

Lei (Lori) Cai

AI Product Designer · B2B & B2C

loricai1017@gmail.com

<https://www.leicai99.com>

Seattle, WA

ABOUT ME

I've spent the last 4 years designing AI products where the stakes actually matter. My edge is sitting at the intersection of deep user research and technical fluency: I can read an ML paper in the morning, run a user study in the afternoon, and ship a prototype by evening. I care most about the hard problems. How do you design trust into a system that makes mistakes? How do you hand control between a human and a model at exactly the right moment? That's the work I show up for.

EXPERIENCE

Founding Product Designer & PM | *Nestify (Seed-Funded, App Store)* Jan 2026 – Present

- Built and shipped production-ready features using Cursor, Visual Studio Code + Claude, and Figma Make, reducing design-to-launch timelines from weeks to days.
- Sole designer driving product vision, PRDs, roadmap planning, and end-to-end UX across seed fundraising and two App Store launches.
- Architected conversational and agent-based interaction systems for collaborative AI workflows, balancing automation with user trust and clarity.
- Managed and mentored design interns, leading critique, execution, and cross-functional collaboration in a fast-paced startup environment.

Product Manager | *Amazon Business × UW HCDE Capstone* Feb 2026 – Jun 2026

- Led product strategy and feature roadmap for an agentic AI browser reducing context-switching in enterprise procurement workflows, sponsored by Amazon Business.
- Defined the "hero workflow" and core feature set by synthesizing 14+ survey responses and 6+ expert interviews; established the assist → recommend → automate framework balancing AI autonomy with enterprise trust requirements.
- Shipped a fully functional prototype via AI-assisted vibe coding, translating product specs into working code end-to-end without engineering support.
- Led a cross-functional team of 4 through research, design, and usability testing; owned sponsor relationship and final handoff.

Lead Designer · iF Design Award 2026 | *2 Projects* 2025 – 2026

- Led product definition for a **3-system AI autonomous trucking platform** (driver HMI, safety operator dashboard, fleet analytics), defined requirements for safety-critical human-AI handoff, override logic, and real-time decision flows across two parallel teams; recognized with an iF Design Award 2026.
- Designed an **AI-powered pregnancy diagnostic app**, applied research-informed principles around trust, disclosure, guardrails, and high-empathy AI interaction in sensitive user contexts; both recognized with iF Design Awards 2026.

Product Designer & PM Intern | *NEXA.AI (AI Products, Launched)* Jan – Jun 2024

- Shipped an **on-device AI assistant for enterprise use**, designed workflow architecture, model interaction patterns, and adaptive UI states for complex multi-step task execution in resource-constrained environments.
- Co-shipped a conversational AI search product contributing to **35K+ registrations** and **#1 Product of the Day on Product Hunt**; redesigned first-run experience by restructuring input/output, clarified uncertainty states, strengthened failure handling.
- Produced 4 high-fidelity prototypes supporting **\$10M+ investment decisions**; built the cross-platform design system adopted across all subsequent features.

AI Research & Design · Research Assistant | *University of Washington*

Jan 2024 – Present

- Leading research across AI-mediated mental health communication (**UW Medicine GIBHS Grant, \$24K+**), LLM-augmented information editing, multi-agent LLM brainstorming, and public AI perception — generating direct insights into expert AI adoption and trust.
- Analyzed **200+ papers** on AI trust; managed and processed **4,000+ participant responses** using R and Python; designed and evaluated AI interaction concepts through interviews, diary studies, and usability testing.
- Produced actionable design recommendations on trust cues, transparency, guardrails, and failure state design — directly informing AI product design decisions.
- Generalization testing for manipulation models at Sensor Olympics-level task complexity (lock-picking, tabletop organization) including hardware setup, data collection, and model training pipelines.
- Tactile-powered robotic arms that integrate haptic sensing to improve manipulation performance; leading hardware preparation and contributing to model design and human mental model research.

EDUCATION

MS, Human Centered Design & Engineering | *University of Washington*

Expected Jun 2026

MA, Communication Leadership | *University of Washington*

Sep 2022 – Jun 2024

SKILLS

Systems Design: Multi-role workflow design · Safety-critical UX · HMI · Operator dashboards · Data-dense interfaces · State/error handling · Trust & transparency · Guardrails

AI / Product: Agent interaction patterns · Uncertainty cues · PRD writing · Roadmapping · Feature prioritization · Stakeholder alignment · 0→1 execution

Research: User interviews · Diary studies · Usability testing · Heuristic evaluation · Thematic analysis · Quantitative analysis (R, Python) · IRB compliance

Technical: Python · R · HTML/CSS · API integration · LLM fine-tuning · Cursor · Figma AI · Lovable · Webflow · SQL · Git