

Jen Strickland

Human-Centered Design, Research, and Engineering Leadership



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With more than 25 years of hands-on experience contracting as a seasoned technologist across industry, nonprofit, B2C, B2B, government, banking, and startups, an award-winning, adaptable change catalyst and strategic thinker with a proven track record of unblocking complex projects at Fidelity Investments, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Sabre, and Akamai Technologies, with a commitment to care for people and the planet, as well as a passion for coaching others with best practices for design, engineering, and research. Known as a friendly “stakeholder whisperer” for articulating design rationale to cross-functional teams and stakeholders, depth of technology expertise, translating emerging technology concepts, strong written and verbal communication skills, and an intuitive ability to align human needs with technology and public policy.

Education

Syracuse University, Maxwell School of Citizenship & Public Affairs

Master's in Public Administration, *current student*;
Certificates of Advanced Study in Data Science,
Conflict and Collaboration, Disability Studies

University of Southern Maine

Bachelor of Arts in Art; *Previous majors*: International
Affairs, Political Science, Cultural Anthropology,
Foreign Languages, Computer Science, Math

Professional Experience

Senior Human-Centered Engineer, Human Centered AI @ MITRE, DC 04/2021–present
Non-profit operating federally funded research & development centers (FFRDCs).

- **Influenced leadership across federal agencies, MITRE, and internationally** as a sought-out SME on human-centered engineering, systems thinking, public policy, social science research, mobile platforms, responsive design, web performance, design systems, accessibility, and oversight of delivery of event communications and work products.
- **Led strategic direction for qualitative & quantitative research** to enhance taxpayer personalized experience, resulting in a 17% increase in visits to IRS.gov and 25% increase in user satisfaction for IRS Online Account.
- **Spearheaded strategic research and design** of a National Science Foundation AI Scholarship for Service project, including data collection methods like focus groups, collaborative workshops, environmental scans, and qualitative interview with AI and emerging technology subject matter experts across academia, industry, and government.
- **Oversee research and design, manage multiple projects for national security** for the USMC advanced marksmanship efforts, USAF intelligence analysis, and IARPA Walk-through Rendering from Images of Varying Altitude (WRIVA) application, considering technical analysis and human factors principles such as cognitive load, perception, reading comprehension, and motor skills to design systems that are safe, efficient, and comfortable.
- **Introduced clear accessibility acquisitions language** for a \$524 million disability pension AI automation modernization for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, with market research and competitive analysis.
- **Stewarded a federal agency's USWDS adoption as a design systems SME** in effective use of HTML, CSS, accessibility, web performance, web component libraries, Drupal, WordPress, usable, system enhancements.
- **Influenced \$2.5 million of new business development and organizational strategy** for IRS Legislative Analysis & Readiness to include Section 508 program redesign, technical analysis, and design system modernization.
- **Designed, led, and executed usability research** for the MITRE AI Assurance Knowledge Base and AI Governance toolkit to work cross-functionally soliciting feedback to ensure user input shapes AI algorithms from the outset, addressing responsive front-end development bugs in an agile environment, and delivering actionable insights to enhance adoption, usability, project documentation, and effectiveness for diverse institutions.

Senior UI/UX Designer, Accessibility Specialist @ Ad Hoc, LLC, DC & Remote 08/2019–01/2021
Born of the HealthCare.gov rescue, a digital agency helping gov better serve people.

- **Led accessibility and ensure 508 compliant designs for cross-functional engineering teams** delivering Veteran-facing services and applications as part of the large-scale VA.gov digital transformation.
- **Introduced stakeholders to human centered design** while facilitating discovery research, technical analysis, and defining roadmap-level design to meet The Mission Act expansion of benefits for Veterans and caregivers.

