

# Mina Rezaei

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## Summary

Product researcher, designer, and empathy-driven storyteller passionate about uplifting users' stories and experiences. I have a strong background in spatial design and mixed-method research, with seven years of professional experience in the social aspects of spatial design. I am fluent in a wide range of UX methodologies and experienced in working with cross-functional teams. Additionally, I have extensive experience teaching advanced courses in Design, Social and Spatial Science, and Human Development.

## Skills

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| <b>Programming</b>                           | HTML, CSS, JavaScript, Python, RStudio                        |
| <b>UX design and Prototyping</b>             | Adobe Creative suite, Procreate, Figma                        |
| <b>Research and Data Visualization Tools</b> | Arc GIS, Hotjar, MAXQDA, Gainsight, Miro, Mural, User Testing |
| <b>Product management</b>                    | Product board, Asana  |
| <b>Languages</b>                             | English(Fluent), Farsi(Native), Arabic(Basic)                 |

## Work Experience

### California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

*Remote, Sacramento*

RESEARCH AND POLICY ANALYSIS PROGRAM MANAGER-SENIOR LEVEL

*May, 2024 - Present*

#### Coordinated and Managed Research Projects Across the Division

- Managed research contracts with universities for the Future of Mobility project, as part of the California Transportation Plan.
- Created a directory of the transportation plans in Caltrans by coordinating with stakeholders to facilitate the research across the division
- Created a list of project metrics for transportation projects across the division.

CROSS DIVISIONAL PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES MANAGEMENT-ASSOCIATE LEVEL

*Jan 2024-May 2024*

- Managed research coordination and contributed constructive feedback on research projects.

### Quantum Workplace

*Remote, Davis*

UX RESEARCH INTERN

*Jun 2022 - Sep 2022*

#### Improving Conversion Rate across QW Platforms

- Created and executed a research agenda involving interviews, surveys, A/B testing, usability reports, and analysis of qualitative data, leading to a 20% conversion rate boost for the Best Places to Work survey platform.

#### Creating Research Repository

- Championed research best practices within the product team, collaborating with cross-functional members to develop a cloud-based employee engagement solution for businesses of all sizes with surveys and feedback collection.
- Established a unified research repository catering to researchers, designers, engineers, and product managers, fostering cross-functional collaboration and streamlining the research workflow.
- Established a collection of research templates to standardize the process of research across the product teams.

### Hack for LA

*Remote, Davis*

UX RESEARCHER INTERN

*Jun 2021 - Sep 2021*

#### Standardizing Research Across HackForLA projects

- Created research plan guides, Interview guides, screeners, and consent form templates for Hack for LA projects resulting in the facilitation of the research process.
- Created research template for generative and evaluative research to expedite the UX research process by UX researchers across Hack for LA.

### Social Computing Lab, Computer Science Department, UC Davis

*Davis, CA*

DOCTORAL STUDENT RESEARCHER ON HUMAN COMPUTER INTERACTION

*Jun 2022 - Dec 2023*

#### Recreating Experience of Space in Social Virtual Reality

- Designed and executed a research study to assess users' spatial experiences in Social VR, recruited participants and employed in-depth interviews and content analysis. Analyzed and synthesized research data to derive actionable insights.
- Worked cross-functionally with the team on creating user-centered educational products, shared feedback, and developed recommendations
- Engaged in a reading group reviewing the newest trends in HCI scholarship to stay up-to-date with the latest research trends and methodologies.

### University of California, Davis, Department of Human Ecology

*Davis, CA*

DOCTORAL STUDENT RESEARCHER

*Sep 2017 - Dec 2023*

#### Designing and Strategic Planning of Creative Wanderer map-based App

- Led and conducted comprehensive foundational research to guide end-to-end product and design strategy. This included research, competitive analysis, data synthesis, prototyping, wireframing, and usability testing for an innovative map-based app. The app leverages films to enhance young people's critical spatial thinking

#### Using Human-Centered Design in Creating Youth-Friendly Environments

- Assessed teens' engagement in redesigning the Rocky Hill trail project through interviews, literature review, and document analysis to gauge their level of participation.
- Mentored junior researchers in conducting observations and ethnographic research for the Growing up in Cities, developing protocols for youth presence in public spaces and creating behavioral maps.

