

VANESSA ZHOU

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EXPERIENCE

UX Researcher @ National Institutes of Health (Contractor)

Jan. 2023 - Mar. 2025 | Bethesda, MD

- Planned and executed NIH's GARD website research roadmap, methods including survey, heuristic evaluation, interviews, focus groups, usability testing, competitor analysis, Google Analytics and SEO analysis. Actively engaged with subject matter experts and project owners. Translated findings into actionable insight for 40+ cross-functional stakeholders, resulting in an increase in multiple engagement metrics.
- Conducted LLM feature discovery research for Polus application suite, proposed hi-fi design prototypes to the leadership.
- Delivered an organizational wide presentation on behalf of the team to educate and promote UX impact.

Research Assistant @ Carnegie Mellon University

May. 2022 - Oct. 2022 | Pittsburgh, PA

- Coded 11 student 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 & Design Lead @ Yale University (Capstone Project)

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 and facilitated workshop activities for the stakeholder presentation, helping to narrow down the design ideas from 6 to 2.

Design Assistant @ 1KG Box (Education Innovation Nonprofit)

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.
- Hosted an online product launch event with 300+ attendees, coordinating promotional efforts and guest engagement.

CX Researcher @ Yunlei (IT Startup)

Nov. 2020 - May. 2021 | Wuhan, China

- Optimized the Q&A system by communicating with over 300 customers, leading to a reduction in customer complaints.
- Managed and grew the company's social media presence, increasing followers by 7,000+ per month.

EDUCATION

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

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 / Affinity Diagramming / Information Architecture

UX Design

Storyboard / Wireframe / Interaction Design

Tools

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

PUBLICATION

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>