

Statement Of Purpose

Vikram Chatterji

Aim and Motivation

I have always been fascinated by human behavior's response to the semantics, aesthetics and design of the devices or applications borne out of this advancement. It is this fascination in the human aspect of technology and my interest in being a part of a dynamic field that motivated me to pursue my under graduation in the field of industrial design (Bachelor in Design) at the prestigious Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), India. IIT is regarded to produce some of the finest engineers in India. My freshman year of undergraduate studies consisted of advanced sciences and programming courses. This was followed by several courses in design over the remaining three years. This engineering background clubbed with my education in design allows me to have an analytical yet creative bent of mind while tackling projects.

My primary area of interest is in Interaction Design, specifically Human Computer Interaction. In order to further equip myself with the knowledge and skill set necessary to excel in industry and provide users with more human-centric devices, I wish to pursue a masters program in **an environment that is dynamic and nurtures a spirit of innovation**.

Interests

I consider myself a good team worker and enjoy leadership and managerial tasks. I had the opportunity to do so in abundance as president of the Literary Club at IIT for the academic year 2008-2009, wherein I organized a plethora of activities including the first national level parliamentary debate at IIT, while maintaining and involving all members of the club. I also have a passion for participation in debates at the national and international levels and enjoy being a part of discussions and brainstorming sessions while ideating for a project.

I believe that my presentation and speaking skills, as well as leadership and management attributes would contribute well to the industry I work at.

Industry experience, Internships and Projects

After my second year of college I spent my summer with a team of talented and experienced automobile designers at **Numero Design**, a design firm based in **Paris, France**. The company is a spin off from the €1 Bn Italy based automotive company Pininfarina. During this industrial internship, I was involved in the various stages of

product development such as cut and trim, interior design and exterior production and I also produced renderings of automotive parts using the software Alias Studiotools(2008) for clients. This involved 3D wire-framing and displaying the various stages of product development. I went on to create experimental prototypes for Nokia cellular, Siemens Coffee Machine and other household equipments. My project gave me a firsthand insight into the world of the automobile industry from a designer and product developer's perspective and allowed me to interact and understand the need of clients at the international level.

After my third year at IIT, I had the opportunity to work for ten weeks with Professor Carolyn Rose (Language Technologies Institute and Human Computer interaction Institute, HCII) at Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) in Pittsburgh, USA. During my internship I worked closely with researchers at CMU to provide solutions to incorporate usability and human computer Interaction (HCI) techniques for tools they developed. These tools were primarily cognitive tutors aimed to create software for use by educators who do not have prior knowledge of JAVA or other software creating languages. I also provided support to users by successfully designing a comprehensive user tested manual for a project that involved four cognitive tutors – TuTalk, CTAT (Cognitive Tutor Authoring Tools), SIDE and TagHelper – all conceptualized, tested and developed at CMU . This user manual was used by educators at the RajivGandhi University of Knowledge Learning in India and also by participants at the PSLC (Pittsburgh Science of Learning Center) Summer School 2009 held at CMU. The Summer School was an annual one week forum that brought together Human Computer Interaction experts from around the world. I was an integral part of the logistics team for the event and was nominated mentor for a group of Interaction Designers.

I should also mention that prior to my internship at Carnegie Mellon University(CMU), I Initiated, established and managed a collaboration between Carnegie Mellon University and Indian Institute of Technology by putting in place for students at the Indian Institute of Technology in Guwahati an Online Course in Machine Learning taught by Professor Carolyn P. Rose. I was based at the Indian Institute of Technology and worked closely online with Professor Rose to manage and monitor this course.

I am currently working on a project in the field of Human Computer Interaction (HCI) dealing with information seeking and search behavior and its application to a search engine GUI (Graphic User Interface) for IPR (Intellectual Property Rights) violation detection of designs. The project is in joined collaboration between Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati and Carnegie Mellon University (CMU), Pittsburgh and is being conducted under the supervision of Professor Pradeep Yammiyavar (FDRS) and Professor Carolyn Rose.

My collaboration with CMU and HCI continues as I'll be helping out in a Winter School to be conducted in December 2009 by Professor Carolyn Rose and Professor Matthew Kam, in Hyderabad, India. I'm certain for that to be a great learning experience for me.

Future plans and Carnegie Mellon University

I plan to work as a professional Interaction Designer in industry. During my internship at Carnegie Mellon University in the summer of 2009, I got the opportunity to interact with students pursuing their Masters in HCI and the faculty for HCI at CMU. This gave me an up close look into their work and mode of action. I was particularly fascinated by the interdisciplinary nature of working on a Capstone Project. The fast paced industry oriented manner of tackling projects seems to be the modus operandi at CMU and this motivated me further to wish to pursue a Masters degree in HCI from the university as it blends perfectly with my interests and career aims. I consider it to be the perfect stepping stone for paving my road ahead into industry.