DIGITAL PORTFOLIO DESIGN FOR ARTISTS

Designing a Digital Portfolio Platform for Emerging Artists: A UX/UI Design Approach to Creative Visibility, Professional Identity and Career Opportunities

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Published November 2026

Abstract

The growth of digital technology has transformed the ways artists create, present, and distribute their work. Digital platforms provide opportunities for creative individuals to display their projects, communicate their artistic identities, and reach audiences beyond geographical boundaries. However, emerging artists, particularly students, recent graduates, and independent creators, may face challenges in presenting their work professionally, organising their creative projects, establishing credibility, and connecting with potential clients or employers.

This research paper explores the design of a digital portfolio platform specifically intended to support emerging artists. The study approaches the problem from a User Experience (UX) and User Interface (UI) design perspective, considering portfolio creation, project presentation, discoverability, accessibility, and professional networking as important aspects of the proposed platform.

The research draws on existing literature concerning digital portfolios in arts education and higher education, alongside a conceptual review of established creative portfolio services. Based on this secondary research, the paper proposes a user-centred platform that enables artists to create personalised portfolios, organise projects by creative discipline, document their design processes, and share their work through a professional profile.

The proposed design framework emphasises simplicity, affordability, mobile responsiveness, accessibility, and user control over creative content. It also identifies potential future opportunities for collaboration, mentorship, feedback, and professional connections.

The paper concludes that a well-designed digital portfolio platform could serve as a valuable tool for emerging artists by combining creative presentation with professional development. However, the effectiveness of the proposed solution must be established through primary user research and usability testing before its practical impact can be confirmed.

Keywords: digital portfolio; emerging artists; UX/UI design; user-centred design; creative industries; online portfolio; digital identity; accessibility; employability

1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

Artistic work has traditionally been presented through physical exhibitions, printed portfolios, galleries, competitions, and personal recommendations. Although these methods remain relevant,

digital technology has introduced new opportunities for artists to present their work online and communicate with wider audiences.

A digital portfolio is an organised collection of creative work presented through a website, application, or online platform. It can include illustrations, paintings, graphic designs, photography, animation, fashion concepts, product designs, digital artwork, and other creative projects.

Digital portfolios can also document the development of a project. Instead of displaying only a finished design, an artist may present initial sketches, research, experiments, iterations, and the final outcome. This allows viewers to understand both the creative result and the process behind it.

For emerging artists, a digital portfolio can support the development of a professional identity. Students and recent graduates can use it to present their skills to recruiters, clients, galleries, educational institutions, and collaborators.

However, creating a professional online portfolio may require knowledge of website-building tools, content organisation, visual presentation, and digital communication. Artists with limited technical experience or financial resources may find these requirements challenging.

The proposed research therefore investigates how UX/UI design principles can inform the development of a digital portfolio platform that is accessible, practical, and suitable for artists at the beginning of their careers.

1.2 Problem statement

Emerging artists often need to communicate their creative abilities to people who may not have previously encountered their work. Their portfolios must therefore be visually engaging, easy to navigate, professionally organised, and accessible across different devices.

Existing approaches to presenting creative work include social media profiles, portfolio websites, online creative communities, and general website-building tools. Each approach serves particular purposes, but artists may need to combine multiple services to display their projects, communicate their process, maintain a professional identity, and share relevant contact information.

For beginners, this fragmentation can create additional work. A social media profile may emphasise individual posts rather than detailed project documentation, while building a personalised portfolio website may require additional time, technical knowledge, or expenditure.

The central research problem is:

How can a user-centred digital portfolio platform be designed to help emerging artists present their creative work professionally, establish a recognisable digital identity, and improve their access to potential career opportunities?

This research proposes a UX/UI design framework to address this problem.

1.3 Aim of the research

The primary aim is to develop a user-centred design framework for a digital portfolio platform that enables emerging artists to showcase their work, communicate their creative identities, and support their professional development.

1.4 Research objectives

The objectives of the research are:

To understand the role of digital portfolios in presenting artistic work.

To identify potential challenges faced by emerging artists when creating and maintaining online portfolios.

To examine existing digital portfolio platforms and their principal features.

To explore how UX/UI design principles can simplify portfolio creation and project presentation.

To propose a platform structure that supports creative discovery and professional communication.

To identify accessibility, privacy, usability, and affordability considerations.

