



# USER PERSONA OVERVIEW



→  
UNDERSTANDING  
OUR AUDIENCE TO  
BUILD BETTER  
EXPERIENCES





# MEET SARAH

*Persona 1:  
The Standards-Driven Educator*

**Name, Age,  
Profession:**

Sarah, 42, 4th Grade Social  
Studies Teacher

**Short Bio**

Sarah is a veteran 4th-grade social studies teacher in a Wisconsin public school district. She is currently updating her curriculum to meet state standards that require more inclusive representations of Wisconsin history. She is tech-savvy but time-poor, needing to find "quick wins" for her classroom. Her primary goal is to find primary source materials: images, audio, and text, that feature lesser-known characters such as Walter Bressette or Elizabeth Baird to make history feel tangible for her students.

**Goals:**

To find specific, "lesser-known" historical figures and broad topical content that aligns with Wisconsin state educational standards.

**Search Behavior:**

She looks for synonymous terms (e.g., "First Nations" vs. "Native American") and expects diverse results including images, text, and sound.

**Frustrations / Challenges:**

Encountering "fuzzy" results for broad terms like "black" or "portage," and the lack of content when using contemporary terms like "Latinx".

**Motivation:**

Needs reliable, high-quality digital assets that align with K-4 social studies topics like the fur trade and the underground railroad.

A portrait photograph of a young man with dark hair and a beard, smiling at the camera. He is wearing a white t-shirt and has his arms crossed.

# MEET JOSEPH

*Persona 2: The Community Advocate Contributor*

## Name, Age, Profession:

Joseph, 35, Cultural Coordinator at Tribal Organization or Community Nonprofit

## Short Bio

Joseph serves as the Cultural Coordinator for a tribal organization in Wisconsin. He is deeply committed to preserving the heritage of underrepresented groups, specifically focusing on First Nations and Ho-Chunk history. While he frequently uses Recollection Wisconsin to research, he is now looking to contribute his organization's own small-scale digital collection. He represents the "small-scale partner" your project aims to support, often working with limited resources and looking for a clear, equitable onboarding path.

## Goals:

To engage with the platform as both a researcher and a potential contributor for underrepresented historical topics.

## Search Behavior:

Highly focused on specific community history, such as Ho-Chunk or Hmong heritage.

## Frustrations / Challenges:

Finds the current contributor onboarding process ambiguous and experiences accessibility barriers that make it difficult for small organizations to engage with digitization services.

## Motivation:

Wants to ensure his community's history is accurately represented and accessible to educators and researchers across the state.

# WHY USER PERSONAS MATTER FOR RECOLLECTION WISCONSIN

## Moving Beyond Assumptions

Personas shift the conversation from "what we think users want" to "what research shows they need". By grounding Sarah and Joseph in the Search Expectations Analysis, we ensure our design decisions solve real-world problems, such as synonymous term confusion (e.g., "First Nations" vs. "Native American").

## Empathy-Driven Design

User Experience (UX) is about understanding users' behaviors and emotions. Personas help us empathize with the specific "pain points" of small-scale partners, such as tribal organizations or community nonprofits, who may feel overwhelmed by the current onboarding process.

## Strategic Scope Containment

With a diverse audience ranging from genealogists to K-12 educators, it is easy for a project to suffer from "feature creep". Personas act as a "North Star," allowing us to prioritize the most critical features that serve our primary targets: educators and underrepresented contributors.