- **Elevated accessibility of Veteran services and applications** by taking on role of motivated staff product designer to build accessibility expertise across teams to cultivate operational excellence, lead change management, monitor KPIs for status reports, design issue ticket template in issue tracking software, and create accessible design patterns.
- **Cultivated leadership champions to spark a strategic organizational change** for U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs Digital Experience Product Office, adopting "Accessibility First" strategic direction, requirements and business processes for team oriented to not only meet, but exceed, Section 508 and influence organizational culture.
- **Introduced human centered accessibility design best practices** to develop training, project documentation, product management, design reviews, responses to RFPs, change control, design templates, survey design, and accessibility auditing processes in and out of CI/CD pipeline to ensure continuous improvement and scalability.
- **Nurtured cross-functional teams to meet and exceed accessibility regulations** outlined in Section 508 (WCAG 2.0), Authority to Operate, and Plain Writing Act, while expanding to relevant WCAG 2.1 & 2.2 success criteria to meet identified needs of the Veteran population to craft a personalized experience.

Design Lead @ Fidelity Investments, Remote (contract) 08/2018–07/2019
A privately held financial services firm generating \$18.2 billion in revenues.

- **Pivoted from key contributor for service design to lead researcher**, to guide researchers and gather data on a worldwide scale research project, leading ideation workshops, technical analysis of qualitative data and quantitative test results for strategic vision, product development for a Microsoft O365 workplace digital transformation.
- **Oversee research and design for a suite of technical workplace tools** with executive leadership awareness and alignment of functional design needs, identifying priority user needs and influencers, conducting contextual inquiry via remote / in-person protocols, synthesizing research data through visualization and analysis in compelling service blueprints, user stories, and customer journey mapping paired with a roadmap to influence respectful partnerships.

Senior UI/UX Designer @ The Creative Group, DC (contract) 08–12/2017
at GMMB for FEMA Floodsmart.gov; FloodSmart, the official website of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

- **Optimized strategic design for UX, accessibility, SEO, and technical analysis**, applied a U.S. Web Design System Drupal CMS theme and human centered process to listen to the voice of the people.
- **Introduced and led a human centered product design process** in an ad agency by guiding client discovery through qualitative research and quantitative statistical analysis, design concepts, information architecture, requirements analysis, survey design, fostering user empathy, defining plain language taxonomy, developing evidence-based journey maps, user flows, responsive wireframes and mockups, teaching the team about Drupal and USWDS theme.

Senior Product Designer @ Akamai Technologies, Cambridge, MA (contract) 12/2016–04/2017
Content delivery network (CDN), revenues of \$2.5 billion & 7,650 employees serving 15%+ of all web traffic.

- **Led customer-centric product vision for a performance analytics tools SaaS proof of concept** by defining scope on a global scale, documenting technical requirements, interacting with customers, market analysis, product strategy roadmap, exploring vendor impact, technical analysis, definition of measures, monitoring metrics, data visualization, business intelligence, system enhancements, and collaborating with stakeholders.
- **95% improvement in design process turnaround time** by applying resourceful workflows, unleashing creative remote collaboration, computer software development lifecycle, and responsive prototypes using flexible, innovative CSS, HTML, JavaScript progressive enhancement techniques to optimize customer experience in an Angular environment.

Senior Product Designer @ Sabre Hospitality Solutions, Watertown, MA (contract) 2015–2016
Leading travel tech company generating \$3.6 billion in annual revenue, employing 10k.

- **Steered a cross-functional team executing a responsive redesign** of complex call center app. Introduced collaborative development and product testing processes, building systems in software development lifecycle to mediate compromises in an environment unaccustomed to user experience research and design thinking.
- **Elevated performance and enhanced software engineering** by championing the transition to modern frameworks (React, Foundation), Agile environment, Lean UX, and aligned design and discovery sprints.
- **Cultivated an organizational shift** by facilitating ideation workshops, user testing, definition of KPIs, monitoring metrics, and optimized workflow to an iterative, user-centered design program with guests and agents.

Design Lead @ Fidelity Investments, Boston, MA (contract) 2013–2015

- **Engaged on technology innovation team for strong technical skills in cutting edge responsive design and rapid prototyping**, contributed to responsive style guide establishing design system; evolved to hands-on principal for a five-person creative team and point of contact for multiple clients to manage multiple projects.
- **Delivered a 75% boost in mobile engagement** by consolidating a data dense fixed user-interface into a responsive Fidelity.com to optimize customer experience, using measures definition and evaluation.
- **Transformed a project one year behind schedule to the most viewed on Fidelity.com** and improved customer loyalty by designing a flexible, innovative user-interface solution and replacing waterfall with Lean methodology co-created with customers in the usability testing lab.

