Mina **Rezaei**

☐ (530) 760-9096 | ✉ minrezaei89@gmail.com | ⌂ www.minarezaei.org | in mina-rezaei-b5642536/

Summary

Strategic and creative UX researcher with 8+ years of experience across tech, design, and academic sectors. Proven success in driving mixed-method research that shapes product vision, strategy, and design decisions in ambiguous and early-stage environments. Skilled in synthesizing complex insights into actionable outcomes, building research operations, and collaborating with cross-functional teams to deliver inclusive and impactful user experiences.

Core Skills and Tools

Research and Analysis	Mixed methods, usability testing, user interviews, A/B testing, ethnography, journey mapping, survey design, research repositories
Tools	Figma, Miro, Hotjar, UserTesting, MAXQDA, Qualtrics, ArcGIS, Python, JavaScript, HTML, CSS, LaTeX
Product and Project Management	Productboard, Asana, Smartsheet, stakeholder alignment, roadmap influence
Communication	Data storytelling, insight synthesis, workshop facilitation, stakeholder reports

Work Experience

Founder and Product Research Lead
Remote

Mysaic by Mina
Jan 2024 - present

- Led the design and launch of a unique art product that blends user insights, storytelling, physical and digital design. Mysaic by Mina transforms users' favorite passions, places, and characters into customized art frames.
- Conducted generative and competitive research—analyzing AI art platforms and memory-based design approaches—to understand the needs of fandom communities and individual buyers.
- Developed brand identity and storytelling strategy across Instagram, website, and storefront—setting the work apart from generic AI art and driving 5,000+ organic views in 40 days.

Researcher and Program Manager

California Department of Transportation
2024 - Present

- Managed a research and policy analysis program for a division of 160 individuals; identifying and pursuing funding for critical research needs, Successfully secured funding for over 10 research projects, totaling more than 5 million dollars in 18 months.
- Developed a project metrics directory by reviewing 20+ key plans, programs and related papers to measure completed projects and presented key insights to state-level stakeholders for strategic decision-making.
- Managed contracts with third party research agencies, ensuring research aligns with customer needs.
- Used LLMs to analyze research titles and uncover popular themes, helping researchers generate new research concepts.
- Managed and delivered over 80 legislative analyses in a 1-year period, providing critical feedback and improvements to over a dozen bills enacted into California state law from 2024-2025
- Developed research repositories and newsletters to increase visibility of research outputs, improving cross-team collaboration.

UX Researcher
Remote

Quantum Workplace-*A startup which aims to to make work better every day.*
Jun 2022 - Sep 2022

Improving Conversion Rate across QW Platforms

- Led a mixed-method research study involving interviews, surveys, authored journey maps and personas based on deep employee research, creating a shared vision for improving the end-to-end employee experience,leading to a 20% conversion rate boost for the Best Places to Work survey platform.

Creating Research Repository

- Partnered with product managers and designers to prioritize roadmap features based on user insights.
- Established company's first research repository, increasing customer touchpoints 4× and standardizing research processes.

UX Researcher
Remote

Hack for LA
Jun 2021 - Sep 2021

Standardizing Research Across HackForLA projects

- Standardized research processes across civic tech projects by designing templates, interview guides, and screener protocols.

Doctoral Researcher and Instructor *Remote*

SOCIAL COMPUTING LAB, DESIGN AND HUMAN ECOLOGY DEPARTMENTS- UC DAVIS *Sep 2017 - Dec 2023*

Recreating Experience of Space in Social VR

- Conducted spatial experience research in Social VR using qualitative methods (interviews, content analysis) to inform 3D environment design.
- Collaborated with cross-functional teams on prototyping and evaluation of immersive learning tools.

Spatial Education App and Youth Engagement

- End-to-end product and research strategy for Creative Wanderer, a map-based app that uses film to support teens' spatial thinking. Conducted generative research, competitive analysis, prototyping, and usability testing to shape the MVP and guide product direction.
- Designed and conducted participatory research on teen engagement in the Rocky Hill Trail redesign project, using interviews, literature review, and behavioral mapping to assess youth involvement in environmental planning.
- Developed research protocols for behavioral mapping and observational methods as part of the Growing Up in Cities initiative, supporting junior researchers and advancing youth-centered public space design.
- Designed and taught a Sociology of Adolescence course for 90 undergraduate students—developed original curriculum, led lectures and discussions, and integrated interdisciplinary perspectives on youth, technology (social media, VR, AR, MR), identity, and social structures.

Design Research Lead / Design Researcher

PRIOR EXPERIENCE – ARCHITECTURE AND SPATIAL RESEARCH AND DESGIN CONSULTING FRIMS *2011 -2017*

Using User-Centered Design Methods in Designing the Built Environment

- Led user research on spatial experiences using interviews, surveys, focus groups, and ethnographic methods; synthesized insights and presented findings to stakeholders, including VP-level leadership—contributing to a 2% increase in open and green spaces in under-resourced communities.
- Selected among top four designs out of 60 consulting firms; awarded $4,000 in funding to continue research in Phase 2.
- Established and led a cross-functional team of 10 designers, researchers, social scientists, and engineers, fostering collaboration between design and engineering that resulted in the company's registration with the urban planning board.
- Built strong relationships with executive stakeholders and successfully managed multiple concurrent research projects from planning through delivery.
- Created 3D visualizations and maps using AutoCAD 3D, 3d Max and ArcScene to communicate research findings and design strategies to director-level stakeholders.

Education

University of California, Davis *Davis, CA*

PH.D. IN GEOGRAPHY WITH A FOCUS ON HUMAN COMPUTER INTERACTION *Sep 2017 - Dec 2023*

Training: NSF I-Corps, UC Berkeley (Startup Training)Creative Wanderer App – Business Model Development Remote 2021

Additional Experience

Organizer and intsructor *Davis, CA*

MAPTIME DAVIS (GEOSPATIAL SKILLS WORKSHOP SERIES) *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.js.

Freelance writer *Davis, CA*

MEDIUM BLOG, COMMUNICATIONS OF ACM (CACM)) *Sep 2021 -present*

- Wrote about tech related themes such as generative AI, UX research, Apps. https://minarezaei.medium.com/

Publications (Selected)

- Rezaei, M.,(2025). Explorer's Intangible Power, Communications of ACM, available online: https://cacm.acm.org/article/explorers-intangible-power/, a short story about the future of generative AI
- Rezaei, M., Owens, P.E and Wang, HC(2025). Recreating Expereince of Space in Social Virtual Reality, Working paper
- Rezaei, M., Owens, P.E and Wang, HC(2025). Designing a Film-Based Educational Map App: Learning Spatial Concepts through Movies , Working paper for journal of Geography in higher education