

# VANESSA ZHOU

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## EXPERIENCE

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### UX Researcher

National Institutes of Health | Jan. 2023 - Present | Bethesda, MD

- Planned and executed GARD website iteration research, methods including **survey, heuristic evaluation, interviews, focus groups, competitor analysis, usability testing, analytics and SEO analysis**. Delivered findings in various forms to 40+ stakeholders.
- Developed a systematic actionable strategy guide for the team, delivered an **organizational wide presentation** on behalf of the team to educate and promote UX impact.
- Conducted **GenAI feature discovery research** for Polus application suite, proposed **hi-fi prototypes** of the integration of GenAI to the leadership.
- Investigated traffic drop issues by triangulating data from **Google Analytics** and **Google Search Console**, informed GA/SEO theories and recommendations for each functional team.

### Research Assistant

IDeATe, Carnegie Mellon University | May. 2022 - Oct. 2022 | Pittsburgh, PA

- **Coded** 11 participants' value ranking data; synthesized and clustered the codes into 9 major categories.
- Led the **quantitative analysis** of 237 value statements, inspiring the team to characterize the participants by considering their learning context.

### UX Researcher and UX Design Lead

NNCI, Yale University | Jan. 2022 - Aug. 2022 | Pittsburgh, PA

- Led 3 rounds of **usability testing** with 12 participants and conducted **qualitative analysis**, resulting in a 20% increase in **SUS** score.
- Designed FigJam **workshop activities** and templates for the stakeholder presentation, helping to narrow down the design ideas from 6 to 2.
- Constructed medical students' **learning journey map**; the insights led to a major design opportunity to integrate the learning resources.

### Design Researcher

1KG Box (Social Innovation NGO) | May. 2021 - Jul. 2021 | Guangzhou, China

- Designed the interview protocol and **conducted in-depth interviews** with 6 users to understand students' eating habits; shared user stories and made a **user empathy map** with the team.
- Led a group of 5 to iterate the organization's core products, conducted **marketing research** and refined the **prototypes**.

### Customer Support and UX Designer

Yunlei Information Technology | Nov. 2020 - May. 2021 | Wuhan, China

- Optimized the Q&A system by **communicating with over 300 users**, resulting in a downward trend in the number of customer complaints.
- Operated the company's **social media account** and created illustrations, with an average increase of more than 7000 followers per month.

## EDUCATION

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### Carnegie Mellon University

Aug. 2021 – Aug. 2022 | Pittsburgh, PA

M.S., Educational Technology and Applied Learning Science, GPA: 3.96/4.0  
Human-Computer Interaction Institute  
Merit Scholarship Recipient

### Huazhong University of Science and Technology

Sep. 2016 – Jun. 2020 | Wuhan, China

B.E., Opto-electronic Information Science and Engineering

## SKILLS

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### UX Research Methods

Survey / User & SME Interview / Competitor Analysis / Focus Groups / Heuristic Evaluation / Usability Testing / Analytics & SEO Analysis / Accessibility Audit

### UX Research Data Analysis

User Journey Map / Empathy Map / Persona / Qual. & Quant. Analysis / Affinity Diagramming

### UX Design

Storyboard / Information Architecture / Wireframe / Interaction Design

### Tools

Figma / Adobe XD / Miro / Mural / Google Suite / Microsoft Suite / Qualtrics / Google Analytics / Google Search Console / Lighthouse / ANDI

## PUBLICATION

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Li, Y., Zhou, X., Byrne, D. et al. "Documentation is now so ingrained in me": how students interpret and value documentation in creative learning domains. *IJTDE* (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10798-024-09889-3>