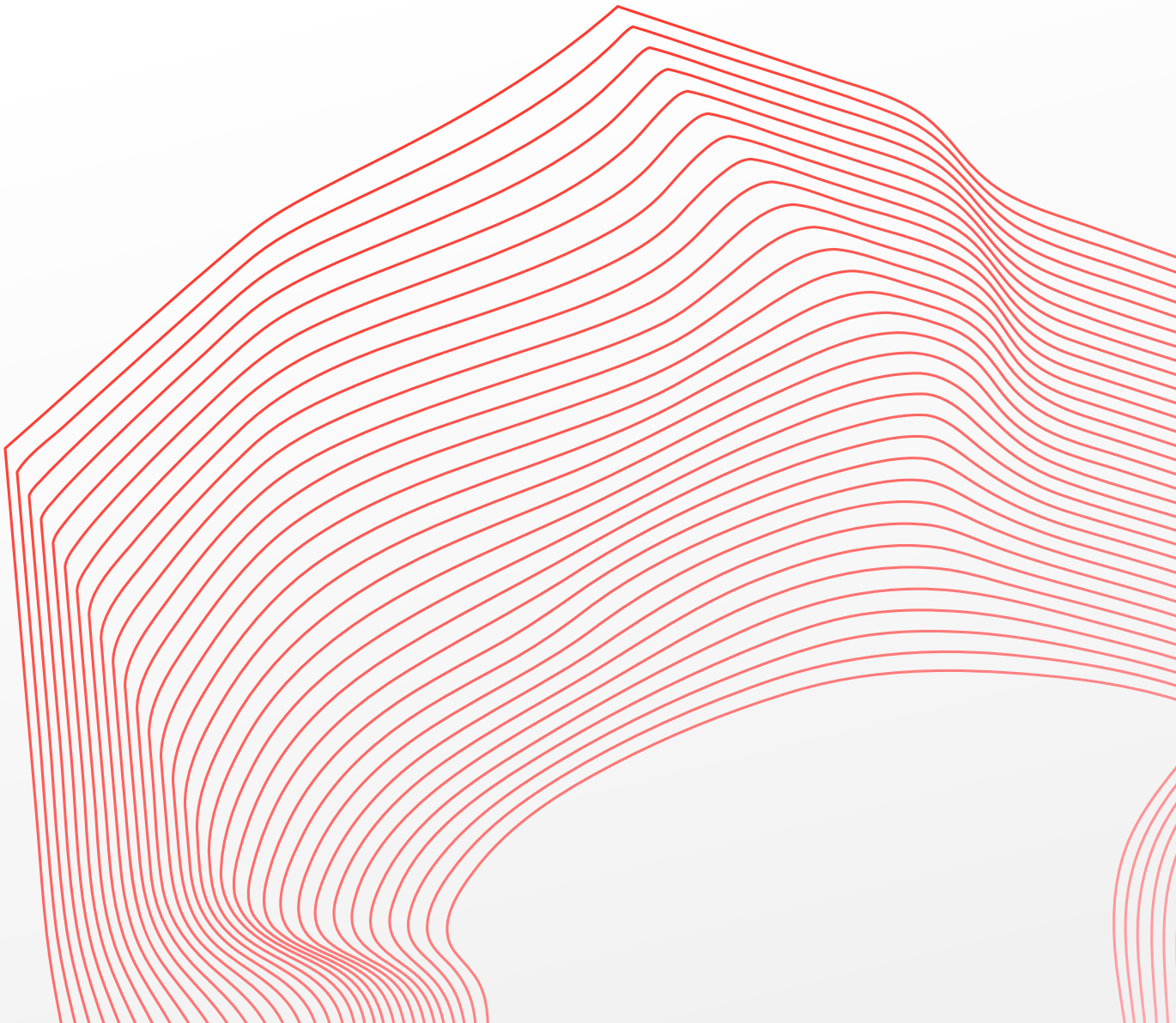


How **Join Together** revolutionised online member sign-up for the **NEU**

The NEU's online join process wasn't fit for purpose. Join Together took the union back to first principles to redesign it from the ground up.



Background

The NEU (the National Education Union) was formed in 2017 by the merger of two education unions: NUT and ATL. The largest education union in Europe, with around half a million members, it has experienced a period of rapid growth since the amalgamation.

The Problem

The union was all too aware that its online membership sign-up process for both student and full memberships was not performing well. The full membership form was faring particularly badly. It loaded slowly. It was not accessible. It was peppered with confusing terminology, and it was easy to lose your place. The form was converting at just 25%.

As a response to the shutdown of in-person student fairs due to the pandemic, the NEU had moved quickly to create a newer form for free student membership in 2020. This form was performing well, but the NEU wanted to combine the two to avoid confusing new joiners and to simplify the process for their membership team.



"A union's join form is a new member's first contact with a union, but we knew that ours was overly lengthy and complex and it wasn't presenting the best first impression of the NEU.

We were asking joiners to answer too many questions, with no clear outcome for all of the data collected. And it all moved way too slowly.

The new form needed to be able to handle all of the idiosyncrasies that come with union memberships, from different types of memberships to varying location-based costs, alongside providing a straightforward upgrade experience for newly qualified teachers.

All unions have their own unique peculiarities, and we knew from the start that our membership structures and subs calculations were even more complex than most. We knew this would be a difficult task."