To recommend a process for validating the proposed design through user research and usability testing.

1.5 Research questions

The research is guided by the following questions:

- **RQ1:** What challenges may emerging artists experience when presenting their creative work digitally?
- **RQ2:** How can UX/UI design improve the process of creating and managing a digital portfolio?
- **RQ3:** Which features are most relevant to a portfolio platform intended for emerging artists?
- **RQ4:** How can a digital platform support the professional visibility and discoverability of emerging artists?
- **RQ5:** What design considerations are necessary to make the proposed platform accessible, usable, and affordable?

1.6 Scope of the study

The research focuses on the conceptual design of a digital portfolio platform for:

Art and design students.

Recent graduates entering creative professions.

Independent and self-taught artists.

Emerging illustrators and graphic designers.

Photographers and digital artists.

Fashion, product, and visual communication designers.

The proposed platform is examined primarily from a UX/UI design perspective. The research covers information architecture, user journeys, portfolio creation, project presentation, responsive interface design, accessibility, and professional communication.

The research does not claim to establish the actual employment outcomes or commercial success of artists using the proposed platform. These outcomes would require further empirical investigation.

1.7 Significance of the study

This research may be useful to students, designers, educators, independent artists, and developers interested in creative portfolio systems.

For emerging artists, the proposed platform could provide a structured way to present their work. For educational institutions, digital portfolios could support the documentation and review of student projects. For potential employers and clients, clearly organised portfolios could make it easier to evaluate an artist's skills and creative approach.

From a UX/UI perspective, the study demonstrates how design decisions can be used to address a practical problem involving digital communication, content organisation, and professional identity.

2 Literature review

2.1 Understanding digital portfolios

Digital portfolios, also known as electronic portfolios or e-portfolios, are digital collections of work, achievements, reflections, and evidence of learning or professional capability.

Unlike a conventional collection of images, a well-organised digital portfolio can communicate the context behind a project. It may include the project's objectives, the creator's responsibilities, the methods used, the challenges encountered, and the final outcome.

For emerging artists, this distinction is important because a finished artwork may demonstrate visual skill, while project documentation can also communicate problem-solving ability, experimentation, and creative development.

Digital portfolios can therefore support both the presentation of completed work and the documentation of an artist's development over time.

2.2 Digital portfolios in arts education

Calderón-Garrido et al. (2023) conducted a systematic review of research concerning educational digital portfolios in the arts. Their review examined 32 articles and identified themes including artistic competence, teacher development, and employability.

The authors discussed the potential of digital portfolios to support artistic identity, digital literacy, and reflective practice. They also identified areas requiring further investigation, including the development of more flexible and sustainable portfolio platforms.

This research provides an important foundation for the present study. It suggests that a digital portfolio should not be treated solely as a gallery of finished artwork. Instead, it may be designed as a space where artists document their creative processes and develop their professional identities.

For the proposed platform, this means allowing users to include sketches, research, drafts, project explanations, and final outcomes within a single project page.

2.3 E-portfolios and higher education

Yang and Wong (2024) reviewed research concerning the implementation of e-portfolios in higher education. Their review identified several considerations, including the purpose of the portfolio, platform selection, user preparation, privacy, academic integrity, student motivation, and evaluation.

These findings indicate that the effectiveness of a portfolio system depends on more than the interface itself. Users also need clear guidance, suitable tools, and confidence in how their work will be stored and presented.

For emerging artists, the implications include the need for a straightforward onboarding process, understandable publishing controls, and guidance for creating an effective portfolio.

The platform should also enable users to manage visibility and decide which projects they wish to make public.

2.4 Digital portfolios and professional identity

A professional portfolio communicates more than technical ability. It can also reflect an individual's interests, values, specialisation, and approach to creative work.

For example, two graphic designers may possess similar technical skills but demonstrate different professional identities through their choice of projects, visual style, design decisions, and written explanations.

A portfolio platform should therefore provide sufficient flexibility for artists to present their work in a way that reflects their individual identities.

The proposed design incorporates customisable profile information, creative categories, project descriptions, and selected featured projects.

This approach is intended to balance consistency in navigation with freedom of creative expression.

2.5 Digital portfolios and employability

Digital portfolios may support professional opportunities by giving employers and clients a convenient way to review creative work.

The systematic review by Calderón-Garrido et al. (2023) identifies employability as one of the major themes in research on digital portfolios in the arts.