## University of California, Davis, Several Departments

Davis, CA

ASSOCIATE INSTRUCTOR, TEACHER AND TEACHING ASSISTANT

Sep 2017 - Dec 2023

### Designed and Taught "Sociology of Adolescence", Upper division course at the Department of Sociology, Co-Taught different courses such as UI/UX at other departments

- Conducted lectures on youth-related subjects including social media, online gaming, and VR/AR/XR impacts. Created course materials, administered exams for a class exceeding 95 students, assessed papers, and offered mentoring support.

### Taught STEM and Design Thinking courses as part of STEM program and English in Business at UC Davis International Center

- Instructed and curated diverse course materials in Mathematics, Biology, Design Thinking, and Technology for visiting international youth aged 10 to 17, as well as college students.

## Paramadan Architecture, Planning and Design Firm

Tehran, Iran

DESIGN RESEARCH LEAD

Nov 2015 - Sep 2017

### Using User-Centered Design Methods in Designing the Built Environment

- Conducted user studies to evaluate spatial experiences through interviews and surveys, analyzed findings, and communicated insights to stakeholders.
- Fostered leadership support through consistent meetings, presentations, and alignment of project outcomes with business and social objectives for revitalizing Tehran's historic districts.
- Mentored Junior designers and researchers and improved collaboration in the team of designers and engineers.

## Farnahad Architecture, Planning and Design Firm

Tehran, Iran

DESIGN RESEARCHER

Nov 2014 - Sep 2016

### Using Human-Centered Design Research in Designing the Built Environment

- Conducted diverse studies, including interviews, focus groups, and ethnography, improving quality of life in disadvantaged communities across various Iranian cities.
- Co-lead design research activities, including research planning and preparation of General Plans for various cities.
- Collaborated cross-functionally with urban design, engineering, architecture, and sociology groups.

## Payest Architecture and Design firm

Tehran, Iran

DESIGN RESEARCHER

Nov 2015 - Sep 2017

### Using Human-Centered Design Research in Re-designing a Historic Cemetery

- Delegated tasks to teams of 3-9 urban designers, civil engineers, and architects and ensured the timely and smooth flow of the project.
- Conducted ethnography research to explore the historical, environmental, and social values of the historic cemetery geared toward improving it as a tourist destination.
- Synthesized research data to craft reports and maps showcasing the cemetery's impact on the neighborhood, leading to the preservation of its historic sections.

## Education

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### University of California, Davis

Davis, CA

PH.D. IN GEOGRAPHY WITH A FOCUS ON HUMAN COMPUTER INTERACTION

Sep 2017 - Dec 2023

### University of Tehran

Tehran, Iran

MASTERS IN URBAN PLANNING AND DESIGN, B.S IN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Sep 2007 - Feb 2014

## Extracurricular Activity

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### Maptime Davis (Geospatial Skills Workshop Series)

Davis, CA

COUNCIL MEMBER

Sep 2021 - Jun 2022

- Facilitated and coordinated workshops, collaborating with local partners to educate on Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and other spatial programming tools for interactive mapping such as D3.

### Medium, UXCollective

Remote

BLOGGER, [MINA REZAEI MEDIUM BLOG](#)

Jan 2020 - Jun 2020

- Contributed blog posts about UX knowledge and practice to improve the UX community knowledge sharing

## Honors and Awards

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### University of California, Berkeley

Remote, Berkeley

BERKELEY I CORPS COHORT: ONE WEEK NSF-FUNDED VIRTUAL TRAINING AIMED AT TRANSLATING ACADEMIC RESEARCH INTO A STARTUP.

Jan. 2021 - Jan 2021

- Activities: Worked on customer discovery and the business model of the Creative Wanderer App (my startup idea)

### Keller Pathway Fellowship, UC Davis

Davis, CA

KELLER PATHWAY FELLOW

Sep. 2021 - Jun 2022

- The Fellowship provided a multifaceted opportunity for student innovators to expand their network and move ideas off campus and into the world.

## Publications (Selected)

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- Rezaei, M., Owens, PE., Schilkman, E., Yang, N., Designing a Film-based Map App: Learning Spatial Concepts through Movies. to be submitted to the Journal of Geography in Higher Education
- Rezaei, M., Owens, PE., Wang, HC, (2023). Recreating Experience of Space in Social Virtual Reality, ACM transaction on Computer- Human Interaction (TOCHI), Submitted