



Scholastic Samsung Mobile Apps Boot Camps Concept Submission Form

Submission: Better4All

1. Name Your App! Be creative. An app name can make all the difference...

Think about some of the best apps available, they are usually less than 11 characters and describe or hint at the user experience inside! (i.e., Twitter: tweets are small sounds that birds make OR small bursts of information.)

Name of your App: Better4All

The name "**Better4All**" was chosen because it is short and catchy, and it also hints that the actions users take within the app make the community better for everyone.

2. Describe Your App (500 Words)

What will users be able to do? What makes it unique? Is it going to help, inform or entertain?

Overview

Better4All is a crowd-sourced application which will enable users within an area to report where volunteer help is needed, as well as to respond to said reports. These reports would be separated into three main categories:

- Road hazards
 - Examples: Potholes, roadkill, trash on road, trash on shoulder, etc.
 - Targeted towards users who already work on these issues, but do not know where to find them (eg. where to find roadkill to clear off the road).
 - Targeted toward reporters who are doing something else, but notice issues passively in the community.
- Off-road issues
 - Examples: Trash in a park, full trash bins at a park, broken picnic tables, dirty/broken park information board
 - Targeted towards users who would like to volunteer on their own time, without much prior experience needed.

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- Targeted towards reporters who actively notice areas in the community that need help, but do not have the time to work on said areas.
- Volunteer positions
 - Examples: Hospital/nursing home volunteering, state park volunteering, day care center volunteering, senior center volunteering
 - Targeted towards users who would like to make a longer-term commitment to help a specific place.
 - Targeted towards reporters who are looking for increased activity in their volunteer program.

Points

As reports are added, volunteers could opt to receive notifications on their phones when opportunities are located near them. In addition to receiving notifications, volunteers could also view the opportunities around them in either a list or a map view. Said volunteers could then claim an opportunity and work on it, receiving points based on the time and difficulty of their work. The volunteers with the most points, either in their region or across the country, would be featured on a leaderboard. This system of gameification would lead to a higher participation of volunteers, which would ultimately result in a greater bettering of the community.

Fraud would be avoided by community vetting and reporting of users high on the leaderboards, as well as by using the GPS and camera functionalities of the app and smartphone. When users arrive at one of the tasks they claimed, they "check in" on their phone (they may only check in when their GPS on their phone says they are at the correct location). Users can then "check out" when they leave, or they will be automatically checked out when their GPS leaves a certain radius of the "check in" point. If users remove the app from running in the background before they leave the area, they receive only the time from "check in" until they quit the app, as the system does not know when they checked out. However, if users quit the app and reopen it before they check out, no penalty is incurred.

In another step to prevent fraud, users who are reporting issues may request (while on the

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issue reporting form) that proof be sent to them when the issue is resolved (a picture of the area). If the proof is not valid, the reporter can file a complaint against the scamming volunteer

In addition to a leaderboard for the hardest-working volunteers, there would also be a "donator leaderboard" for the companies that donated the most in the previous month. This would create a competition for companies to be the "best community supporter," and this income would only be used to pay for costs related to running the app (eg. server costs).

Hours

Volunteers who need to gain community-volunteering hours for work or for school could have virtual certificates sent to their schools/workplaces, marking the cumulative time spent on different activities. A system would be added (eg. a secure, trusted website listing the hours spent) to ensure that these virtual certificates would be fraud-proof and could be trusted by schools and workplaces.

Unique

There are no other services or applications on the market which allow users to report and respond to volunteer opportunities. In question #6 on this concept submission, this application's few competitors are described in detail, and there is no question that **Better4All** is extremely different from them.

3. Which mobile platform(s) will you develop this app for? Check off a box below:

☒ Smartphone ☐ Tablet ☐ Both

(Note: A tablet version could later be released to enable better use of the app for users who run programs in the "volunteer positions" section, such as volunteer managers at hospitals)



4. How is your app going to solve a current neighborhood problem and help your community? Will your app be a call to action, a medium to house information, a means to bring your community together... or all three?

This application is both a call to action and a means of bringing the community together. It encourages users to both find areas of their community that needs to be worked on, as well as to get outside and to volunteer within the community. This application also allows people who want to volunteer to see where they can volunteer.

Over a prolonged time of this application being out, communities may begin to see much cleaner public areas, which would not only be beneficial to the residents of the community, but would also leave good impressions on visitors to the community, which could result in high tourism incomes and an improved local economy. This application goes way beyond its surface goal, and really helps to create an overall enriched community.