However, the existence of a portfolio does not automatically lead to employment. Professional opportunities may also depend on the quality and relevance of the work, market demand, communication skills, professional networks, and the availability of suitable opportunities.

The proposed platform should consequently be understood as a tool that may help artists communicate their abilities and improve the presentation of their work, rather than as a guarantee of employment.

2.6 Learning from existing digital platforms

Existing services provide useful examples of how creative work can be organised and presented online.

Behance: Behance allows creative professionals to publish projects, maintain profiles, discover creative work, and participate in a professional creative community (Behance, n.d.). Its project-based presentation model demonstrates the value of organising related images and media into a coherent project.

Adobe Portfolio: Adobe Portfolio provides tools for building personalised portfolio websites. It supports customisable presentation, multimedia content, and public or private portfolio configura-

tions (Adobe, n.d.). These features illustrate the value of visual customisation and control over portfolio visibility.

Social media platforms: Social media services can make individual artworks easy to share and discover. However, artists who use social posts as their primary portfolio may need additional ways to organise work into structured projects and communicate the context behind each project.

These examples are not intended to establish that existing services are inadequate. Instead, they provide a basis for identifying design opportunities relevant to the specific needs of emerging artists.

2.7 Research gap

The reviewed literature demonstrates the educational and professional potential of digital portfolios. It also identifies concerns involving platform flexibility, privacy, usability, guidance, and the practical implementation of e-portfolios.

A design opportunity exists in exploring how these considerations can be combined within a platform specifically intended for emerging artists.

The proposed study focuses on five areas:

A beginner-friendly portfolio creation process.

Structured presentation of both finished work and creative processes.

A professional profile that reflects an artist's individual identity.

Creative discovery and communication with potential collaborators or clients.

Affordable, accessible, and responsive design.

These areas represent the proposed focus of the platform rather than a claim that no existing platform offers similar functionality.

The principal contribution of this research is a UX/UI design framework that brings these considerations together for further investigation and testing.

3 Research methodology

3.1 Research approach

This study adopts a qualitative, exploratory approach to the conceptual design of a digital portfolio platform.

The research framework combines a review of existing literature, conceptual analysis of current digital portfolio services, identification of design requirements, and the development of a proposed UX/UI solution.

The purpose is to establish a reasoned design direction before proceeding to primary user research and usability evaluation.

3.2 Research design

The research is organised into five stages.

Stage 1 – Secondary Research. Relevant academic literature on digital portfolios, arts education, professional identity, employability, and e-portfolio implementation is reviewed.

Stage 2 – Existing Platform Review. Selected digital portfolio services are examined conceptually to understand common presentation methods, profile structures, project organisation, and publishing controls.

Stage 3 – Problem Definition. Potential user needs and design challenges are translated into a set of proposed design requirements.

Stage 4 – UX/UI Concept Development. The research informs a conceptual platform structure, navigation system, feature set, and user journey.

Stage 5 – Future Validation. The proposed solution is prepared for evaluation through interviews, prototype testing, and usability studies with representative users.

3.3 Target population

The intended target population includes emerging artists and creative students who need to present their work professionally.

Potential participant groups include:

Undergraduate art and design students.

Recent design graduates.

Independent illustrators and artists.

Freelance creative professionals in the early stages of their careers.

Recruiters, creative educators, or clients who review portfolios.

These groups are proposed for future primary research. No claim is made that participants from these groups have already been interviewed as part of this paper.

3.4 Proposed sampling strategy

For a future exploratory study, purposive sampling would be appropriate because participants should have experience creating, sharing, reviewing, or evaluating creative portfolios.

A preliminary sample could include the groups listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Proposed preliminary sample for future primary research.

Participant Group	Proposed Number	Purpose
Art and design students	8	Understand portfolio creation needs
Recent graduates	5	Explore professional presentation challenges
Emerging independent artists	5	Understand ongoing portfolio management
Recruiters, educators, or creative clients	2	Explore portfolio evaluation needs
Total proposed sample	**20**	Exploratory qualitative research

These figures are a proposed sample plan, not a report of completed recruitment or interviews. The final sample should be determined according to the research objectives, participant access, data quality,.

3.5 Proposed data collection methods

The following methods could be used to validate the conceptual design.

Semi-structured interviews: Interviews with artists could explore their current portfolio practices, difficulties, expectations, and professional goals.

