

# Case Study Presentation

## AulaLink: A Platform for Sharing Knowledge and Educational Resources



### About This Document

This case study serves as complementary material, offering a detailed exploration of **AulaLink** – a conceptual web platform designed to support educators by facilitating the sharing of Open Educational Resources (OER) and daily teaching practices. The project was originally introduced in the chapter published in the e-book: **The New Digital Craftsmen and the Anthropocene: From Machines to Global Consciousness, the Maker Culture Shapes the Present** (Original title in Portuguese: *Os Novos Artesãos Digitais e o Antropoceno: das máquinas à consciência global, a cultura maker faz o agora*).

Although not implemented, the project illustrates innovative approaches to addressing real-world educational challenges. This case study provides a comprehensive overview of the research and design processes, highlighting the methodologies, challenges, and creative solutions that shaped AulaLink as a conceptual educational tool.

[Access the Published Chapter \(PT-Br\)](#)

[Read the English Version](#)

### Why This Case Study?

The AulaLink project reflects my commitment to advancing education through innovative design and technology.

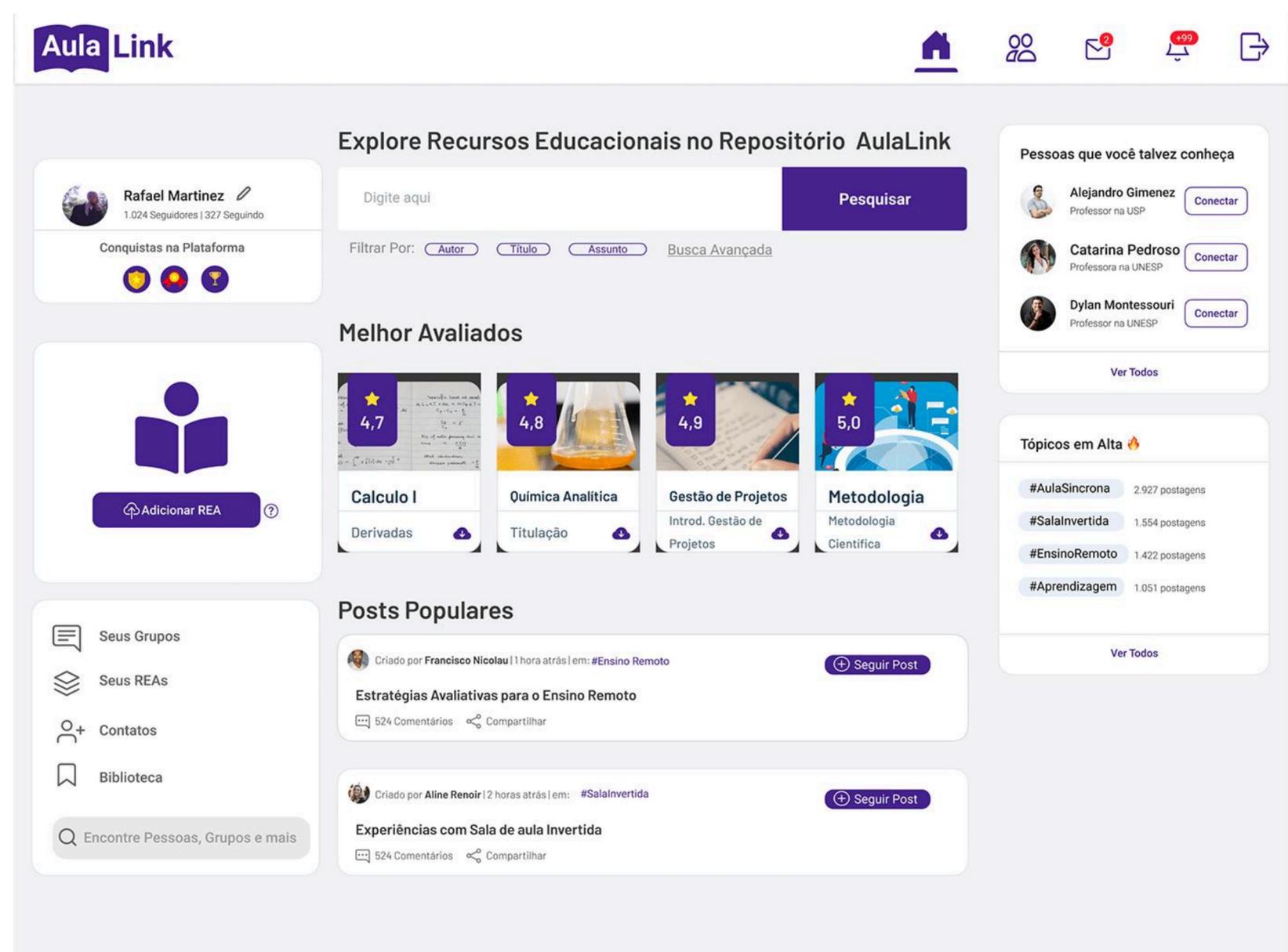
It showcases some of my skills in identifying challenges, conducting user-centered research, and presenting innovative solutions.

