

# Innovation and Matching Platforms for students, startups and SMEs

Student

Koray Kaya

**Initial Situation:** This project explores the design and conceptual development of Graviton, a prototype platform that facilitates collaboration and innovation among students, startups, and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Switzerland. SMEs face barriers to innovation, while startups and academia often lack structured access to industry partners. The goal of this work is to define a platform concept that enables reliable, data-driven interaction across these stakeholder groups and makes cross-sector collaboration more actionable.

**Approach / Technology:** The project followed a design research approach to shape the concept of Graviton as a collaboration platform for students, startups, and Swiss SMEs. First, a structured benchmark of comparable platforms and ecosystem initiatives was conducted to identify common patterns, value propositions, and gaps. Second, qualitative interviews and expert input were used to validate key pain points, trust barriers, and functional requirements. The findings were translated into a platform concept, including core user journeys, feature set, and a high-level system design for scalable implementation.

**Result:** The main outcome is a validated platform concept and a functional prototype design that illustrates how Graviton could enable structured partner discovery and collaboration across the three stakeholder groups. The work consolidates requirements and translates them into concrete product elements such as profiles, opportunity posting, matching logic at a conceptual level, and transparent recommendation explanations. The project also defines a roadmap towards an MVP, including data strategy, user testing, and iterative refinement to confirm product-market fit and feasibility.

Advisor  
Samuel Böhni

Subject Area  
Business Engineering