Aki Fukai

Principal Product Designer
B2B2C SaaS

Hamburg · Berlin · Zurich
Remote: EST to GST
Swiss Citizen

📞 **+49 172 431 15 00**
✈ **aki@fukai.ch**
🌐 **www.fukai.ch**
in **in/fukai**

Rapid Integration Toolkit

Design-to-Code Bridge: Figma expert (variables & tokens) · Component driven design · VS Code · Git workflows · Modern HTML/CSS · Meaningful CSS Transitions

Venture Collaboration: Notion · Miro/FigmaJam · Slack · JIRA/Asana/Linear · Google Sheets

Methodology Expertise: Shape-Up · JTBD · Service Design · Lean UX · Hypothesis-driven validation

Workflow Effectiveness: Cross-functional alignment eliminating translation gaps · Regulatory constraint adaptation ·

Currently exploring AI-augmented UX and design tooling and workflows besides ChatGPT, Claude and GitHub Copilot: Figma Make, Relume, Claude Code in Figma DevMode MCP server, various LLM-powered website builders

Languages

German: Mother tongue
English: Full professional proficiency
French: Intermediate level (B1)
Japanese & Zulu: Beginner level

Education

HAW Hamburg, Department Design Communication design (with an internship at Fork Unstable Media)

B2B/B2B2C SaaS Platform Design Specialist

Seasoned Product Designer with >20 years experience and 12+ years delivering scalable e-commerce and B2B SaaS in FinTech, HR Tech, UC/Collaboration and Sustainability. Expert in transforming complex requirements and regulations into intuitive products and platforms empowering small and medium businesses through insights-driven design.

Expertise: Platform design leadership · Rapid MVP validation · Regulatory UX · Design systems · Cross-functional alignment

Impact: Multiple successful SaaS launches · Best startup award · Rapid concept-to-market cycles · Enterprise pilot validation

Recent Engagements Overview

Principal Product Designer, SDGventure · Impact-Focused Venture Building Collective | Ongoing
Design Director, WHATEVER.WORKS (JobRad) · HR Tech / B2B SaaS Corporate Venture
Principal Product Designer, PlasticPlan (Henkel) · AI-Powered B2B SaaS / Circular Economy
Co-Founder & Principal Designer, Hello Meet · Scheduling SaaS Product / C2B / Social Network
Senior Product Designer, enfore AG · ERP Systems / POS SaaS
Founding Interaction Designer, collectAI (Otto Group) · FinTech / B2B2C Collections SaaS / ML
Lead Interaction Designer, SBB Railway (IVEG) · Enterprise GIS / Infrastructure SaaS
Senior Interaction Designer, frog for Siemens/Unify · Cloud-Based Enterprise Communications SaaS

Principal Product Designer, SDGventure

Jan 2022 – Present · 2 years 11 months · Part-time advisory role · Remote
Impact-focused venture building collective.

Strategic design leadership within Product-Design tandems and trios for corporate innovation projects. Operating as venture building expert within Germany's leading sustainable venture ecosystem, collaborating on multiple corporate ventures and spin-offs.

Reference: Patrick Koegel, Founder & CPO @ SDGventure

Principal Product Designer, whatever.works (JobRad)

May 2023 – Jun 2024 · 1 year 2 months · Contract · Remote
HR Tech B2B SaaS platform (corporate venture).

Led hands-on product design in tandem with Interim CPO and Tech Lead for corporate-backed B2B SaaS venture from idea validation to minimum lovable product (MVP) launch. Designed UX architecture and design system enabling confirmed product-market fit.

Rapid MVP Development & Validation:
- **14-Week Sprint:** Corporate-backed venture from idea validation to MVP launch in 14 weeks
- **Product-Market Fit:** UX architecture and design system enabled scaling to 30+ B2B clients
- **Sales Pipeline:** Design quality contributed to 40+ high-potential leads pipeline

End-to-End Design Leadership:
- **Compliance Architecture:** Streamlined user flows for 150+ countries regulatory framework
- **Technical Integration:** Localization (Lokalise), RBAC, SSO, account customizations, HRIS API integr.
- **Design System:** Scalable architecture enabling rapid feature development and client customization
- **Team Building:** Hired, onboarded design talent within 1 week; mentored toward higher ownership

Stakeholder & Business Impact:
- **Alignment:** Engaged stakeholders across functions ensuring product and UX strategy buy-in
- **Award Recognition:** Contributed to "Best HR Startup 2023" award (8th HR Start-up Award)
- **Successful Spin-Off:** JobRad corporate venture spun off as independent company (2024)
- **Strategic Positioning:** Design excellence enabling transition from venture to standalone entity

Methodology Innovation: Modified Shape-Up framework for compliance-heavy regulatory constraints, enabling rapid iteration while meeting legal requirements.
Impact: SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth)

Reference: Uwe Michaelis, Founder & Managing Director @ WHATEVER.WORKS

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Principal Product Designer, PlasticPlan (Henkel Venture)
Feb – Jul 2022 · 6 months · Contract · Remote
AI-powered sustainability compliance SaaS for circular economy.

AI-powered sustainability platform automating packaging data management and plastic tax compliance. Operated as Fractional Principal Designer in tandem with Interim CPO and Venture Lead, serving major enterprise clients in circular material use transformation.

Enterprise Impact & Validation:
- Market Validation: Secured LoI from Landbell, Bahlsen, and Melitta confirming market demand
- Cost Efficiency: UX design enabled up to 80% AI-driven reduction in plastic tax reporting costs
- Data Scale: 236M+ data points processed, 800K+ packaging comp., 160K+ products classified
- Corporate Satisfaction: High level of corporate client satisfaction regarding regulatory compliance

Technical Design Excellence:
- Scalable Frontend: Designed and shipped Tailwind-based frontend for multi-level data analysis
- AI-UX Integration: Turned AI data checks into actionable UI with low cognitive and interaction cost
- Contextual Design: Role and operational context specific sorting and filtering mechanisms
- Collaboration Systems: Assignment logic for cross-team collaboration, preventing delayed reports
- UX Coherence: Delivered clear, consistent UX in German and English. Improved flows, microcopy, and interactions in close collaboration with Frontend Lead across agile sprints.

