

VERA J. SCHULZ

BILINGUAL SENIOR MIXED METHOD UX RESEARCHER & PRODUCT MANAGER

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I operate at the intersection of research and execution, translating mixed-method insights into clear product direction. For 5+ years, I've partnered with founders and cross-functional teams to turn ambiguity into roadmaps and ship products that deeply resonate with customers.

Work Experience

Design Humans: Senior UX Researcher (Contractor)

Feb 2026 – Present | San Francisco, CA

- Partnering with Grand Studio to support research for Exelon, improving enterprise compliance and governance workflows.
- Co-led 50+ stakeholder interviews across regulatory, operational, and engineering teams to understand compliance tracking and escalation workflows.
- Contributed to research strategy, synthesis frameworks, and client deliverables in a highly regulated enterprise environment.

Stride/K12: Senior UX Researcher & Product Strategist (Contractor)

Aug 2025 – Feb 2026 | San Francisco, CA

- Led end-to-end UX research for a K-12 school comparison platform, synthesizing insights from 126 users (30 interviews, 96 survey responses) to uncover friction points and inform product improvements.
- Discovered a mobile filtering failure → +300% faster task completion; optimized the review banner timing → avoided ~1 month of development.
- Identified misaligned geo-targeting → guided campaign consolidation and strategic pivot; created lightweight community feedback loops → increased early user engagement.
- Partnered with PMs, designers & engineers to translate research insights into actionable product changes, improving adoption & usability.

Hey Penny: Product Manager & Research Lead (Part-Time)

Mar 2025 – Present | San Francisco, CA

- Defined product vision & success metrics by synthesizing early adopter feedback, competitive analysis, and growth team input.
- Guided 0-1 product development from research to lean UX roadmap.
- Analyzed A/B-tested onboarding workflows → increasing activation and retention.
- Validated MVP financial workflows → ensured usability and regulatory compliance.

Callistemon Insights – Product Manager & UX Consultant (Hybrid Freelance)

March 2018 – Present | Pittsburgh, PA

- Partnered with CEOs, advised 5+ startups on product strategy, MVPs, & GTM Strategy, driving faster launches and stronger adoption.
- Built research playbooks → reduced turnaround time by 30%, accelerating executive decision-making.

Select Client Projects:

- **Qoodle.ai:** Validated social learning MVP through usability testing & rapid prototyping; directly informed roadmap priorities.
- **Cloudcode.ai:** (AkiraDocs): Directed discovery research shaping AI document assistant architecture and feature sequence
- **ResMed:** Mapped CPAP therapy device onboarding pain points and regulatory constraints: Sample UX Flow.

Datacor – Sole UX Researcher and Analyst (Full Time)

July 2022 – Sept 2023

- Led UX research & benchmarking, empowering leadership to make data-driven product decisions
- Shaped LabelCalc positioning and launch → differentiated product in competitive markets, driving strategic adoption decisions
- Identified ERP workflow inefficiencies → guided engineering and roadmap priorities.
- Delivered PMF insights for logistics SaaS expansion into food & beverage through feature audits and user interviews.

Sherwin-Williams – UX Researcher & Analyst (Contract)

Feb – April 2022

- Conducted usability tests and validated prototypes for the OEM paint ordering system.
- Identified UX friction points and recommended design changes that improved feature discoverability.
- Reduced order entry errors → improved feature discoverability.

PNC Bank – Intern UX Researcher & Designer

May – July 2021

- Conducted competitor benchmarking & expert reviews to improve error messaging for PNC's wealth management platform.
- Guided WCAG 2.1 accessibility audit, identifying gaps and providing recommendations that improved usability.
- Reduced support tickets → improved error handling and accessibility compliance.

Core Skills

- **Software & Analytics:** Jira, Figma, Replit, Stych, Loveable, Confluence, Adobe Suite, UserZoom, UserTesting, Amplitude, Salesforce, HubSpot, SQL, Google Analytics, Pendo, Airtable, Hot Jar, Miro, Qualtrics
- **UX Research Methods:** Field Research, A/B Testing, Card Sorting, Usability Testing, Think-Aloud Protocols, Co-Design Workshops, Journey Mapping, Competitive Analysis, Survey Design

Education: Carnegie Mellon University

M.S. Engineering: Integrated Innovation for Products & Services
B.A. History: Global Studies; **Minors:** Intelligent Environments & Entrepreneurship

Aug 2020 – May 2021

Aug 2015 – May 2019

