentiation on hover	usability.
	provides visual cues,	
	improving user interaction.	
	Enhanced Reliability:	
Investigate and address the	Resolving server disruptions	
root cause of server	ensures consistent website	Enhances overall reliability
disruptions, optimize page	availability.	and performance, reducing
loading times, and consider	Improved Performance:	frustration and promoting a
migrating to a more stable	Optimized page loading times	positive user experience.
hosting platform.	contribute to a smoother user	
	experience.	
Rectify the server error issue	Seamless Exploration:	
on tag clicks, ensuring a	Resolving server errors	Fosters a positive user
seamless user experience	ensures uninterrupted	experience by eliminating
when exploring blog content.	exploration of blog content.	obstacles to content

	User Engagement: A smooth	exploration and promoting
	experience encourages users	user engagement.
	to explore and engage with	
	blog tags.	
	Polished Appearance:	
Enhance form design by	Correcting indexing issues	
correcting indexing issues	results in a more aesthetically	Creates a visually appealing
and ensuring all elements	pleasing form design.	and user-friendly interface,
align correctly within form	Improved User Interaction:	facilitating positive
boxes for a polished	Aligned elements within form	interaction for users.
appearance.	boxes enhance the overall	
	form-filling experience.	
	Cohesive Branding:	
	Aligning the merchandise site	
	with the main site establishes	.
Align the theme of the	a cohesive and recognizable	Enhances brand consistency
merchandise website with the	brand identity.	and user trust, offering a
main site's styling to create a	Consistent User	unified online experience that
cohesive and branded online	Experience: Users	positively influences user
experience.	experience a seamless	perception.
	transition between different	
	website sections.	

Simplify the registration process for the Qcast webinars, possibly through a single sign-on system, and provide clear instructions.	Simplified registration process.	Reduces user confusion, making it easier to engage with Qcast webinars.
Improve the search functionality of the website. Include a recommendation system in the search functionality.	Improved search results for the content on the website and increased accessibility to QRCA content.	Enhances user experience by facilitating quick access to QRCA resources.
Ensure the prominent placement of VIEWS Magazine in navigation/dropdown menus.	Increase in online traffic to the VIEWS Magazine page.	Ensures easy access to the VIEWS Magazine, improving user satisfaction.

7. Wireframes and Design Suggestions

7.1. About the proposed wireframes and design suggestions

After conducting a thorough analysis, we crafted a high-fidelity mockup for the QRCA Annual Conference microsite using Figma. Our approach included employing the WebAim Color Contrast Checker to ensure the selection of appropriate colors and contrasts, thereby prioritizing accessibility for all users.

In our design, we strategically incorporated sections within the user interface, currently blank, specifically intended for the seamless integration of images, icons, or logos. This aims to enhance user engagement by providing visual elements accompanying textual information, fostering a more immersive experience.

Additionally, we developed a comprehensive UI-style tile framework within Figma. This framework encompasses essential elements such as font styling and size, form layout, primary and secondary color schemes, and a variety of button styles. The purpose of this framework is to serve as a reference for the QRCA website redesign team. It provides a standardized guide for maintaining design consistency throughout the website overhaul, ensuring a cohesive and visually appealing user interface.

7.2. UI Design

- Figma file:

https://www.figma.com/file/5siDzNKc4m7dJoW4Dctzle/QRCA?type=design&nodeid=7%3A37&mode=design&t=Jj0GkiWWlExHxhRu-1

27

- UI Style tile

UI STYLE TILE

QRCA

PRIMARY COLOURS		SECONDARY COLO	OURS			
HEX #1B4B89 HEX	X #F4BE49	HEX #458DBD	HEX #81BC00	HEX #EEBD5E	HEX #EAF8FF	HEX #BEE862
rgb(27, 75, 137) rgb(2	244, 190, 73)	rgb(69, 141, 189)	rgb(129, 188, 0)	rgb(238, 189, 94)	rgb(234, 248, 255)	rgb(190, 232, 98)
BUTTON STYLES			FORM EL	EMENITS	TYPOGRAPHY	
BUTTON STYLES						
BUTTON	BUTTON	B BUTTON	Name		Aa	
BUTTON	BUTTON		Email		H1 - Main Heading 40px/32px ABeeZee	
ICONOGRAPHY		LINK STYLES				
品 前 区 🔓 ೭ (+ 🖬 🖻	Link	Comments		Aa	
	0 1 -	Link			H2 - Sub Heading 25px	
,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,	⊖ ♀ 🗉	LITIK	Number		Abel	
⊕ ⊵ ֎ ⊙ □ (i i i		0		P - Paragraph Text Abel	
] \$ Q		Check 🗌		16px/14px	

- QRCA Annual Conference microsite





Conference Resources

Conference Central Rates &	Registration	Schedule	Speakers	Conference Symposium
	Spo	nsors and Exhibitors		
CONTACT US			CONTACT US	S. Suite 213Minneannlis, MN
CONTACT US QRCA1601 Utica Ave S, Suite 213Minneapolis, MN 56415 phone 651. 290. 7491 fax: (551. 290. 266 into@grca.org		tica Ave S, Suite 213Minneapolis, MN 190, 7491 1, 2266		S, Suite 213Minnespolis, MN 91

8. Challenges Faced

8.1. Identified Challenges and How We Overcome them

Since this is a big project and we have only 12 weeks to complete the whole project, it requires a lot of effort and time to achieve the desired results. Our team encountered several significant challenges during the project.