5. Who is best suited to use this app?

Why are they your target audience? Hint: Be descriptive about who they are, what they like and why this app is perfect for them.

The target audience of this app is anyone who wishes to help their community or earn volunteer hours. More specifically, this application will help teenagers in high school or adults in the workplace who need to earn volunteer hours for either their job or school. This application will also be targeted at the "do-gooders" in the community who wish to sacrifice their time to help out others. This application is perfect for teenagers because, while the majority of teenagers need to earn community service hours in their school, many do not know where to start or where to earn them, and this app provides many opportunities for volunteering. This app is also good for adults and "do-gooders," as many people may *want* to volunteer, but they don't know where they could volunteer. Since this application has both a "volunteer positions" section and two community-reported sections, there are many different opportunities for all different types of people.

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This app is also well-suited for towns and communities that don't have the budget to pay for things to be fixed or cleaned, or for towns that would like to put that money into things like education. Towns could utilize this app to relocate their resources to other areas, letting volunteers do many public service actions. This would create a particularly good benefit in low-income communities, making them cleaner and better environments to live in (and thus increasing housing value and benefitting the community economy).

6. In the app world it is survival of the fittest. Who are your competitors and what sets your app apart from theirs? Describe differences in design, content and purpose; the weaknesses of your competitor's app, and how your app turns those weaknesses into strengths.

Through my searching, I found two similar services; they were *idealist.org* and *sparked.com*. While these are comparable to my application, they are built to serve different goals and are based on different systems. *Idealist.org* is more of a job-finding site for volunteers, where volunteer positions and internships are listed, and users may submit applications for these positions. This is very similar to my application's "volunteer positions" category, except *idealist.org* seems to be focused more on users with special skill sets such as "HR Assistant" and "Volunteer Electrician," while my application will be focused on jobs that would not require previous experience and would require minimal training such as a volunteer on a hospital floor, or a volunteer in a hospital lobby. *Sparked.com* refers to itself as a "microvolunteering network." The only tasks available on this site are web-based, specific skills such as "design, marketing, web development, copywriting, social media, research, blogging" and so forth. My application would not cover those aspects of volunteerism (unless someone posted a volunteer position for a social media expert in the "volunteer positions" section).

My application is very different from my competitors' services because it is much more focused on reporting issues in the community and ease-of-use. In addition, my app is different because it includes the use of gameification (a points system), covers many more options of volunteering, and offers virtual certificates indicating the time spent volunteering (a

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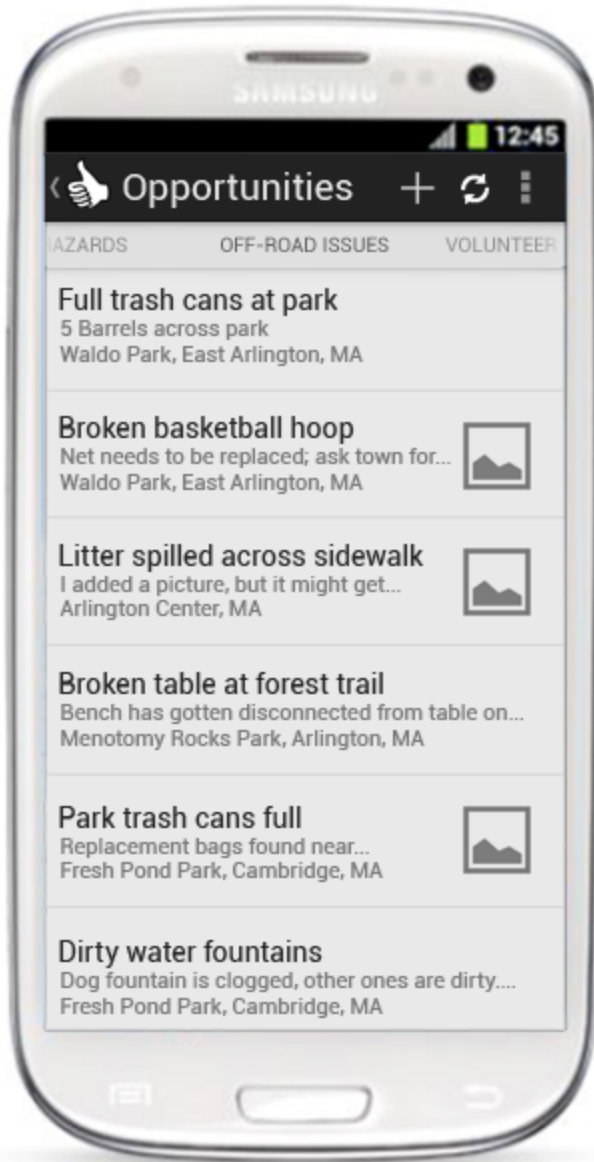
possibility of printed certificates could arise in the future). Both of my competitors (*sparked.com* and *idealist.org*) have a weakness that, in order to post a listing, you need to be a registered organization (business or nonprofit). In addition, *sparked.com* seems to also have a focus on charging organizations which are not nonprofits. My app is the only service out of these three that offers the average person a chance to report where volunteer help is needed and for someone else to easily respond.

