

Connelly Morris

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SENIOR USER EXPERIENCE RESEARCHER

Senior UX Researcher with 5+ years of experience uncovering user needs and transforming complex systems into accessible, human-centered experiences. Skilled in mixed-method research and translating insights into product and service improvements that drive measurable impact. Proven success establishing research practices within mission-driven organizations like FEMA, strengthening stakeholder engagement and decision-making. Passionate about using research to help people navigate life's most challenging moments and to build scalable, compassionate digital experiences that make essential services more equitable.

KEY SKILLS

Interaction Design | B2B | B2C | Competitive Analysis | Ethnographic Research | Customer Relations | Customer Journey | App Design | Prototype Development | Service Design | Meeting Facilitation
| Human Computer Interaction | Data Analysis | Leadership | Social Media | Customer Service | Human Centered Research

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

CMS | SKYWARD IT SOLUTIONS, ROCKVILLE, MD

HCD Lead | July 2025 – Present (Contracted through Skyward IT Solutions)

Lead Human-Centered Design efforts across the SEAS-IT contract, guiding UX research and design strategy to improve collaboration, align stakeholder priorities, and embed HCD practices into the development lifecycle. Partner closely with CMS stakeholders, engineers, and product teams to ensure user insights inform product direction and delivery.

- Lead and mentor a team of UX practitioners (research and design), overseeing day-to-day execution, providing strategic direction, and ensuring alignment of HCD work with program goals and CMS priorities.
- Facilitate stakeholder interviews and working sessions with CMS partners to capture product requirements, clarify vision, and translate business needs into actionable research and design initiatives.
- Co-led multi-method research efforts, incorporating stakeholder input and developer collaboration to ensure findings directly informed product decisions and development priorities.
- Introduced pre-research collaboration workshops with engineers, increasing engagement in the research process and improving adoption of insights in final deliverables.

FEMA | SKYWARD IT SOLUTIONS, ROCKVILLE, MD

Senior User Experience Researcher | July 2024 – July 2025 (Contracted through Skyward IT Solutions)

Partner with FEMA and DHS stakeholders to improve the **disaster survivor experience**, simplifying how survivors apply for aid, understand communications, and access support. Collaborated cross-functionally with program managers, developers, and policy teams to ensure user insights translated into measurable enhancements to FEMA's service design and communication strategy.

- Conducted and analyzed **12 in-depth user interviews** to assess six FEMA letter templates, producing evidence-based recommendations that enhanced clarity, accessibility, and trust in FEMA communications.
- Facilitated **12 usability sessions** with helpline agents to evaluate the AgentAssist tool; synthesized **563 data points** into **17 critical usability findings**, informing product improvements and leadership priorities.
- Led usability testing with the **DHS AI Corps** to evaluate an AI chatbot for FEMA call center agents,

identifying workflow efficiencies that reduced handling time and improved service delivery.

- Designed and distributed a **CSAT survey** to 100 government employees, gathering quantitative insights that informed the product roadmap and shaped team OKRs for the upcoming quarter.

MEDABLE, INC., PALO ALTO, CA

Senior User Experience Researcher | July 2022 – January 2024

Joined Medable during its early growth phase (100 employees, scaling to 500 by Jan 2024) and coached five cross-functional product teams in continuous discovery and experimentation, leading hands-on workshops on mapping opportunity trees to drive data-informed product decisions.

- Led ethnographic research (contextual inquiry and 20+ field interviews) to inform product strategy and design for two major platform features; findings directly guided product direction and improved end-user workflows.
- Designed and executed a full-cycle research project (18 qualitative interviews with usability testing) to develop a new application from concept to release — replacing a command-line workflow with a visual interface that decreased time on task by 70% and reduced training needs for non-technical users.

User Experience Researcher | July 2021 – July 2022

- Created **20 evergreen B2B personas** used across the organization to inform product strategy, guide discovery, shape user stories in Jira, and onboard new employees.
- Designed and deployed a **quantitative NPS survey** (60+ respondents) to establish baseline metrics; results were leveraged by five product teams to define and prioritize user-centered OKRs.
- Produced **25+ short research highlight videos** and distributed them company-wide, democratizing access to insights and increasing engagement with user feedback across teams.

Accenture Federal Digital Studio, Washington, DC

Product Designer | May 2020 – July 2021

Designed and iterated user-centric digital products for federal clients, ensuring accessibility, usability, and alignment with mission objectives.

- Won a federal “Tech Challenge” competition by designing and presenting a functional prototype under timed conditions; recognized for usability and accessibility best practices.
- Conducted bi-weekly **design reviews** with account teams to refine wireframes and address system constraints, resulting in client-approved screens ready for development on a weekly cadence.

Design Intern | January 2019 – May 2020

- Recruited and managed over **45 user testing participants** for moderated sessions; synthesized findings and delivered actionable recommendations to the design team.
- Supported usability improvements to the **FAFSA website**, resulting in measurable increases in user engagement and satisfaction.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) User Experience Design

Savannah College of Art and Design, Savannah, GA

Marty Cagan “EMPOWERED: Ordinary People, Extraordinary Products”

30 day, In-person training

CERTIFICATIONS

Agile SAFe Certified Product Manager

Certified SAFe Agilist

IDEO AI x Design Thinking Practitioner (Workshop Completion, 2025)

AWARDS

- **UX Mentor – Designlab** – Provided UX mentorship and guidance to students to promote their growth in the industry.
- **Red Dot Design Award – Brands & Communication Design 2020** - *“Token” recognized for excellence in Interaction UX Design, winning one of the world’s most respected design competitions.*