Challenges	How We Overcome It
	Since this capstone course is an online course, we have members on
Time Zone	the team from different time zones. To avoid any confusion and
	increase communication efficiency, we use EST as our time when
	planning the meetings.
	As time went by, we had a lot more documents at the end of the
Number of Documents	quarter than we had at the beginning because of the amount of
Number of Documents	research we did. We decided to create some significant files on Teams
	and then create the subfiles to categorize them.
	At the start of the project, we weren't sure about the sponsor's
Expectations of	expectations since the project involves a website redesign and
-	encompasses a broad range of tasks. We later asked for clarification
Sponsor	during the meetings and received a different project scope: usability
	study of the QRCA.org.

9. Lessons Learned

9.1. Project Team Reflections

- *Time Management:* The project, time-sensitive and requiring extensive research, involved a thorough usability study, thorough browsing of the QRCA website, and various reports and presentations.
- *Communication:* Effective communication is crucial for project completion, and meetings are an effective channel for discussing project issues and receiving feedback from team members, sponsors, and professors.
- *Coordination:* Each of us in the team has a different academic background; we split the work according to what the member was good at and worked together to resolve the issues/difficulties we encountered.

9.2. Insights Gained from the Usability Study

While we worked on the usability study for the project, we browsed the QRCA webpages one by one and identified all the issues the webpages had. We also include recommendations on how to fix the issues on the web pages.

Additionally, we identified several user personas for the survey design. The personas analysis includes QRCA members, event participants, website visitors, research buyers, sponsors, and student/academic users. Although we eventually decided to create the survey form for QRCA members, we had some brainstorming sessions and gained practical knowledge from the user personas analysis.

10.Next Steps

10.1. Recommendations for Implementation

- *Navigation:* To enhance user experience, it is highly recommended to establish a clear and intuitive navigation structure. This can be achieved by incorporating a user-friendly menu and strategically placing essential links.
- *Accessibility:* To make web content more accessible to people with disabilities, it is vital to conduct accessibility testing and provide alternative text for images. This will help ensure that everyone can easily use and navigate web pages. For instance, our recommended wireframe has already passed accessibility testing.
- *Mobile Responsiveness:* Optimizing webpages for different screen sizes is advisable to provide a seamless browsing experience for users across various devices.
- *Loading Speed:* To enhance the speed of your website, it's advisable to optimize your images and scripts. Additionally, you may want to explore using content delivery networks (CDNs), which can significantly improve your page loading times.
- *Consistent Design:* To ensure a seamless user experience, it is essential to maintain a consistent design across all web pages. This will create a cohesive look and feel throughout the website, making it easier for users to navigate and find what they want.

10.2. Follow-Up Actions for Continued Improvement

After the implementation phase, planning and executing monitoring and follow-up actions are crucial to continuously improve the QRCA platform. Here is an additional list of recommendations for continuous improvement:

- User Feedback Analysis: To continuously enhance user experience, regularly gathering and analyzing feedback from the implemented webpages and survey forms is essential. This feedback can help identify areas for improvement and enable prompt resolution of any emerging issues, ensuring that users have the best possible experience.
- *Iterative Testing:* Regularly conducting usability testing like this one can be beneficial in assessing the effectiveness of implemented changes. The insights gained from such testing can help make iterative improvements to web pages and design, leading to a better user experience.
- *Performance Monitoring:* One way to enhance website performance is by implementing monitoring tools like analytics software. To ensure the website's success, it is recommended to track key performance indicators (KPIs) from a usability study, such as page load time, bounce rates, and survey completion rates.

11.Conclusion

11.1.Project Summary

This website redesign project requires us to observe and evaluate the QRCA website thoroughly and carefully to make a list of recommendations so that our sponsor can overhaul the website based on our suggestions.

In the first several weeks of the project, we observed the website page by page to find out what issues those web pages had. We made a list to record the URL of the website and the issues we found convenient for the process later.

After observing and noting all the issues we found, we started creating and designing the survey form for QRCA members to conduct. The purpose of the survey is to let members find out how hard or how easy it is for them to locate the information on the QRCA website.

Eventually, five members responded to five different sets of tasks, and after we analyzed the results, we found that most of the tasks were easy for members to conduct.

11.2. Acknowledgments

We, Jenny Dcruz, Binal Jogani, and Jiahao He (Garrick), want to express our sincere gratitude to our sponsor, QRCA.org, and its members for their support throughout our project. Our seamless collaboration among team members and our collective commitment to excellence enabled us to identify critical issues and provide constructive recommendations for QRCA. We are grateful for the mentorship provided by Professor Jason Black, who helped us navigate the project's challenges, shape its trajectory, and provide invaluable guidance and expertise, which helped us complete the QRCA website usability study project. We would also like to acknowledge our sponsor, Zosia Czerska from QRCA.org, for their unwavering support and partnership, which

were crucial in bringing this project to fruition. We believe that our findings and recommendations will help QRCA improve its website usability and enhance the user experience for its members.

12. References

[1] Nielsen, J. (1994, April 24). 10 Usability heuristics for user interface design. Nielsen Norman

Group. https://www.nngroup.com/articles/ten-usability-heuristics/