

Grace Yu-Chun Yen

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Dear Hiring Manager,

I am writing to express my deep interest in the Senior UX Researcher role at Waymo. I am an accomplished User Experience researcher and a Ph.D. candidate at the Department of Computer Science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. My research draws together theories and methods from human-centered design, social sciences, behavioral psychology, and machine learning. I independently directed a number of research projects: from crowdsourcing feedback, collaborative learning, smart homes, to pervasive healthcare. My work regularly appears in top-tiered conferences (e.g., ACM CHI, DIS, IUI, HCII, ICOST, etc).

All of my research, regardless of context, has been driven by unique user insights and behavioral psychology. My dissertation addresses the challenges in leveraging online feedback for iterative design. To me, feedback on innovative design is vital for helping designers iterate toward effective solutions; feedback reveals problems, offers insights, and unblocks fixation. I am confident that my expertise and experience in designing effective feedback tools can help Waymo tighten the evaluation cycles for multiple products, for example, by producing new interfaces and interactions to capture more and in-depth user experience while maintaining the safety and positive experiences of the riders.

I am also a strong cross-disciplinary UX researcher. During my collaboration with Adobe Lab, I worked closely with creative directors, product managers, and UI/UX designers to identify designers' major pain points when using digital software (e.g., Slack, emails, Google Doc) for managing feedback from multiple stakeholders. Through a series of contextual interviews and iterative prototyping, I built a visualization tool that embodies the formative research insights. This work will be presented at ACM CHI this April. I was also invited to discuss the research findings in multiple product teams such as Document Cloud Team and Behance (Adobe's online design community).

Besides creativity domains, I am also skilled in conducting ethnography research in medical scenarios. Before joining UIUC, I built an intelligent ward in the National Taiwan University Hospital. In this work, I synthesized different perspectives from surgeons, psychologists, caregivers, and patients. My work was recognized as the Best Thesis by National Taiwan University and Taiwanese Association of Artificial Intelligence; it also receives a patent in Taiwan and a grant for continuing the research.

I would love to discuss this UX Research position with your team in the weeks to come. If you need any additional materials or information, please let me know. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Grace Yu-Chun Yen

