# Meghna Gupta

Ph.D. Student in Human Centered Design and Engineering
Research Interests: Human-centered AI, AI Companions, Digital Safety and Privacy, Children and Families, Care, Family-centered Technologies

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## Education

**2023 - Present** **University of Washington**, Seattle, WA
Ph.D. in Human Centered Design and Engineering
Advisor: Prof. Julie Kientz

**2023 - 2025** **University of Washington**, Seattle, WA
M.S. in Human Centered Design and Engineering (GPA: 3.95)

**2016 - 2020** **Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology**, Delhi
B.Tech. (Hons) in Computer Science and Engineering (CSE)
Advisors: Prof. Grace Eden and Prof. Pushpendra Singh

## Publications

PRE-PRINTS AND WORKING PAPERS

**2026** **Meghna Gupta**, Mitsuka Kiyohara, Ranjitha Naruganahalli Rangaswamy, Franziska Rosner, and Julie Kientz. Exploring AI Companions Together: A Structured Family Co-Investigation of Character.AI. *Under Review*

**2026** **Meghna Gupta\***, Aayushi Dangol\*, Daeun Yoo, Robert Wolfe, Jason Yip, Franziska Rosner, and Julie Kientz. Toys that listen, talk, and play: Understanding Children's Sensemaking and Interactions with AI Toys. *Under Review* (\* = Equal Contribution)

**2025** **Meghna Gupta**, Sophie Stephenson, Apu Kapadia, Julie Kientz, and Franziska Rosner. "They are not my children to post": Examining Non-Parental Sharenting Practices in In-home Childcare. *Under Review*

## Conference and Journal Papers

**2026**  **Meghna Gupta**, George Zhang, Sophie Stephenson, Franziska Rosner, and Julie Kientz. Consent under Constraints : Negotiating Photography and Media Sharing in Institutionalized Childcare. In *ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* **(CHI'26)**

**2025**  **Meghna Gupta**, Arpita Bhattacharya, and Julie Kientz. "Being a nanny isn't just caregiving": An Analysis of How Nannies Seek Support in Online Communities like /r/Nanny. In *The Symposium on Human-Computer Interaction for Work* **(CHIWORK'25)**.

**2025**  **Meghna Gupta** and Audrey Desjardins. Echoes of Care: Unveiling the Intertwined Tensions between Childcare Work and Voice Assistants. In *ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* **(CHI'25)**.

**2024**  Peya Mowar, **Meghna Gupta**, and Mohit Jain. 2024. Breaking the News Barrier: Towards Understanding News Consumption Practices among BVI Individuals in India . In *ACM SIGACCESS Conference on Computers and Accessibility* **(ASSETS '24)**.

**2024**  Caitlin Lustig, Maya Kaneko*, **Meghna Gupta***, Kavita Dattani*, Audrey Desjardins, and Daniela Rosner. Porous by Design: How Childcare Platforms Impact Worker Personhood, Safety, and Connection. In ACM Designing Interactive Systems Conference **(DIS'24)**. [Best Paper Award] (* = Equal Contribution)

**2024**  Pradyumna YM, Vinod Ganesan, Dinesh Kumar Arumugam, **Meghna Gupta**, Nischith Shadagopan, Tanay Dixit, Sameer Segal, Pratyush Kumar, Mohit Jain, Sriram Rajamani. PwR: Exploring the Role of Representations in Conversational Programming. **(arXiv)**

**2024**  **Meghna Gupta***, Nimisha Karnatak*, Mohit Jain. Understanding the Technology-Mediated Home Phlebotomy Ecosystem in India. *Proc. ACM Hum.-Comput. Interact. 8, CSCW1, Article 144.* **(CSCW'24)** (* = Equal Contribution)

**2023**  Anant Mittal, **Meghna Gupta**, Roshni Poddar, Tarini Naik, Seethalakshmi Kuppuraj, James Fogarty, Pratyush Kumar, and Mohit Jain. 2023. Jod: Examining Design and Implementation of a Videoconferencing Platform for Mixed Hearing Groups. In *ACM SIGACCESS Conference on Computers and Accessibility* **(ASSETS '23)**.

**2023**  Harsh Vijay, Saumay Pushp, Amish Mittal, Praveen Gupta, **Meghna Gupta**, Sirish Gambhira, Shivang Chopra, Mayank Baranwal, Arshia Arya, Ajay Manchepalli, and Venkata N. Padmanabhan. 2023. HyWay: Enabling Mingling in the Hybrid World. In *ACM Interact. Mob. Wearable Ubiquitous Technolology* **(IMWUT '23)**.