UI/UX Designer / Front End Developer @ Easy Designs, *Chattanooga, TN, Remote*..... 2011–2012
Digital agency owned by Aaron Gustafson, Microsoft's web standards advocate

Senior Technologist Contractor @ Aquent/VitaminT, *Boston, MA* 1995–2011
Evolved from design production to creative direction to emerging technology SME to full-stack design/development

Founder, Full-stack Principal Technologist @ Ink Pixels Paper / JenStrickland.Design 1995–2021
Clients: Partners In Health, State of Massachusetts, Harvard's National Preparedness Leadership Initiative, Boston Area Rape Crisis Center

Core Competencies

Security Clearance DOD Secret clearance, IRS MBI suitability. **Design tools** Adobe XD & Creative Cloud, Figma, High Charts, Invision, Power BI, Sketch, Tableau. **Development skills** Angular, AWS, Azure, CSS, Git, HTML, JavaScript, jQuery, .NET, PHP, Ruby on Rails, Python, React, SQL, XML. **Project Management** Agile, Confluence, GitHub, GitLab, Google Analytics, Jira, Lean UX, Miro, MURAL, Notion, Trello, Zenhub. **Volunteer** U.S. Digital Response Technical Lead, Code for America Brigades, Board of Directors for the John P. Mayhugh Foundation, and Worldwide Web Consortium (W3C) Invited Expert, Co-lead of Sustainable Web UX Task Force, Equity Chair.

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| • Accessibility, Section 508, WCAG | • Design Thinking | • Interaction Design |
| • Artificial Intelligence | • Human Factors Research | • UI/UX and Visual Design |
| • Data Science | • Human-centered AI Methods | • User Research |
| • Design Systems | • Information Architecture | • Workshop Facilitation |

Addendum

Knowledge Sharing

- 2025 Grace Hopper Celebration, *A Playbook for Accessible Chatbots and AI Agents*, as well as *Rigorous Qualitative Research Methodology for Broadening Participation in Engineering*
- 2025 American Society for Engineering Education, *Rigorous Qualitative Research Methodology for Broadening Participation in Engineering*
- 2025, 2024, 2023 California State University, Northridge (CSUN) Assistive Tech Conference
- 2025 Access Now RightsCon
- 2024 Knowbility's AccessU
- 2023 Inclusive Design 24 ([YouTube video](#))
- 2023 A11yTO (Accessibility Toronto)
- 2022 Code for America Summit Panel with Angie Quirarte, Victor Udoewa, Brian Whittaker
- 2021 Inaugural Civic Design Conference by Rosenfeld Media
- 2021 CENTRIC International Conference, **Awarded Best Paper**, *Inclusive Personalities for Conversational User Interfaces*

Leadership

- Worldwide Web Consortium (W3C) – *Invited Expert*, Accessibility Guidelines Working Group and Accessible Platforms Architecture; *Co-lead*, Sustainable Web UX Task Force; *Chair*, Equity Community Group; member of multiple groups, like CSS, Positive Work Environment, Web Components, Web Performance
- John P. Mayhugh Foundation *Board of Directors* – Program & produce annual symposium, advocacy on issues for Veterans, disability, and mental health visiting members of Congress
- AIGA DC 2021 DotGov Conference *Programming Director*
- Technologists for the Public Good – *Community Leadership Committee*, responsible for community engagement, 2021–2024

Professional Development

- Indi Young Advanced Training – Certificate in Problem Space Research
- IDEO U – Designing for Change Certificate
- AIGA & UXPA – coaching designers; UXPA Boston, AI and Machine Learning Roundtable Mentor
- AI Adoption Learning Path – MITRE Institute
Supplemental courses in Accessibility, AI/ML, Human Computer Interaction (HCI), Human Factors, Human Centered AI Methods, Psychology, Service Design, Social Science Research, Trauma Informed Design, Virtual / Augmented Reality