

VERA J. SCHULZ

BILINGUAL SENIOR MIXED METHOD UX RESEARCHER

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

Work Experience

Design Humans: Senior UX Researcher (Contractor)

Feb 2026 – Present | San Francisco, CA

- Led **end-to-end research initiatives** supporting enterprise compliance & governance products in a highly regulated environment (Exelon)
- **Drove stakeholder research (60+ interviews)** and led qualitative data synthesis to inform compliance workflow design & product recommendations
- Partnered cross-functionally with product, design & engineering to align research findings with product direction and roadmap decisions

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

Aug 2025 – Feb 2026 | San Francisco, CA

- Led **end-to-end UX research and product discovery** for a K-12 platform, synthesizing insights from **126 users (interviews + surveys)**
- Identified critical usability issues (mobile filtering), **improving task completion speed by 300%**
- Optimized product features (review banner timing), **preventing unnecessary development cycles (~1 month saved)**
- Identified misaligned geo-targeting and informed product and GTM strategy pivot
- Built **lightweight user feedback loops**, increasing early-stage engagement and product validation
- Collaborated with PMs, designers, and engineers to translate insights into **prioritized product improvements and roadmap updates.**

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, contributing to AI/LLM feature development
- Analyzed A/B-tested onboarding workflows → increasing activation and retention.
- Validated financial workflows and user journeys, ensuring usability and compliance requirements were met

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

March 2018 – Present | Pittsburgh, PA

- Advised **5+ startups** on **product strategy, MVP development, and go-to-market execution** in fast-paced environments
- Led **customer discovery and user research**, directly informing product direction and feature prioritization.
- Built and scaled **research frameworks and playbooks**, reducing turnaround time by **30%** and accelerating decision-making

Select Client Projects:

- **Qoodle.ai:** Validated MVP through rapid prototyping usability testing; shaped roadmap and feature prioritization.
- **Cloudcode.ai: (AkiraDocs):** Led discovery research shaping AI document assistant architecture and workflow design
- **ResMed:** Analyzed CPAP onboarding, identifying usability gaps/regulatory constraints to improve patient experience: [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