**2022**  Azra Ismail, Deepika Yadav, **Meghna Gupta**, Kirti Dabas, Pushpendra Singh, and Neha Kumar. Imagining Caring Futures for Frontline Health Work. *Proc. ACM Hum.-Comput. Interact. 6, CSCW2, Article 480 (November 2022), 30 pages.* **(CSCW '22)**.

2022 **Meghna Gupta**, Devansh Mehta, Anandita Punj, and Indrani Medhi Thies. 2022. Sophistication with Limitation: Understanding Smartphone Usage by Emergent Users in India. In *ACM SIGCAS/SIGCHI Conference on Computing and Sustainable Societies* **(COMPASS '22)**.

2022 **Meghna Gupta** and Grace Eden. 2022. The Human-Air Interface: Responding To Poor Air Quality Through Lived Experience and Digital Information. In *ACM Designing Interactive Systems Conference* **(DIS '22)**.

### Abstracts and Posters

2024 Tanvi Roy and **Meghna Gupta**. 2024. Weaponizing Cringe for Virality: Paving the Way for Democratization on Social Media. In Proceedings of the Social Media and Society in India Conference held at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, April 9-10, 2024 **(SMSI '24)**.

2022 Jasmeet Kaur, **Meghna Gupta**, and Pushpendra Singh. 2022. Understanding the Role of Technology-mediated Solutions for Women's Safety in Urban India. In *ACM SIGCAS/SIGCHI Conference on Computing and Sustainable Societies* **(COMPASS '22)**.

2020 Arpit Bhatia, **Meghna Gupta**, Abhishek Gupta, and Nishtha Singhal. 2020. AICA: Artificial Intelligence Conversation Assistant. In *ACM Designing Interactive Systems Conference* **(DIS '20 Companion)**.

### Workshop Papers

2022 **Meghna Gupta**. Seeking Digital Care in Low-Resourced Contexts: Identifying Opportunities and Challenges. In *Information-Seeking Online Workshop* at **(CSCW '22)**.

2020 **Meghna Gupta** and Grace Eden. Meaning in Language: From Professional to Local Contexts. In *(Coping With) Messiness in Ethnography Workshop* at **(ECSCW '20)**.

## Professional Experience

2021 - 2023 **Research Fellow**, Microsoft Research India
*Advisors: Dr. Indrani Medhi Thies, Dr. Mohit Jain*
Worked on several research projects around Human Computer Interaction (HCI) and Information Communication and Technologies for Development (ICTD), specifically in the context of emerging digital technologies, healthcare and well-being, and accessibility.

2021 - 2021 **Research Intern**, Microsoft Research India
*Advisor: Dr. Indrani Medhi Thies*
Worked on understanding smartphone usage among emergent users in low-income communities in India across both urban and rural areas.

**2020 - 2022** **Research Assistant**, Intelligent and Interactive Systems Lab, IIIT Delhi
*Advisors: Dr. Pushpendra Singh, Prof. Neha Kumar*
Worked on research problems around gender, health and well-being, and labor in India, with specific focus on (1) women safety in public spaces, and (2) care routines of frontline health workers (FHWs) during COVID-19.

**2020 - 2021** **Software Engineer**, NatWest (Royal Bank of Scotland)
Worked on enhancing the user experience of a CI/CD dashboard (Hygieia) by customizing the widgets corresponding to various stages of integration and deployment pipeline in the Software Development Cycle (SDC).

## Ongoing Research Projects

**2025 - Present** **Investigating Emerging AI Companions in Children's Play Environments**
Graduate Research Assistant, University of Washington
*Advisors: Prof. Julie Kientz*
Conducting intergenerational design workshops with children (ages 6-11) using free play sessions and storyboards to examine how they interact with and interpret AI-enabled Toys.

**2025 - Present** **Family Co-Exploration of AI Companions**
Graduate Research Assistant, University of Washington
*Advisors: Prof. Julie Kientz, Prof. Franziska Roesner*
Conducted a four-week study with parent–teen dyads (ages 13–15) to investigate how families can explore and learn about emotionally responsive AI companions together such as character.ai

## Grants & Funding

**2026** **Open AI and Mental Health Grant Award**
Awarded $25k funding to support our work on Children and Emotionally Responsive AI Systems [link].

