

Research Interest

My research goal is to help people live better lives by supporting human cognitive development with science and technology, with a strong emphasis on a human-centered design approach. In particular, I have explored how digital interactions can enable people to become aware of and manage things that are difficult to perceive, such as emotions or unconscious behaviors.

Educations

Aug 2022 – Aug 2024

Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST), Daejeon, South Korea

M.S. in Industrial Design

Advisor: Prof.Hwajung Hong

Mar 2013 – Feb 2019

Seoul National University (SNU), Seoul, South Korea

B.F.A. in Painting

B.F.A. in Media Art

Graduated with honors

Publications

Thesis

Exploring design opportunities of the surrealistic virtual environment for mindfulness: VR interventions to mitigate emotional eating

Sooyeon Ahn (Advisor: Hwajung Hong)

MS Thesis, Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology 2024

Journal & Conference Paper

MindTerior: A Mental Healthcare Game with Metaphoric Gamespace and Effective Activities for Mitigating Mild Emotional Difficulties

Ain Lee, Juhyun Lee, Sooyeon Ahn, and Youngik Lee **The authors contributed equally to this work.*

CHI 2023: ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems

Designing a Personalized Stress Management System for Call Center Workers

Kwangyoung Lee, Hyunseung Lim, Sooyeon Ahn, Taewan Kim, Hwajung Hong

BigComp 2023: IEEE International Conference on Big Data and Smart Computing

Projects

2024 Curi

Curi is a text-based online mentoring platform aiming to solve the digital divide accelerated by network and technical issues. We proposed a text-based online mentoring platform with AI support based on user research results about existing video and voice-based mentoring services.

Sooyeon Ahn, Chaebeen Kwon, Yeji Shim, Hyobin Cho

Role: User research, Service plan, and design, Team lead

2024 EE-Scape

Recorded video of [EE-Scape](#)

EE-Scape is a VR mindfulness application that alleviates impulsive eating triggered by emotional reasons. Our preliminary studies indicated that most emotional eaters reflect some meanings to the food (e.g., a friend comforting me). To deal with these emotional bonds, *EE-Sscape* provides a novel virtual food experience that allows users to perceive the food differently and reflect on their emotional eating habits.

Sooyeon Ahn, Hwajung Hong, Eunmi Kim

Role: Research, Service plan and design(Lead), VR application development, First author

2022 – MindBattery

2024 In this study, we developed MindBattery, a smartphone application that uses a battery metaphor to help call center workers recognize their emotional energy depletion, and provides a set of microbreaks for emotional recovery.

Ain Lee, Sooyeon Ahn, and Jongok Hong

Role: Research, Service plan and design, UX/UI Design, Interaction Design, Co-author

2022 – MindTerior

Publication [CHI 2023](#)

2023 *MindTerior* is a mental health care game for people with mild emotional difficulties. It analyzes each player's emotional state and shows the results as visual elements in the game space. It also suggests a gamified evidence-based mental health care activity that allows players to cope with their emotional problems.

Ain Lee, Juhyun Lee, Sooyeon Ahn, and Youngik Lee *All members contributed equally to this work.

Role: Research, Service plan and design, Sound Design, Development support(Unity), Co-first author

2021 – OWN

Recorded video

of [OWN](#)

2022 *OWN* is a 3D virtual space that elaborately visualizes the abstract and invisible inner world. It was dedicatedly tailor-designed for just one person(OWNer) through in-depth psychological analysis. It comprises therapeutic elements based on color psychology, environmental psychology, and art therapy to help calm the mind.

Sooyeon Ahn, Heeyoung Beak, Gill Son, and Dongbum Kim

Role: Research, Project management(lead), 3D virtual world design(Unreal Engine)

2021 **For the STARved**

Link to [For the STARved, Red Dot 2022](#)

For the STARved is an astrophotography exhibition held in an online 3D virtual space. It allows people starved of stars due to the pandemic to freely explore beautiful and fantastic galleries and watch astrophotographs taken by club members.

Sooyeon Ahn, Youngjae Kim, Doeun Kim, Seojin Park, Seungyun Oh, Minha Kang, and Wootae Kim

Role: Project Management, Design team lead, UX/UI Design, 3D Design, Sound Design

2020 **Mind-room**

Link to [Mind-room, Red Dot 2022](#)

Mind-room is an online test designed to increase people's awareness of their emotional state. It analyzes each user's emotional state based on how they react to various situations during a virtual journey, then suggests an emotionally calming room designed based on various theories such as color psychology and art therapy.

Sooyeon Ahn, Youngjae Kim, Minha Kang

Role: Project Management, Research, UX/UI Design, Illustration, Sound Design

Certificate

Nov 2024 *Boost Course <Generative AI 2024> Coaching Study*, Naver Connect Foundation

Oct 2024 *The user research and design for the social impact UX project*, COGITO

Aug 2024 *Boost Course <Data Science 2024> Coaching Study*, Naver Connect Foundation

Jun 2023 *CHI 2023 Student Game Competition Finalist Certificate*, ACM CHI Conference

Dec 2021 *Digital Three-Dimensional Creation Workshop for Lecturer*, Sketchsoft Inc.