Questionnaires: A short questionnaire could collect information about the types of portfolio tools participants use and the features they consider important.

Competitive analysis: Existing platforms could be compared using a consistent set of criteria, including ease of portfolio creation, project organisation, customisation, accessibility, and sharing.

Usability testing: Participants could be asked to complete representative tasks using an interactive prototype.

Observation: The researcher could observe task completion, navigation choices, points of confusion, and requests for assistance.

3.6 Data analysis

If interviews and open-ended questionnaire responses are collected, thematic analysis could be used to identify recurring patterns.

A possible analysis process would involve:

Reviewing the collected responses.

Identifying meaningful statements.

Assigning preliminary codes.

Grouping related codes into themes.

Comparing themes across participant groups.

Translating supported findings into design requirements.

Possible themes include ease of use, project presentation, professional credibility, affordability, discoverability, and privacy.

These are anticipated analytical categories, not findings from completed primary research.

3.7 Ethical considerations

Research involving artists should respect participant consent, privacy, and intellectual property.

Participants should understand the purpose of the study and how their responses will be used. Personal information should be collected only when necessary, and identifiable responses should not be published without appropriate permission.

Artists should retain control over their creative work. Any portfolio prototype should communicate publishing permissions clearly and avoid implying that uploaded work becomes the platform's property.

For academic submission, all primary research should be conducted according to the college's research ethics requirements.

4 Proposed digital portfolio platform

4.1 Platform concept

The proposed platform is a digital environment where emerging artists can create a professional profile, upload and organise creative projects, communicate their process, and share their work with relevant audiences.

The platform is intended to combine the presentational qualities of a portfolio website with the discovery and community functions of a creative network.

Its central design principle is:

Make professional portfolio creation accessible to beginners without restricting their creative freedom.

4.2 Proposed user personas

The following personas are hypothetical design tools. They represent possible user types and must be validated through actual user research.

4.2.1 Persona 1: Aditi Sharma — the design student

Age: 21

Occupation: Undergraduate graphic design student

Primary goal: To present college projects professionally and prepare for internships.

Potential challenges:

Limited experience building websites.

Difficulty organising multiple academic projects.

Uncertainty about how to explain design decisions.

Limited budget for paid portfolio services.

Design needs:

Simple portfolio templates.

Step-by-step project creation.

Clear sections for process and final outcomes.

Easy sharing through a single portfolio link.

4.2.2 Persona 2: Rahul Verma — the emerging illustrator

Age: 24

Occupation: Independent illustrator

Primary goal: To attract commissions and establish a professional creative identity.

Potential challenges:

Difficulty presenting work consistently.

Limited visibility beyond existing social networks.

Need for a clear method of communicating with prospective clients.

Design needs:

Customisable profile and artwork galleries.

Clear contact and enquiry options.

Creative category tags.

Portfolio privacy and image-protection controls.

4.2.3 *Persona 3: Meera Patel — the creative recruiter*

Age: 30

Occupation: Creative recruitment professional

Primary goal: To review relevant portfolios efficiently.

Potential challenges:

Portfolios with unclear navigation.

Missing project context.

Difficulty identifying a candidate's specific contribution to collaborative work.

Design needs:

Consistent project information.

Search and filtering options.

Clear descriptions of skills and responsibilities.

Direct access to contact information.

These personas provide a starting point for interface design. They should not be presented as profiles derived from real interviews.

4.3 Core platform features

4.3.1 *Personalised artist profile*

Each user would have a professional profile containing:

Name or preferred professional identity.

Profile image or artist logo.

Short biography.

Creative disciplines and areas of specialisation.

Skills and software knowledge.

Selected projects.

Contact preferences.

Links to relevant professional accounts.

The profile should communicate essential information without overwhelming visitors with unnecessary details.

4.3.2 Project-based portfolio

Artists would be able to create individual project pages containing:

Project title.

Cover image.

Project category.

Project description.

Creative brief or objective.

Research and inspiration.

Sketches and iterations.

Final artwork.

Tools and techniques used.

The artist's role in the project.

Credits for collaborators.

This structure would support both visual presentation and explanation of the creative process.

4.3.3 Beginner-friendly portfolio builder

The proposed portfolio builder would use a guided workflow.

Users could choose a layout, upload their work, enter project details, preview the result, and publish when ready.