7. Using provided frames, draw and describe up to three screens that show off your app! How will your app work and look? Show the elements that appear on three key screens of your app. Then, describe the content and functionality of each screen, how users navigate or transition between screens and content, and what happens when users interact with your app (i.e., tap a button).

This application will be designed using the *Holo Light with dark action bars theme*. This will provide a clean, bright look, while giving contrast with the dark action bar. Design for this app has been done in Photoshop and is based on the Ice Cream Sandwich design standards found at developer.android.com/design.

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Describe your screen:

When users initially launch the application and complete their first-time setup and short tutorial about the app, they will be brought directly to this page. This is the "opportunities" page, and it will be the first thing to display every time the app is launched.

The opportunities screen pictured will allow users to view the various volunteer opportunities near them. In order to switch between the three categories (road hazards, off-road issues, and volunteer positions), users can utilize the scrollable tabs to swipe and view different categories. Then, they may gesture up and down to scroll through the various opportunities. In this list, any opportunities with pictures will have a small thumbnail of the picture shown next to the text (indicated in this demonstration screen by the "picture" icon, for demo purposes). Any opportunities without pictures will be listed without a thumbnail (eg. the 1st and 4th opportunities on this screenshot.) After the user finds an opportunity they would like to claim, they may select it to view more, claim the opportunity, or (if their GPS indicates they are at the location of the opportunity) mark that they have begun to work it.

Pressing the "up" carat in the upper left of the screen will open a drawer (a slide-out menu that allows users to switch between views of the app) listing different views within the app such as:

- Opportunities (pictured)
- My Tasks
- My Profile
- Leaderboards

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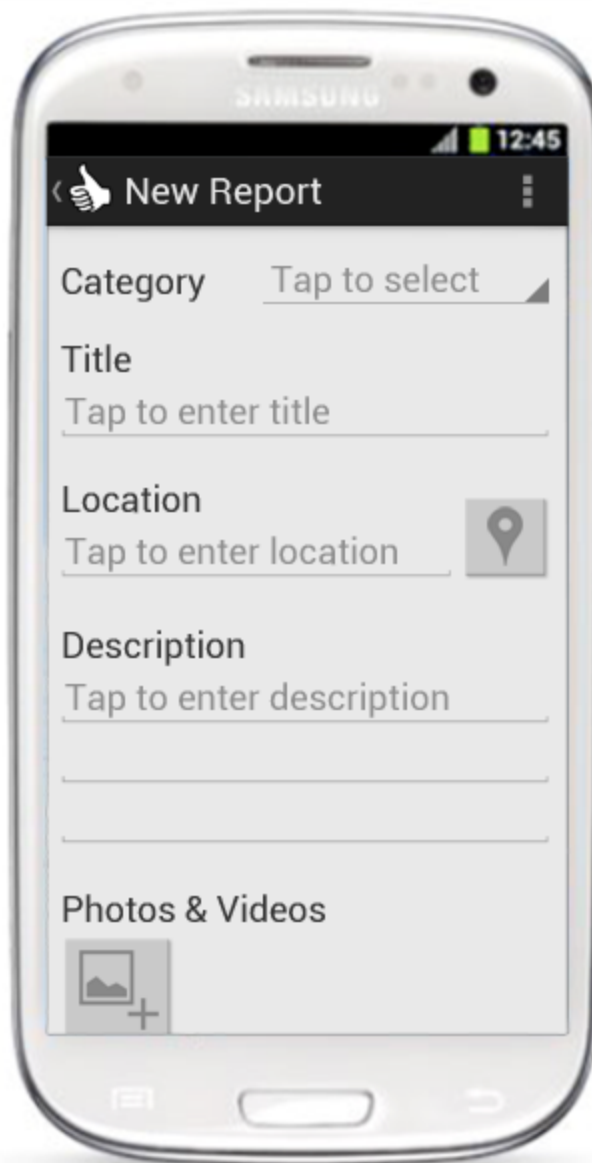
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In the upper right hand corner of the screen on the action bar, there are the action buttons. Pictured on the opportunities page are the "new" and "refresh" buttons, as well as the action overflow button (the three dots). Pressing the action overflow button will list further actions such as "sign out," "settings," "help," and "feedback."