# AulaLink: A Platform for Sharing Knowledge and Educational Resources (Case Study)

2021 Ideation, User Research, User Interface

## Project Overview

The AulaLink project is a conceptual web platform designed to serve as a repository for Open Educational Resources (OER), providing teaching, learning, and research materials across various formats that are either in the public domain or openly licensed. These resources are accessible, reusable, and adaptable, fostering an environment of sharing and collaboration among educators. AulaLink was proposed as an instructional design solution to address the challenges of Emergency Remote Teaching, empowering teachers and democratizing access to high-quality educational content.



## 1. My Role and Responsibilities

My role in the **AulaLink** project was pivotal in leading the phases of user research, ideation, and interface design. Specifically, I was responsible for:

- 1. User Research (Interviews and Questionnaires):** Conducting in-depth interviews and designing questionnaires to gather insights from UNESP faculty members across various departments. This research identified key challenges and informed the project's direction to address educators' real needs.
- 2. Ideation:** Collaborating in brainstorming sessions to translate challenges into actionable design solutions and prioritizing platform features based on research insights.
- 3. Prototyping:** Developing a user-centered interface using a pre-designed UI Kit from the Figma library, emphasizing intuitive navigation and accessibility. The design adhered to usability principles, maximizing engagement and ensuring seamless interaction with educational resources.

## 2. Context and Challenges

During the COVID-19 pandemic, colleges and universities faced the challenge of adapting teaching to the new reality of social distancing. In response to this need, Sao Paulo State University (UNESP) implemented Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT), an essential measure that, at the same time, brought numerous challenges for teachers and students.

The **AulaLink** project was designed to address the challenges of that time more effectively and offer practical solutions. My role encompassed the phases of research (interviews and surveys), ideation, and interface design. I faced the challenge of capturing and translating teachers' needs into actionable insights, which guided the development of the project to ensure a focus on educators' real needs.

Below are the main insights gathered in the research phase regarding the challenges faced by teachers in the context of ERT:



**Increased Workload for Lesson Preparation:** Teachers reported feeling overwhelmed, as preparing lessons for a remote environment demanded significantly more time and effort due to their limited familiarity with digital teaching platforms.



**Limited Knowledge of Open Educational Resources (OER):** Many teachers had little to no knowledge of OER, which restricted the range of high-quality, adaptable educational materials they could use in online teaching.



**Informal Resource Sharing via Social Media:** During the pandemic, a large portion of teachers shared methods and materials informally, primarily through social media. This highlighted the absence of a centralized, reliable platform for resource exchange.



**Need for a Reliable Repository:** Teachers expressed a strong desire for a common, trustworthy repository that would facilitate the structured sharing and reuse of materials, making educational resources easily accessible to all.

These challenges guided the design of **AulaLink**, a collaborative project aimed at reducing teacher workload, introducing the use of OER, and providing a secure, centralized space for sharing and collaborating on educational resources. By addressing these challenges, AulaLink was designed not only to provide a practical solution for immediate remote teaching needs but also to support long-term changes in educational resource sharing and collaborative teaching practices.

## 3. Methodology and Process

The **AulaLink** project was built on three pillars: "connect, share, and create," promoting a culture of creation, collaboration, and sharing among educators. During the development, a user-centered design approach was adopted, following an iterative process structured in the stages of **Discovery, Definition, Development, and Delivery**. Unfortunately, due to budget constraints, the project was discontinued before the implementation phase.

### The Three Pillars of AulaLink



**Connect**



**Share**



**Create**

### 3.1 Discovery:

In the first stage, we analyzed information collected from interviews with UNESP faculty members. This initial research highlighted the following central problem:

“Professors lack an adequate tool for sharing ideas, experiences, and educational resources.”

Based on this problem, additional research was conducted to map existing solutions for material sharing and communication among teachers.