The interface should use understandable labels and provide guidance when users encounter unfamiliar tasks.

Optional templates could support different creative disciplines without forcing every artist to use the same visual style.

4.3.4 Creative discovery

A discovery page could allow visitors to browse portfolios by:

Creative discipline.

Project category.

Artistic style.

Skills.

Keywords.

Selected location, where users choose to provide it.

Discovery should not depend exclusively on popularity. The proposed design could include curated categories and transparent sorting options to give visitors alternative ways to find relevant work.

Any recommendation system should be evaluated for bias and unintended exclusion.

4.3.5 Professional communication

The platform could offer contact links or enquiry forms that allow interested visitors to communicate with artists.

Artists should be able to choose which contact details are visible and whether they wish to receive enquiries through the platform.

Potential future features could include collaboration requests, mentorship connections, and creative opportunity listings.

These features would require additional research and moderation policies before implementation.

4.3.6 Portfolio analytics

A future version could provide basic analytics, such as portfolio visits, project views, and link engagement.

Such information may help artists understand which projects attract attention. However, analytics should be presented carefully because views and clicks do not necessarily indicate professional success.

Users should be able to understand what is measured and control the collection of non-essential tracking data.

4.4 Information architecture

The proposed platform could use the primary navigation shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Proposed primary navigation of the platform.

Navigation Item	Purpose
Home	Introduce the platform and highlight selected creative work
Discover	Browse artists and projects
Create Portfolio	Build or update a portfolio
My Projects	Manage uploaded and published projects
My Profile	Edit professional identity and preferences
Opportunities	Explore relevant creative opportunities
Messages or Enquiries	Manage professional communication
Settings	Control privacy, account, and accessibility preferences

The navigation should prioritise the most frequent user tasks and remain consistent across desktop and mobile interfaces.

Features such as opportunities, messaging, and analytics may be introduced in stages rather than included in the first version.

4.5 Proposed user journey

A typical artist journey could involve the following steps.

Step 1 – Discovery. The artist learns about the platform through a college, peer, professional community, or online search.

Step 2 – Registration. The artist creates an account using a simple registration process.

Step 3 – Profile Setup. The artist adds a name, biography, creative discipline, and selected skills.

Step 4 – Project Upload. The artist uploads images or other supported media and enters the project's basic details.

Step 5 – Project Organisation. The artist adds a description, selects categories, and arranges content into a coherent sequence.

Step 6 – Preview and Review. The artist checks how the portfolio appears on desktop and mobile screens.

Step 7 – Publication. The artist selects the desired visibility settings and publishes the portfolio.

Step 8 – Sharing. The artist shares the portfolio link with recruiters, clients, collaborators, or educational institutions.

Step 9 – Maintenance. The artist updates the portfolio as new projects and skills develop.

This journey is a proposed workflow. It must be tested with users to identify unnecessary steps and opportunities for improvement.

4.6 User experience design principles

The proposed platform should follow these UX principles.

Simplicity: Common tasks should require as little unnecessary effort as possible.

Consistency: Navigation, buttons, form fields, and feedback messages should behave predictably.

Visibility: Users should understand whether a project is a draft, published, private, or shared through a restricted link.

User control: Artists should be able to edit, reorder, archive, or remove their projects.

Error prevention: The interface should help prevent accidental deletion, incomplete publishing, and unintended disclosure of private information.

Feedback: The system should confirm successful uploads, identify missing information, and clearly communicate errors.

Accessibility: Content, controls, and navigation should accommodate users with different access needs.

4.7 User interface design direction

The UI should create a professional environment while allowing creative work to remain the main visual focus.

A possible visual direction includes:

A clean, spacious layout.

Neutral interface backgrounds that complement diverse artwork.

Readable typography and clear text hierarchy.

Large, appropriately sized project thumbnails.

Consistent spacing and alignment.

Responsive layouts for different screen sizes.

Clear calls to action for creating and sharing portfolios.

The interface should not rely on a single colour scheme or decorative style that conflicts with the work of individual artists.

The final visual system should be developed through wireframes, visual exploration, and feedback from representative users.

4.8 Accessibility and responsive design

Accessibility should be considered from the earliest design stages.

The proposed platform should include:

Sufficient colour contrast.

Keyboard-accessible navigation.

Meaningful text alternatives for informative images.

Clearly labelled form fields.

Visible focus indicators.

Readable typography.

