

Siddarth Ponnala Ph.D.

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SUMMARY

Siddarth Ponnala is a results-driven product leader with 9+ years of experience in mixed-methods research and design across healthcare, pharmaceuticals, automotive, and logistics. He excels in leading teams, driving innovation, and delivering research-backed design solutions from wireframes to high-fidelity prototypes to support product roadmaps and business outcomes.

EXPERIENCE

Managing Consultant

07/2018 – present

Infinite Intuition [Self-employed], Chicago, IL

- Conduct design research studies to uncover user attitudes, behaviors, and needs, shaping product development in B2B and B2C organizations.
- Manage research budgets of \$50K+ per study to recruit participants and execute user and product research.
- Develop and iterate design artifacts to maturity using Figma and Miro.
- Clients: Froedtert Hospital, ZS Associates, Expeditors, Medidata, Z-Tech

Head of UX Research & Design

10/2022 – 12/2024

Saama, AI solutions for Clinical Trials

- Led a team of 8 UX designers and researchers to support six product and marketing teams.
- Conducted 60+ user interviews and 10 focus groups to uncover current user experiences and desired outcomes.
- Established a design system in Figma and delivered over 200 design concepts to drive product ideation and innovation
- Partnered with customer success to establish a usage analytics suite in Amplitude for C-suite

Head of Design Research

09/2021 – 10/2022

CARIAD (Volkswagen Auto Cloud), - Cloud Solutions Provider for VW brands

- Launched 2 new product verticals and expanded business portfolio from user research.
- Mentored and trained over 150 employees on user research and design practices in PDLC
- Created surveys using Qualtrics and MaxDiff to capture insights from 100+ unique users
- Developed over 12 new personas and supporting journey maps to inform the product backlog

Lead Design Strategist

04/2021 – 09/2021

divvyDose [Acquired by Optum], - Online Pharmacy for Multi-Medication Patients

- Established the product discovery program for pharmacy and customer experience and mentored 3 researchers to support 8 product teams
- Applied usage metrics and error data to prioritize features in product backlogs
- Defined 6 personas and corresponding journey maps to shape product capabilities
- Managed research protocols and 20k+ budgets with vendors: usertesting.com and DScout
- Partnered with product delivery team to establish a usage analytics suite in Pendo

Human Factors Engineer

01/2020 – 04/2021

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, - Top rated Pediatrics Academic Medical Center

- Spear-headed COVID-19 Vaccines for 21,000 employees and patients by designing a boot-

- strapped scheduling tool and clinic operations
- Improved wait time in outpatient cardiology clinics by 15 mins through human factors engineering
- Reduced safety events related to central line infections by 8% by implementing a hygiene checklist program.

Human Factors Engineer (Internship) 05/2019 – 10/2019

Mayo Clinic, Top ranked academic Medical Center

- Conducted 50+ hours of ethnographic studies on robot assisted surgery and surgeon workload and performance
- Applied systems engineering to develop ergonomics training modules for 300 surgical staff
- Usability tested tourniquets and vitals sign machines with over 40 different users to evaluate device capabilities and adherence to regulations.

Human Factors Systems Engineer 06/2018 – 06/2019

Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, Top ranked Pediatric Medical Center

- Reduced physician to physician to handoff time in PICUs by 5 minutes and improved satisfaction by 20%
- Conducted heuristic evaluations and accessibility testing to refactor contrast ratios
- Reviewed over 500 safety events to identify sentinel trends in patient safety and quality

AHRQ Graduate Research Assistant 09/2017 – 01/2020

University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI

- Investigated the work processes and networks of caregivers of persons with Dementia through 30 interviews and published 6 peer reviewed articles in high impact journals
- Designed the Alpha release of a mobile application, Help Care Connect using Adobe suite
- Mentored and trained 8 undergraduate students in research initiatives that included literature reviews, grant proposals, data collection and analysis protocols

User Experience Engineer (Internship) 06/2017 – 09/2017

Northrop Grumman, Civic Tech Contractor

- Conducted user research for disability case processing systems with 20 moderated user testing sessions
- Developed 5 usability testing protocols for various product lines and executed 5 studies.
- Evaluated 3 applications for accessibility violations and produced a backlog of enhancements

Lead User Experience Researcher and Designer 08/2016 – 08/2017

Newman Library, Virginia Tech, Information Services Provider

- Conducted work-domain analysis for academic social networking and designed the MVP
- Surveyed over 30 users to elicit user preferences and needs
- Designed high-fidelity screens for 15 development sprints and 2 major product leases.

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Industrial and Systems Engineering (Human Factors)

University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI

M.S. Industrial and Systems Engineering (Human Factors)

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA

B.S. Liberal Arts and Sciences - Psychology

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, IL