

Alejandra Rodriguez Vega, Ph.D, UX Researcher

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WORK EXPERIENCE

UX Researcher Google · DeepMind - Gemini App

San Francisco, CA - Contract March 2026 — Present

- Design and conduct **qualitative and quantitative user testing** with new and existing users to evaluate first-time interactions, **initial feature adoption**, comprehension, and navigation of **experimental AI interfaces across multi-platform environments**.
- Analyzed and synthesized data to **pinpoint key usability barriers**, successfully **resolving core user friction points** related to cognitive load management, contextual retention, and spatial orientation.
- Delivered **actionable recommendations** to cross-functional stakeholders that directly **guided executive UX investment and product roadmaps**.

UX Researcher - Study Coordinator Apple · Vision Pro

Sunnyvale, CA Contract March 2025 – March 2026

- Lead usability studies for **Apple Vision Pro's Persona feature**, a real-time 3D avatar system for immersive video communication.
- Conduct research to evaluate **Persona Enrollment workflows**, gathering **feedback and behavioral insights** to refine the end-user experience.
- Design and execute **surveys, in-depth user interviews, observational studies and A/B testing**, to assess **performance and user satisfaction** across diverse hardware environments and lighting conditions.
- **Collaborate with cross-functional teams**, including hardware **engineering, computer vision, and design**, to improve system-level performance and fidelity of Personas.
- Support data analysis pipelines and help translate findings into **actionable recommendations for refinement and product usability**.
- Contribute to ongoing **improvements in research operations to reduce human error**, including protocol documentation, testing setup efficiency, and multi-device study reliability.

User Experience Researcher Starbucks (via ASU).

Tempe, Arizona 2018 — February 2025 (Foundational Research)

- **Led user research for a strategic innovation** partnership between **Starbucks** and Arizona State University, supporting the development of new products and experiences for **Gen-Z consumers across food, beverage, and retail environments**.
- **Designed and executed mixed-method research** using **interviews (n=10–30), surveys (n=100+), usability testing, card sorting, diary studies, and co-creation workshops (10–50 participants)** to uncover user needs, **behavioral trends, and emerging expectations**.
- **Partnered with design, product, and marketing teams** to translate insights into **actionable product strategies**, driving alignment between customer needs and business objectives.
- **Delivered research findings** through clear, stakeholder-facing artifacts and presentations, **enabling data-informed decisions on product features**, service design, and future innovation planning.

SKILLS

Research Methods

Survey Design & Analysis, User Interviews, Usability Testing, Diary Studies, Ethnographic Field Studies, Cultural Probes, Focus Groups, Rapid Testing, Literature Reviews, Stakeholder Workshops, A/B Testing, Collaborative & Speculative Design, Design Fiction, Rapid Prototyping, Thematic Analysis, Affinity Diagrams, Card Sorting.

Research Tools and Analysis

Qualtrics, SurveyMonkey, Excel, dscout, NotebookLM, Antigravity, Gemini, Claude, ChatGPT

Additional Tools & Skills

Figma, Mural, Miro, Photoshop, Illustrator, Blender, HTML, CSS, JavaScript, Python, Arduino, OptiTrack MOCAP

EDUCATION

Arizona State University

Ph.D in Human-Computer Interaction

2020 — 2024

Graduate Completion Fellowship

Arizona State University

MA in Media, Arts, and Sciences

2018 — 2019

Outstanding Graduating Student

North Carolina State University

BA in Communication Media

2012 — 2016

RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

Alejandra Rodriguez Vega, and Stacey Kuznetsov. 2025 Dream Drone: Crowd-based Storytelling as a Tool for Design Reflection. In Leonardo - MIT Press. 2025

Stacey Kuznetsov, Alejandra Rodriguez Vega, and Elenore Long. 2022. [A Study of Solar Cooking: Exploring Climate-Resilient Food Preparation and Opportunities for HCI](#). In Proceedings of the 2022 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI '22). New Orleans, Louisiana USA.

Heesun Kim, Kyle Hoefler, Alejandra Rodriguez Vega, and Stacey Kuznetsov. 2019. [Drogon, the Thermal-Sensing Drone: Exploring Aerial Imagery as a Tool for Citizen Science Research](#). In Companion Publication of the 2019 on Designing Interactive Systems Conference 2019 (DIS '19). San Diego, California USA.

DISSERTATION

Exploring Collaborative Design Through Storytelling and Ideation ([link](#))

Arizona State University

CONFERENCES CONTRIBUTIONS

Reviewer , [ACM CHI](#) (2023) Honolulu, Hawaii

Area chair, [ACM DIS](#) (2023) Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Presenter: [A Study of Solar Cooking](#), [ACM CHI](#) (2022) New Orleans, Louisiana

Area Chair, [ACM DIS](#) (2021) Online

Works in Progress Chair, [TEI](#) (2019) Tempe, Arizona

Presenter: [Drogon, the Thermal- Sensing Drone](#) [ACM DIS](#)(2019) San Diego, California