Responsive layouts for mobile devices.

Helpful error messages.

Support for reduced-motion preferences where relevant.

Alternatives to interactions that depend only on colour or visual cues.

Images and multimedia should be optimised to reduce unnecessary loading delays, particularly for users with limited bandwidth.

Accessibility should be evaluated against recognised guidelines, including the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2 (World Wide Web Consortium, 2023), rather than assumed from visual appearance alone.

4.9 Privacy and intellectual property

Artists may be concerned about unauthorised reuse of their creative work.

The proposed platform should therefore make ownership and visibility controls understandable.

Potential measures include:

Clear terms describing content ownership and platform permissions.

Public, private, and restricted-sharing options where technically supported.

Attribution information for collaborators.

Optional visible watermarks.

Reporting procedures for suspected infringement.

Account and content deletion controls.

Secure account management.

Watermarks may discourage some forms of casual misuse, but they cannot guarantee protection against copying.

The platform should also avoid using uploaded artwork to train artificial intelligence systems or for unrelated commercial purposes without an appropriate legal basis and clear user-facing disclosure.

4.10 Proposed minimum viable product

To keep the project manageable, the first version should focus on essential portfolio functions (Table 3).

Table 3. Proposed feature prioritisation for the minimum viable product.

Priority	Feature	Reason
High	Artist registration and profile	Establishes professional identity
High	Project creation and upload	Enables portfolio presentation
High	Project descriptions and categories	Improves organisation
High	Responsive portfolio pages	Supports viewing across devices
High	Preview and publishing controls	Helps users review work before sharing
High	Basic privacy settings	Gives artists control over visibility
Medium	Search and filtering	Supports creative discovery
Medium	Contact links or enquiry forms	Enables professional communication
Medium	Portfolio templates	Helps beginners create consistent layouts
Future	Analytics and recommendations	Supports further engagement analysis
Future	Mentorship and collaboration tools	Expands community functions

The minimum viable product should be evaluated before more complex features are developed.

5 Discussion

5.1 The role of UX/UI design in creative portfolio development

A digital portfolio platform is not simply a collection of images displayed on a screen. Its structure influences how artists organise their work and how visitors interpret their creative abilities.

A confusing interface may make it difficult for visitors to locate relevant projects. Similarly, a portfolio that displays only final images may provide limited information about the creator's process or contribution.

A user-centred approach can address these challenges by considering both sides of the experience: the artist who creates the portfolio and the visitor who evaluates it.

For artists, the interface should simplify uploading, organising, editing, and sharing projects. For visitors, the platform should provide clear navigation, readable project descriptions, and convenient access to relevant information.

5.2 Balancing standardisation and creative freedom

Standardisation can improve usability by providing familiar navigation and consistent project information. However, excessive standardisation may limit artistic expression.

The proposed platform addresses this tension through a flexible template system.

Essential information, such as the project title and creator attribution, could follow a consistent structure, while layout choices, imagery, typography, and selected presentation elements could remain customisable.

The purpose is to provide enough structure to help beginners while preserving the individuality of experienced creators.

5.3 Affordability and access

Cost can be an important consideration for students and artists beginning their careers.

A platform that requires expensive subscriptions or advanced technical skills may be less practical for some users.

The proposed concept therefore considers a basic free portfolio option, with essential profile creation, project organisation, and sharing functions.

The financial feasibility of such a model would require further research into hosting costs, storage requirements, maintenance, moderation, and potential revenue sources.

Affordability should not be achieved by compromising privacy, accessibility, or the security of users' work.

5.4 Discoverability and professional opportunities

Creative discovery is an important proposed function because a portfolio is useful only when relevant audiences can access and understand it.

Search filters and creative categories could help visitors identify artists whose skills align with particular projects.

However, platform visibility may be affected by algorithmic ranking, existing popularity, language, accessibility, and the quality of portfolio metadata.

The platform should therefore be designed to provide understandable discovery mechanisms and avoid presenting popularity as the only measure of creative value.

Whether these mechanisms actually improve professional opportunities remains an empirical question.

5.5 Limitations of the proposed solution

The proposed platform presents a design direction rather than a fully validated product.

Several limitations should be acknowledged:

The paper does not report completed interviews with emerging artists.

The proposed personas have not been validated through primary research.

The sample size is a suggested plan rather than a completed study.