Teaching Experience

Teaching Assistant, KAIST, Daejeon, South Korea

Mar 2024 – Jun 2024 ID218 Photo Techniques

Sep 2023 – Dec 2023 ID221 Information Design

Sep 2022 – Dec 2022 ID221 Information Design **Awarded for Outstanding TA Award*

Academy Instructor, GAUDI Design & Art Institute, Gwacheon, South Korea

Jan 2019 – August 2022 – Teaching Painting and Art Theories

– Planning the annual exhibitions

Scholarships & Awards

- 2024 **Outstanding Contribution Award**, COGITO(Funded by the MIT Sandbox Innovation Fund)
- 2023 **Outstanding TA Award**, KAIST Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching
- 2022 **Red Dot Award** in Brands & Communication Design: Digital Solution, Red Dot Design Award
Red Dot Award in Brands & Communication Design: Websites, Red Dot Design Award
- 2019 **Cum Laude**: Graduated with honors, Seoul National University
- 2018 **Grand Prize** in CI design competition for SNU tech-startup plaza, College of Engineering at Seoul National University
- 2017 **SNU Development Fund Scholarship** (Merit-Based), Seoul National University
- 2016 **Eminence scholarship** (Merit-Based: excellence), Seoul National University
- 2015 **SNU Development Fund Scholarship** (Merit-Based), Seoul National University
Eminence scholarship (Merit-Based: excellence), Seoul National University
- 2014 **Eminence scholarship** (Merit-Based: excellence), Seoul National University
Merit-based scholarship, Seoul National University
- 2013 **SNU Development Fund Scholarship** (Merit-Based), Seoul National University
Merit Based Scholarship, Seoul National University
- 2011 **Silver Prize**, la Francophonie Photo contest

Experience

- Oct 2024 – Oct 2024 **COGITO**, New York, USA
Freelancer UX/UI Designer (Remote)
– Conducted user research and UX/UI Design
– Design team leader
- Aug 2022 – Aug 2024 **Data Interaction Design(DxD) Lab**, Daejeon, South Korea
Research Assistant
– Worked as a researcher and designer in the research project: *Development of human digital twin technology for predicting and managing mental health problems of emotional labor*
Advisor: Hwajung Hong

- Jun 2020 – Aug 2022 **Downleit**, Seoul, South Korea
Freelancer Graphic Designer
 – Designed several 3D motion posters for art exhibitions
 – Developed an AR application for an art exhibition
 – Designed a website for an art exhibition
- May 2019 – Aug 2019 **Conalog**, Seoul, South Korea
Part-Time Designer
 – Designed a website for Conalog, a company manufacturing small appliances based on energy-harvesting technology.
 – Branding, UI/UX design, Graphic Design
- Jan 2018 – Apr 2018 **Shareus**, Seoul, South Korea
Design Intern
 – Designed an online lecture platform to lead communication between retired seniors and the younger generation: aimed to mitigate the isolation and depression of the elderly and anxiety of young adults.
 – Branding, UX/UI Design, Graphic Design, Video Editing, Motion graphic design
- Mar 2015 – Oct 2015 **Korea Foundation for Women In Science, Engineering and Technology(WISET)**, Seoul, South Korea
Designer at a research project
 – Designed a humidity sensor for a research project: *Tannic acid coated graphene oxide reinforced poly(vinyl alcohol) nanocomposites with humidity sensing properties*

Selected Exhibitions

- 2024 ***Crossing Over: Innovation and Boundaries***, Ground Seoul, Seoul, South Korea
- 2023 ***Over Road***, Andong International Convention Center (ADCO), Andong, South Korea
Blueprint: Feasible Blue, ONDREAM SOCIETY, Seoul, South Korea
Art Eternal Light, MEUM(Online 3D Exhibition) & Arts Center Seoul, Seoul, South Korea
Sensing Anthropocene, KAIST, Daejeon, South Korea
CHI 2023 Exhibition, Congress Center Hamburg (CCH), Hamburg, Germany
- 2022 ***Inventive Minds and Ideas: Living in the Future***, DDP, Seoul, South Korea
- 2021 ***Neohyndaism 3rd: Miracle***, Geomang Creative Studio (GCS), Seoul, South Korea
Video Bites, Interart Channel, Seoul, South Korea
For the STARved, Online 3D exhibition

- 2020 *Mind-room*, Online exhibition
Mirror in Mirror, SOSHO, Seoul, South Korea
Fragmentary Memory (Solo Exhibition), OSISUN, Seoul, South Korea
- 2018 *Running Time Running*, Seoul National University, Seoul, South Korea
- 2017 *Not a Family but Similar*, Seoul National University, Seoul, South Korea
- 2016 *Festival 284: 英雄本色 A Better Tomorrow*, Culture Station Seoul 284, Seoul, South Korea
SNU 70th Anniversary Exhibition,
- 2013 *A Meeting of Video and Sound*, nest NADA, Seoul, South Korea
- 2011 *Stories of 14 persons*, Gallery In 仁, Seoul, South Korea
la Francophonie Photo Exhibition, Ambassade France Seoul, Seoul, Korea

Skills

Adobe: Photoshop, Lightroom, Illustrator, InDesign, Premiere Pro, After Effects, Audition

3D: Blender, Inventor, SOLIDWORKS, SketchUp pro, Unreal Engine, Unity, 3D printing

UX/UI: Figma, XD

Music: Muscores, Logic Pro X

Code: Python, HTML, CSS

Others: Arduino, Drawing, Painting, Printing, Sculpting, Paper making, Ceramic work, Sewing

Languages

Korean: Native

English: IELTS 7.0 – L 7.5 R 8.0 W 6.5 S 6.0