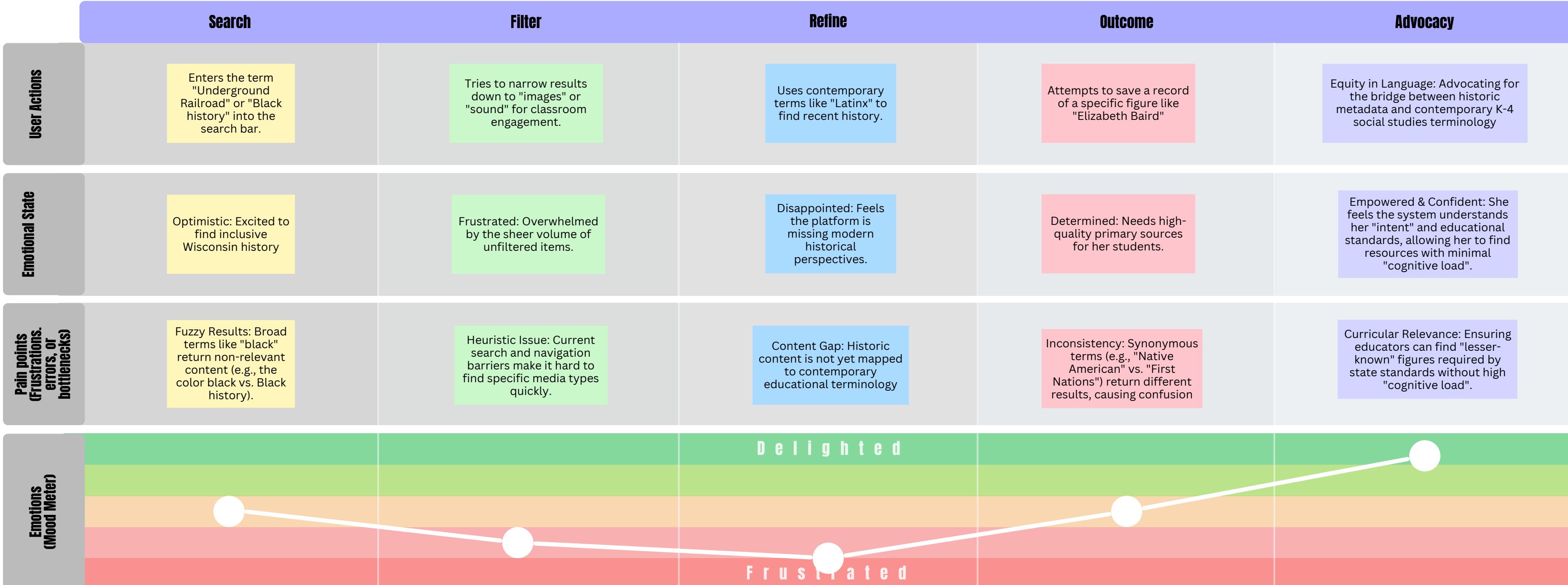
## Improving Accessibility and Equity

By focusing on a Community Advocate like Joseph, we can identify specific barriers in clarity and logic that currently hinder small or under-resourced institutions. This aligns the redesigned flow with WiLS's core values of inclusivity and transparency.

# User Journey Map: Sarah (The Educator)



**Goal:** Finding primary source materials for a 4th-grade social studies unit on the "Underground Railroad".



**Possible Solutions:** Target Emotion: Clarity.

**Synonym-Aware Search:** Implement a backend "thesaurus" that links terms like "First Nations," "Native American," and "Ho-Chunk" to ensure consistent results.

**Resource Tags:** Add a "Social Studies Standard" filter (e.g., "K-4") to allow for instant narrowing of results.

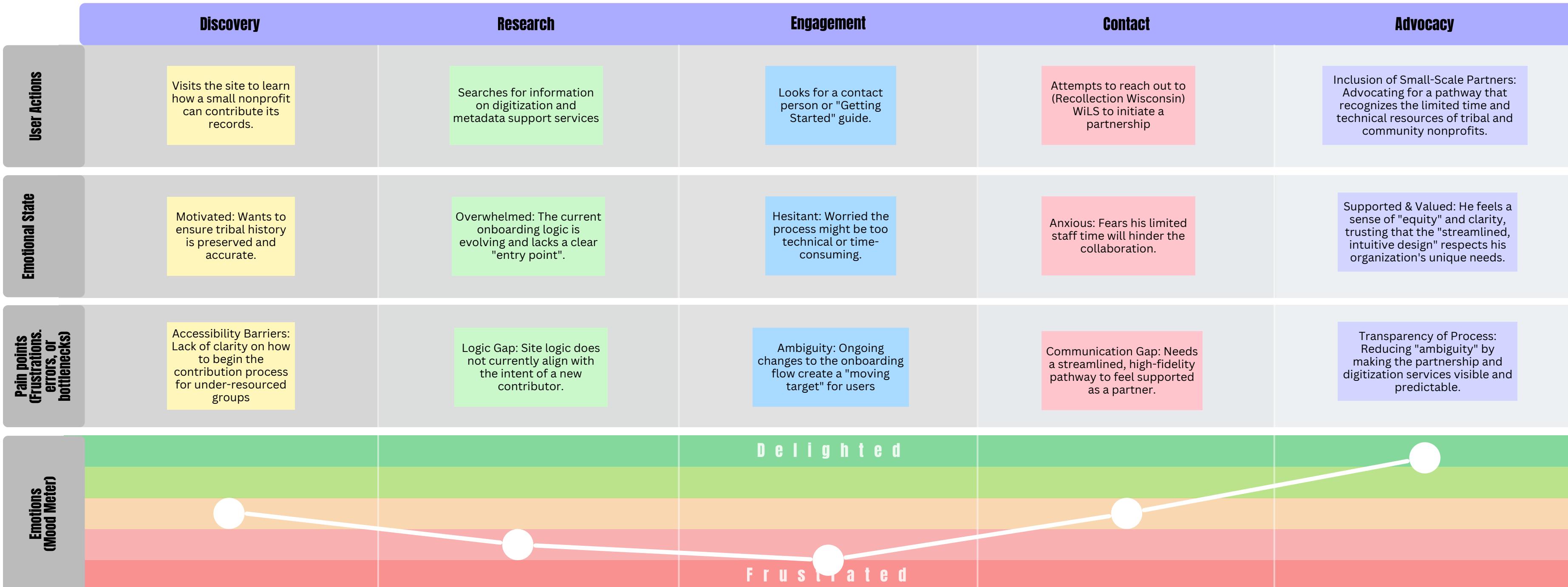
**Advocacy Goal:** To move Sarah from "Recall" (trying to remember complex historical terms) to "Recognition" (seeing clear, standard-aligned filters).

**Solution Impact:** Reducing Usability Friction so she can focus on teaching rather than navigating a complex database.

# User Journey Map: Joseph (The Community Advocate)



**Goal:** Onboarding a small-scale tribal organization to share their digital cultural heritage.



**Possible Solutions:** Target Emotion: Trust

**Wizard UI Onboarding:** A step-by-step interactive guide that simplifies the contribution process and metadata requirements.

**Accessibility Dashboard:** A clear "Start Here" portal specifically for organizations needing digitization support, highlighting WiLS consulting as a primary resource.

**Advocacy Goal:** To provide a Human-Centred Design that eliminates the "Roach Motel" feeling, where entering a process is easy, but understanding the steps is hard.

**Solution Impact:** Using Progressive Disclosure in a "Wizard UI" to make a complex partnership feel manageable and predictable.

# LET'S DESIGN WITH EMPATHY

*Personas are not just profiles – they are reminders that behind every click, there's a real human being*