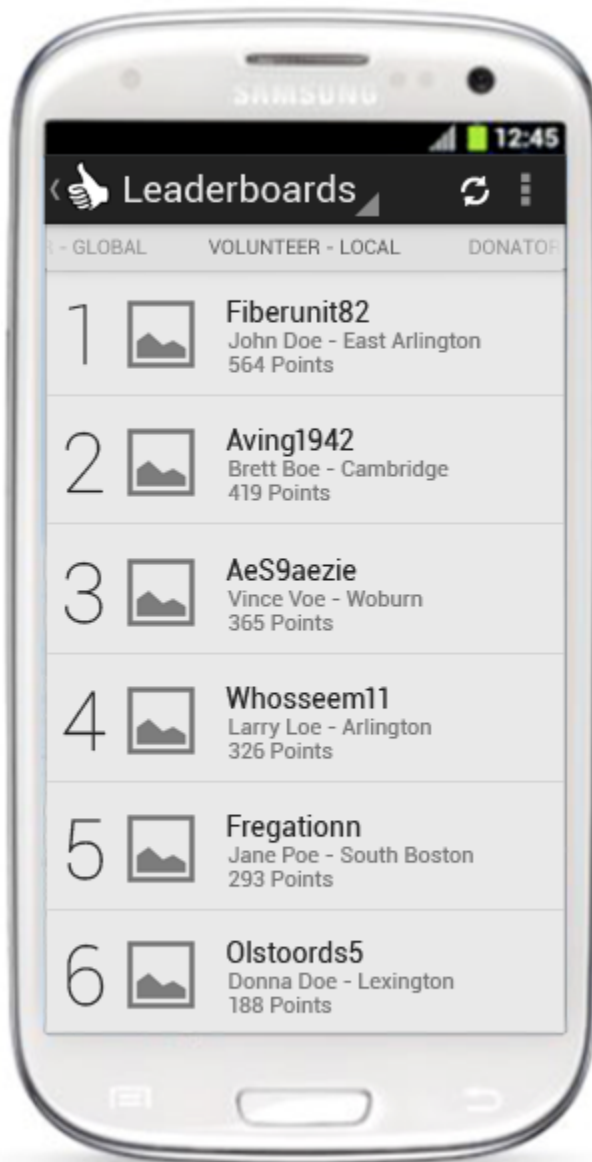
Describe your screen:

When users press the "new" button in the action bar, they are brought to the "new report" screen, where they may report any volunteer opportunities. Reporters select the category (either road hazards, off-road issues, or volunteer positions), make a title, add a location (either by typing or using an auto-locator via GPS), add a description, and attach any photos or videos they wish to include. They then press a button at the bottom of the screen to submit their report, and it shows up in the listings within a few minutes. Users earn points for submitting a reports and points for if their report is completed.



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Describe your screen:

This is the "leaderboards" screen. This screen also uses scrollable tabs to view the four different leaderboards (donator - global, volunteer - global, donator - local, volunteer - local). The "local" section encompasses the highest-scoring volunteers, and most donating organizations within the application users' state. The "global" section takes into account these statistics across the entire U.S. (the application will be U.S. only at launch).

Under each leaderboard, there are lists of the top volunteers, sorted by points earned. Each entry includes the volunteer's profile name, profile picture, actual name, town/city, and point value. Users can click on the entries for further information and specifics on volunteer time. In the action bar, there is a refresh button to refresh the leaderboards manually.

In the action bar, the word "leaderboards" is a spinner (an Android Design technique, indicated by the grey arrow to the bottom right of the word "leaderboards"). This means that when you click on it, you are presented with a list of options. This spinner allows the users to select the timeframe for the leaderboards; either "Last 30 Days," "Last year," or "All Time."