Strategic Business Contributions:
- Stakeholder Engagement: Drove technical-business alignment through Director-level alignment
- Growth Foundation: Extended stakeholder engagement laying groundwork for strategic expansion
- Global Impact: Addresses 40% of global plastic waste, enabling regulatory compliance

Environmental Context: Addressing critical sustainability challenge where plastic production GHG emissions projected to account for 15% of Paris Agreement allowed emissions by mid-century
Impact: SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production), SDG 13 (climate action), SDG 14

Reference: Dr. Nora Mundschenk, Corporate Director Global Tax @ Henkel

Co-Founder & Principal Designer, Hello Meet — Group Scheduling
Jan 2018 – Oct 2021 · 6 years 3 months · Hamburg/Remote
Initially part-time, full-time from Jun 2020
Group scheduling product (mobile app) and social network platform.

Co-founded an uncompromisingly user-centric scheduling platform challenging traditional group scheduling models and ad-tech driven Social Networks. Led complete product design from early concepts and business model design through multiple product iterations.

Strategic Contributions:
- Product Architecture: JTBD-based UX strategy with hypothesis-driven validation cycles
- Cross-Platform Systems: Designed and maintained design systems across iOS, Android, Web
- Product Development: Led end-to-end feature delivery using our assumption mapping method and drove continuous improvements through user-centered insights
- Innovation Model: Pioneered C2B approach disrupting traditional enterprise scheduling workflows

Senior Product Designer, enfore AG
Jun 2018 – May 2020 · 1 year 11 months · Hamburg (Hybrid)
Contract extended to permanent employment after 8 months
ERP and POS SaaS platform for retail, hospitality, beauty and service.

UX leadership for retail and hospitality POS/ERP platform serving SME market. Delivered comprehensive modules including reservations, pick-up & delivery, online presence, business documents, a modular KPI dashboard and dashboard widgets.

Key Contributions:
- Modular Design Systems: Scaled architecture for complex multi-device workflows across multiple verticals (gastronomy, retail, beauty salons, services, e-commerce)
- SME-Focused UX: Simplified complex ERP processes for non-technical business users
- UX Architecture: Developed robust service blueprints to support fragmented, real-life user journeys with rapid context shifts and multi-role handovers
- Engineering Partnership: Ensured design QA and performance optimization throughout development cycles

Reference: Christophe Stoll, Head of Design @ Enfore via small is beautiful

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Founding Interaction Designer, collectAI (Liquid Labs, Otto Group)

Feb 2016 – Feb 2018 · 1 year 11 months · Hamburg (on-site)
Contract extended to permanent employment after 7 months
FinTech B2B2C SaaS for debt collection automation.

Led the UX and design as the founding Product Designer to create a customer centric collections platform. Designed scalable dunning and self-service payment flows for enterprise clients within regulated finance environment. Architected a B2B2B SaaS receivables management platform, powered by smart ML driven claim resolution.

Specialized Contributions:
- **Traction:** Delivered product design that helped scale receivables management to €25M
- **White-Label Architecture:** Built modular UX systems supporting multiple client brands
- **Payment Journey Optimization:** Self-service flows reducing customer service dependencies
- **Regulatory Compliance:** Receivables management workflows within strict financial and GDPR rules

Reference: Michael Backes, Co-Founder & CTO @ collectAI

Lead Interaction Designer, SBB Swiss Federal Railways (IVEG)

Nov 2015 – Sep 2016 · 11-month contract · Bern, Switzerland (on-site > hybrid)
Enterprise GIS / Infrastructure SaaS

Digitized vegetation risk assessment for Swiss railway infrastructure through GIS-enabled iPad/web application. Mapped complete field-to-office workflows for public sector efficiency and sustainability.

Technical Integration:
- **Service Design Workshops:** Complete workflow mapping from field assessment to procurement
- **Component Library:** UI systems aligned with SBB corporate identity across iOS and web
- **Stakeholder Complexity:** Public sector hierarchy alignment through iterative design workshops

Reference: Simon Haesler, Product Owner & GIS Specialist @ SBB CFF FFS

Senior Interaction Designer, frog for Siemens/Unify

Sep 2013 – Jan 2014 · 5-month contract · Munich (on-site)
Enterprise Communications / Cloud-Based Team Collaboration SaaS

Designed the real-time collaboration experience design for "Project Ansible" (productized as Circuit) with frog Munich in close collaboration with the product leads and lead software architects from Unify. Seamless cross-platform consistency across mobile, web, and tablet for multi-modal enterprise communication requirements.

Reference: Justin Maguire III, Executive Creative Director @ frog Munich

Further Engagements

Principal Product Designer & UX Consultant (freelance, remote/hybrid)

Time Management B2B SaaS Rebranding & Relaunch · 2025 ongoing
Babymarkt UX Audit · 2022
Tagesspiegel Media Relaunch · 2022
Mercedes-Benz Design System Refactoring · 2022-2023
1komma5° Design System Consulting · 2024
SAP (Fiori) Design System & UX Consulting · 2015

Senior Art Director & UX Concept Lead (freelance)

Telefónica o2 Relaunch o2online.de · 2011
CTS Eventim Relaunch eventim.de · 2008
Daimler/Mercedes-Benz Relaunch My Mercedes · 2009
Rossmann Relaunch online shop, corporate site, career portal · 2008-2012