**2025** **Google Academic Research Award**
Awarded $100k funding to support our work on Designing Family-Centered Safety Tools for Teen-AI Companion Interactions (w/ Julie Kientz and Fraziska Roesner) [link].

**2023** **UW GSEE Icon Scholarship**
Received University of Washington GSEE Icon Scholarship ($2500) as a top-up fellowship for the PhD program.

## Academic Service

### Mentoring

2025 - Present    George Zhang (MS in HCDE, University of Washington)

2025 - Present    Mitsuka Kiyohara (Summer DUB REU Student, University of Washington)

### Teaching

2025    Directed Research Group Lead, University of Washington
Course: HCDE 496/596: Exploring Photography and Social Media Guidelines in Childcare Institutions

### Reviewer

2025 - Present    HCDE PhD Applications Reviewer

2025 - Present    HCDE MS Applications Reviewer

2025 - Present    ACM Conference on Designing Interactive Systems (DIS)

2024 - Present    International Conference on Social Media and Society in India (SMSI)

2023 - Present    ACM SIGCAS/SIGCHI Conference on Computing and Sustainable Societies (COMPASS)

2022 - Present    ACM Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing (CSCW)

2021 - Present    ACM CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI)

2021 - Present    ACM CHI Late Breaking Work (LBW)

### Student Volunteer

2024    ACM Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing (CSCW)

2022    ACM SIGCHI Symposium for HCI and Friends

2022    ACM Designing Interactive Systems (DIS)

### Invited Talks

2022    What does working in HCI for Global Development look like? | Introduction to HCI, IIIT Delhi

2022    Technology and Global Development at CHI 2021 | TEM Group at MSR India

2021    Intersectionality: An Ongoing Discussion  TEM Group at MSR India

## Selected Software Projects

2021 - 2022    **HyWay: Enabling Unstructured Conversations in the New Hybrid World** [link]
Microsoft Research India, *Advisors: Dr. Venkat Padmanabham, Dr. Ajay Manchepalli*
Our team designed, developed, and deployed a hybrid communication platform to improve interactions between today's physical and virtual users with 100+ attendees. Specifically, I worked on designing a virtual map to enable fluid movement, muffled audio of users based on the distance for porous conversations.

**2019 - 2019**  **Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) Connect** [link]
IIIT Delhi, *Advisor: Prof. Ponnurangam Kumaraguru*
Developed an Android application to facilitate interactions between DMRC officials and Delhi
Metro users using human-centered design methodologies. Covered by various media houses across
New Delhi.

**2019 - 2019**  **Conference Portal: Designing conference applications in a click!** [link]
IIIT Delhi, *Advisor: Prof. Pushpendra Singh*
Designed and developed a Django-based web platform that can be used by conferences (academic
or non-academic) to automatically generate a customized android application for their conference
as per their requirements. Used at ICTD 2019 to generate official conference mobile applications.

## Skills

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| **Research Methods:** | Semi-structured Interviews, Surveys, Ethnographic Observations, Usability Testing and Evaluation, Technology Probes, Participatory Design, Quantitative Study |
| **Design Tools:** | Adobe XD, Proto.io, Adobe Photoshop |
| **Programming Languages:** | Python, Java, Javascript |

## Awards & Honours

**2024**  **CRA-WP: Grad Cohort Workshop for Women**
Received Scholarship to attend Grad Cohort Workshop, April 2024 in Minneapolis, USA.

**2020**  **Undergraduate Thesis**
Received Dean's letter of appreciation and recognition for significant achievements in undergraduate thesis.

**2017**  **Google Women Techmakers Travel Grant**
Youngest of the 10 women across the world to be awarded travel support to attend the Firebase
Dev Summit 2017 in Amsterdam.

**2017**  **BYLD Hackathon**
Awarded the first position for developing a mobile application that recommends songs depending
upon the mood of the person.

**2014**  **National Talent Search Exam Scholarship**
Awarded by Government of India to identify and recognize students (top 0.01% students) with
high intellect and academic talent at national level.

2013     **Junior Science Talent Search Exam Scholarship**
Awarded by Central Board of Secondary Education to academically bright students (top 150 students) belonging to Delhi State.

## Leadership & Volunteering

2021     **TEM Reading Group, MSR India** | *Organizer*
Responsible for organizing a lab-wide reading group and arranging talks in HCI, ICTD, and related areas.

2017     **Government Co. Senior Secondary School** | Teacher
Responsible for teaching a class of 30+ students – covered academic curriculum as well art and craft, computer lab and fitness sessions.

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