Scarlet Harris

Recruitment and Retention Strategy Manager, NEU

The Process



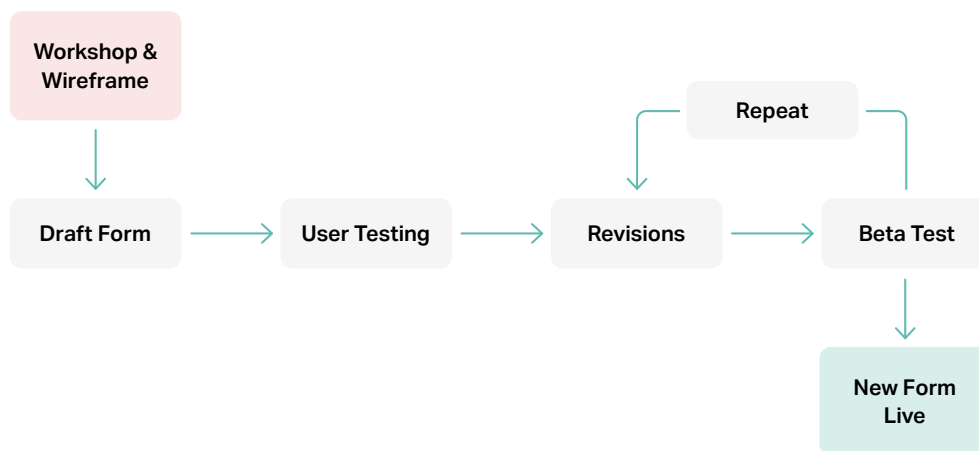
“Join Together began the project with a really useful day-long workshop, which took us right back to basics. The questions they asked got us thinking in a totally new way about what we really needed the membership form to do.

We went through the old join forms page by page, questioning the data fields, use of language, and user journey.

Join Together’s logical thinking, understanding of the workings of unions and perceptive eye on user experience helped us to let go of old assumptions and start to imagine how the new form could function.”

Scarlet Harris

Recruitment and Retention Strategy Manager, NEU



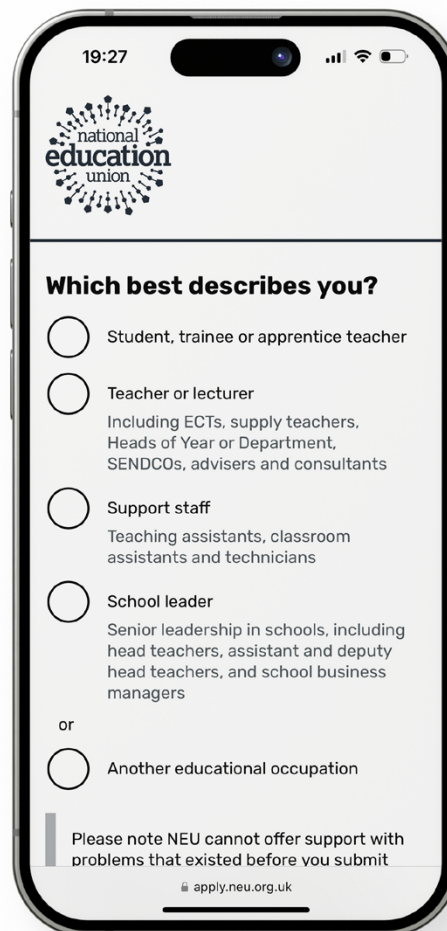
Join Together then worked with a smaller group from the NEU to wireframe the process, plotting out the path of every possible user journey. Within five weeks the NEU was able to view the first version of a clickable form.

Extensive user testing followed, which saw both education employees and student teachers navigate the form over video calls with Join Together. The team ironed out a number of issues – particularly around the choice of terminology – before the form went live on the NEU website for a 24-hour beta test. Further rounds of refinements and two further beta tests were carried out before the final version of the form was delivered.

Outcome

Features of the new membership form include:

- Student and full membership sign-up in a single combined branching form
- A simple and rapid student upgrade process requiring minimal new input
- A straightforward and automatic rejoin process for lapsed members
- The potential for full integration with any CRM, giving NEU the freedom to migrate to another system without having to rebuild the join form
- Automated 'dropped cart' email reminders encouraging people to resume an incomplete application at the point they left off
- A progress bar, indicating how far applicants are through the form's flow
- An accessible, inclusive, WCAG-compliant design
- Compatibility with all devices and browsers
- Readiness for straightforward ad-hoc future changes or additions to the form
- Less admin and manual data processing for the NEU's membership team




"The new form is performing very, very well.

The journey is so much easier for people to complete and its intelligent functions have removed the need for much manual work behind the scenes, including deduping student upgrades. It's completely transformed the user experience!"

Scarlet Harris

Recruitment and Retention Strategy Manager, NEU

Key Figures

The NEU's new online join process has:

- A completion rate **60%** higher than the forms it replaced
- A median time to complete of less than **two minutes**, with the fastest being just **45 seconds**
- Student members upgrading in as little as **30 seconds**, with almost **3,000** doing so within a week when they received an email after graduation
- Lightning-fast page load, with a **95th-percentile** response time of **<50ms**
- Load testing showing the new system can easily handle the NEU's stated goal of **2x** estimated peak traffic, having headroom for **50x**
- **2%** of overall submissions result from automated dropped cart emails, which remind people to pick up their incomplete application where they left off

Conclusion

Working with Join Together, the NEU totally overhauled its online sign-up process, combining full and student membership applications for the first time. Applicants can complete the new online join form in a fraction of the time (as little as 45 seconds) compared to the forms it replaced and, as a result, completed applications have increased by 60%. Join Together's platform reduced admin time and cost for the union, and the new process can easily be integrated into any future CRM or updated to reflect new requirements.

Best of all, the new form has given the NEU the confidence to end the availability of costly, inaccurate paper forms for full memberships, instead directing everyone to the new, improved, online sign-up process from Join Together.

Work With Us

Could your union benefit from faster, slicker, easier, fit-for-purpose online member sign-up?

Book a no-obligation call or email us at hello@jointogether.online to find out how Join Together can streamline your process.