### 3.2 Definition:

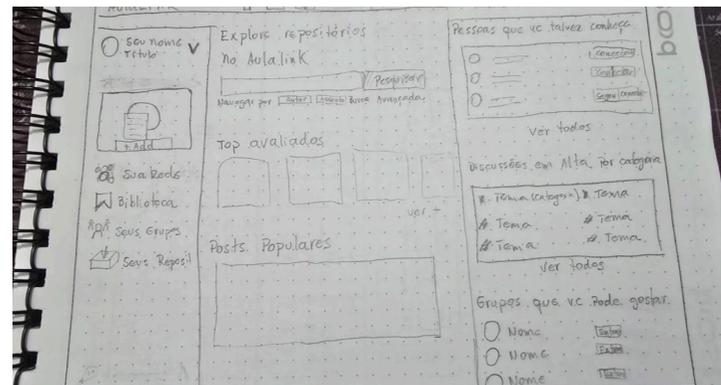
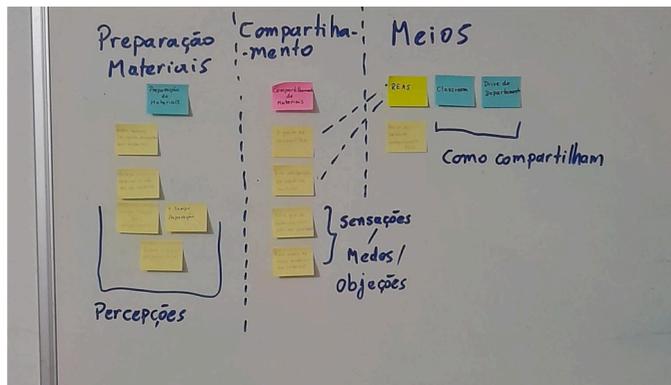
Based on the data and insights gathered, the project’s primary objective was defined as:

“Design a platform that brings teachers together and allows them to share ideas, experiences, and educational resources.”

Also, it was observed that teachers were already using social media to share resources and experiences but lacked a tool with a reliable repository for Open Educational Resources (OER). This led to the definition of the platform’s key features, including communication tools, an OER repository, and the ability to create discussion topics where teachers could exchange experiences and enhance their teaching practices.

### 3.3 Development (Ideation and Prototyping):

With the objective well defined, low-fidelity and high-fidelity prototypes of the AulaLink platform’s user interface were developed. The primary goal was to create an intuitive and accessible design that enables educators to connect, share ideas, and exchange materials. The platform combines the social dynamics of traditional social media with the added benefit of a dedicated OER repository.



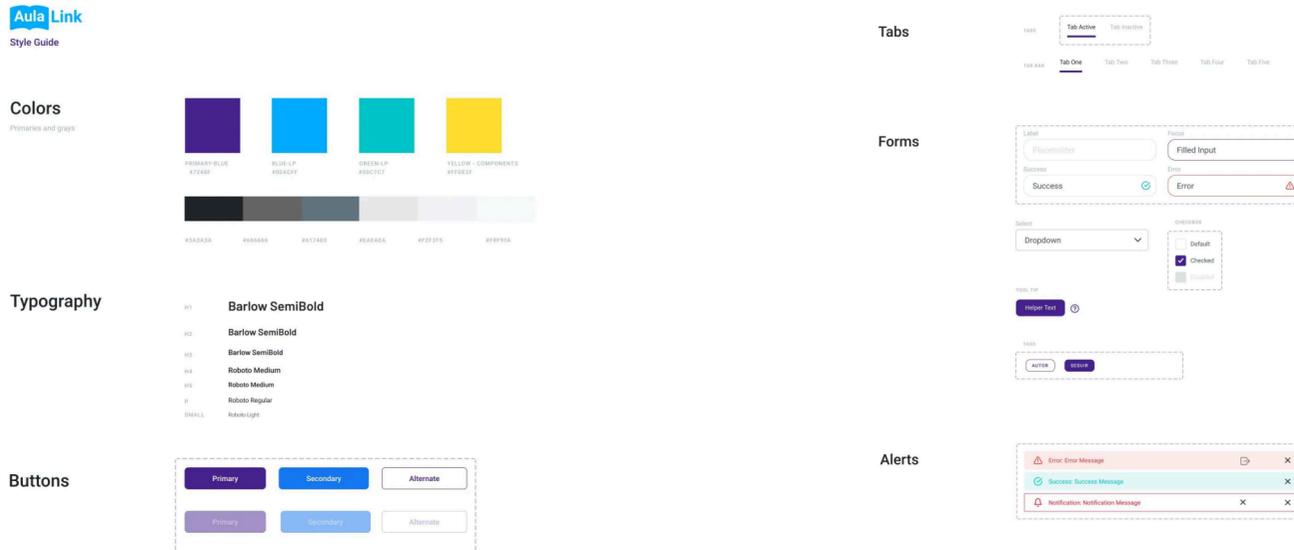
To support the design process, references from existing social networking platforms were analyzed, focusing on user dynamics closely aligned with AulaLink’s concept. This research guided the integration of familiar and intuitive design elements, enhancing the overall user experience.