The feature prioritisation is based on conceptual analysis and literature, not measured user preferences.

No usability scores or user satisfaction results are available.

The platform's technical feasibility and financial sustainability have not been established.

The effect of the platform on employment or income has not been measured.

These limitations indicate the need for further research before drawing conclusions about the platform's effectiveness.

6 Expected outcomes and evaluation framework

6.1 Expected outcomes

The proposed research is expected to produce a conceptual UX/UI framework for an emerging-artists portfolio platform.

Potential outputs include:

A documented problem statement and set of design requirements.

A proposed user-centred information architecture.

Hypothetical personas and user journeys for design exploration.

Low-fidelity wireframes for key screens.

A high-fidelity interface prototype.

A proposed accessibility and privacy checklist.

A usability testing plan for future evaluation.

These are expected deliverables, not evidence that a working platform has already been implemented or tested.

6.2 Proposed usability evaluation

Once an interactive prototype is available, it could be evaluated by asking representative participants to complete tasks such as:

Create a profile.

Add a new project.

Organise images and project information.

Preview the portfolio on a mobile screen.

Change a project's visibility.

Locate another artist using the discovery interface.

Participants could then provide feedback about ease of use, clarity, visual presentation, and confidence in using the platform.

The suggested evaluation metrics are listed in Table 4.

Table 4. Suggested evaluation metrics.

Metric	What It Measures	Proposed Method
Task completion rate	Whether users complete assigned tasks	Observed usability testing
Task completion time	Time needed to complete a task	Timed task observation
Navigation errors	Difficulty locating functions	Observation and task logs
User satisfaction	Perceived ease and usefulness	Post-test questionnaire
Accessibility issues	Barriers affecting access	Accessibility review and assistive-technology testing
Portfolio quality	Completeness and clarity of project presentation	Defined portfolio review criteria
Publishing confidence	Whether users understand visibility and sharing	Task observation and interviews

No numerical results should be reported until the evaluation has been conducted.

The research team should establish appropriate success criteria before testing and interpret findings in the context of the sample and test conditions.

7 Conclusion

Digital portfolios offer emerging artists a way to present creative work, communicate professional identities, and share projects with audiences beyond traditional physical environments.

The literature reviewed in this paper indicates that digital portfolios can support artistic development, reflection, digital literacy, and professional presentation. At the same time, research highlights the importance of appropriate platform design, user guidance, privacy, and flexibility.

Based on these considerations, this paper proposes a user-centred digital portfolio platform designed around the needs of emerging artists. Its key components include personalised profiles, structured project pages, beginner-friendly portfolio creation, creative discovery, professional communication, and accessible responsive interfaces.

The central design recommendation is to combine the simplicity of a guided portfolio builder with the flexibility required for individual creative expression. Artists should be able to communicate not only what they have created, but also how they approached a project and what role they played in its development.

The research also recognises that a successful platform must consider privacy, intellectual property, affordability, and equitable discoverability alongside visual quality.

Although the proposed framework provides a basis for UX/UI concept development, its effectiveness cannot be established through secondary research alone. Interviews, prototype evaluation, and usability testing are necessary to verify whether the proposed features address real user needs.

In conclusion, a thoughtfully designed digital portfolio platform could become a useful resource for emerging artists seeking to organise their work and communicate their professional abilities. Its practical value will depend on how well the final design responds to users' needs and how effectively the platform supports accessible, trustworthy, and meaningful presentation of creative work.

8 Future scope

Future research could explore the following areas:

1. **AI-assisted portfolio organisation:** Investigating whether optional tools can help artists categorise and describe their work while preserving creative control and obtaining appropriate consent.
2. **Career opportunity integration:** Exploring how portfolio platforms could connect emerging artists with internships, commissions, exhibitions, and freelance projects.
3. **Mentorship and collaboration:** Evaluating features that allow artists to receive constructive feedback and connect with experienced professionals.
4. **Regional and multilingual accessibility:** Examining how language options and accessible interfaces could support artists from different educational and socioeconomic backgrounds, including users in India.
5. **Longitudinal evaluation:** Studying whether continued use of digital portfolios affects professional visibility, confidence in presenting creative work, or access to opportunities over time.
6. **Platform sustainability:** Exploring feasible funding models that keep essential portfolio features accessible without compromising user privacy or creative ownership.

These areas could support the development of a more comprehensive platform following initial user research and prototype validation.

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