Given time constraints, pre-existing elements from the Figma library were strategically utilized to streamline the workflow while maintaining high design quality. During the wireframing phase, a design by Saif, K. (2021), available in the Figma Community, was adapted to align with the project’s goals. This resource, licensed under CC BY 4.0, was retrieved from <https://www.figma.com/community/file/1008030115689645877>.

The final design maximized engagement by incorporating intuitive navigation and accessibility, allowing users to seamlessly interact with educational resources and navigate the platform with minimal guidance.

### 3.3.1 Platform style guide

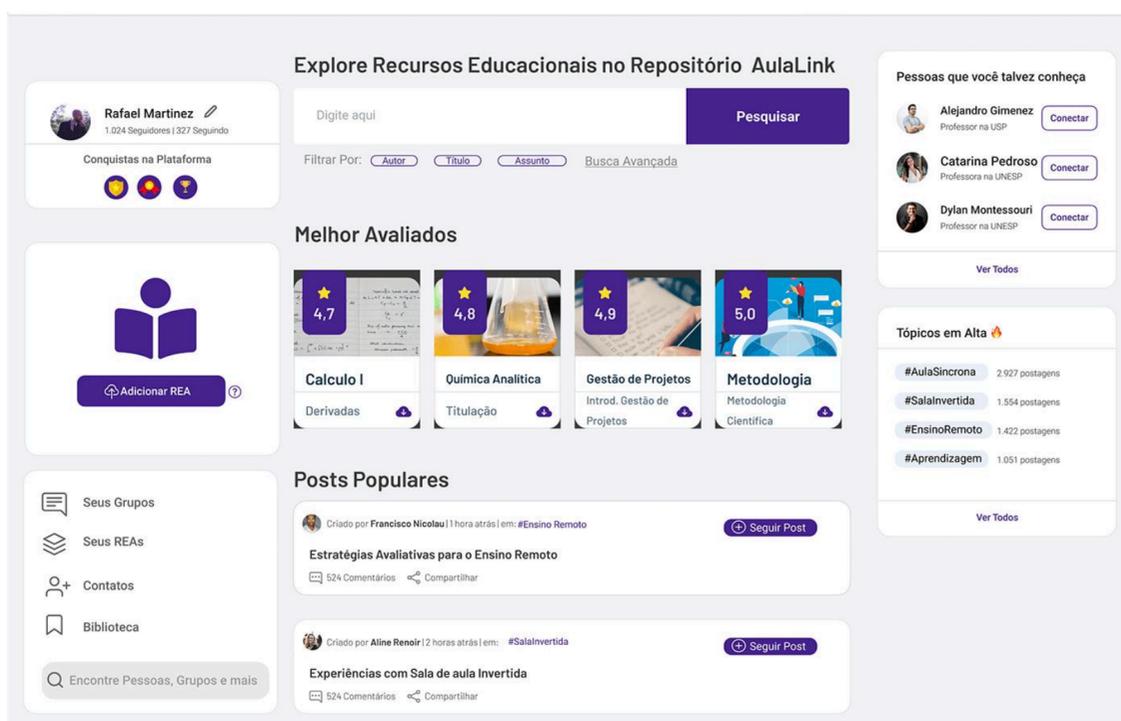
A consistent style guide was developed to ensure cohesive visual elements and maintain usability across the platform. This guide defined typography, color schemes, button styles, and other design components, ensuring a unified and professional appearance. By establishing clear visual standards, the style guide supported a seamless user experience and facilitated scalability for future design updates.



This phase highlighted the importance of aligning visual design with user behavior and preferences, particularly in educational tools. Feedback from faculty members gathered during the research stage was instrumental in shaping both the style guide and the final prototypes, demonstrating the value of incorporating user insights early in the design process.

### 3.4 Delivery:

Developed as the capstone project for the course **Design, Innovation, and Technology** within the Master's program in Media and Technology, **AulaLink** was created to address real-world educational challenges. The project deliverable consisted of a user interface prototype that demonstrated how the platform could operate if development had continued. While the project did not progress beyond the prototyping phase due to budget constraints, the design provides a comprehensive vision of the platform's potential to empower educators through innovative technology. This deliverable highlights the integration of user-centered design principles and emphasizes the platform's ability to facilitate collaboration and resource sharing among educators.



### Final Thoughts

This project solidified my expertise in user-centered design and educational technology. AulaLink was a turning point in my career, reinforcing my commitment to developing innovative and accessible solutions that empower educators and enhance learning experiences.