

Nicola du Toit

Product Designer & Researcher

79 Auckland Ave, Auckland Park, Johannesburg, South Africa

+27 83 256 7666 ✿ nicoladutoit@gmail.com

nicoladutoit.com ✿ linkedin.com/in/nicoladutoit ✿ empathylab.co.za

Overview

Hello and thank you for taking the time to review my CV. My name is Nicola du Toit and I have more than a decade's experience working as a digital product and UX/UI designer, user researcher and facilitator in the edtech, e-commerce, fintech and agency spaces. I also have many years of experience leading and managing design teams.

I have deep industry experience in UX and UI design, and front-end development. Education, research and academia are close to my heart - I have worked in edtech and publishing for many years and have lectured design and business courses at the tertiary education level. I have also developed and facilitated numerous design-related workshops and courses. Additionally I have experience managing teams - I thoroughly enjoy supporting and guiding team members and line reports, in order to help them flourish in both their personal and professional capacity.

I have done user research, design and user testing work for complex cross-platform web and native applications, including for Takealot.com (customer and internal-facing systems); for Nedbank's online banking platform and banking app and for Luno's transactional and investment flows. I have also been involved in the implementation of human-centred design strategies, processes and training at companies including Pearson, Takealot.com and IQbusiness.

As a creative but scientifically-minded problem solver, I firmly believe that human-centred design thinking and tools can (and should) be used to solve wicked problems and promote positive social change. I am interested in how design thinking can enable ideation, iteration and the co-design of solutions that work for all humans involved.

Experience

June 2017 - present **Co-founder & Experience Lead: The Empathy Lab**

The Empathy Lab began as an informal design collective in 2017. Today we offer human-centred design, research and strategic advisory services - helping businesses, organisations and communities understand messy, human problems, and create impact in an increasingly complex social world. Our client base extends from South Africa to the EU and UK, and client sectors range from banking, healthcare and agriculture, to the performing arts and beyond.

Sept 2024 -
July 2025

Partner for Technologies: [AIPX Atelier](#)

Having freelanced for AIPX Atelier for a year (from June 2023), I joined the business full time in Sept 2024 as their Technologies practice lead and partner. My focus was on UX/UI and digital product design, web development, and digital strategy and growth for a wide variety of clients - from large corporations to NPOs and charities.

Apr 2021 -
May 2023

Product Design Team Lead: [Luno](#)

In this role I managed a team of 5 Product Designers / UX Writers. I was responsible for design oversight, craft and leadership across a variety of different crypto products and customer-facing flows within a fleet. Additionally, I collaborated closely with design and product heads and directors on design, research and delivery strategies, fleet-wide OKRs, project planning, recruitment efforts etc.

Sept 2020 -
Mar 2021

Senior Product Designer: Luno

In this role I was responsible for UX and UI design in a cross-functional delivery team that looked after Luno's buy and sell flows and crypto investment products. Responsibilities included user research, design, usability testing and QA testing. I collaborated closely with product management, UX writing, data science and engineering.

Jan 2019 -
Aug 2020

Manager and Senior UX Consultant: IQbusiness

Senior Principal from Jan 2019 - June 2020. Promoted to **Manager** in June 2020.

I managed a team of 5 UX/UI designers, distributed across different clients. People responsibilities included fortnightly check-ins, performance reviews, mentorship and career and personal development and growth.

2019: Consulted at [Nedbank](#). Worked on UX, UI and IA for Nedbank's Money app and Online Banking platforms. Responsible for expanding Nedbank's cross-platform accessibility strategy.

2020: Consulted at [Liberty](#). Worked on UX for Liberty's end-to-end investments platform.

Ongoing: Developed and facilitated external UX training content, and was a member of IQbusiness's digital leadership team which was responsible for digital/design strategy and growth within the business.

Apr 2018 - Dec 2018	Lecturer: AFDA Part-time lecturer in design thinking and business management operations at AFDA .
Apr 2018 - Dec 2018	Freelance UX and usability consultant UX design, user research, usability testing, strategy and design thinking training on a consulting basis. Part-time lecturer in design thinking and management operations at AFDA . Clients included Takealot.com , Pearson , the Social Systems Lab and the Digital Opportunity Trust .
Apr 2017 - Mar 2018	Senior UX designer: Takealot.com UX design, user research and usability testing for Takealot's desktop, mobile, Android and iOS platforms - both customer-facing and internal/back-end systems. Responsible for setting up and managing Takealot's on-site usability lab and for formulating their usability testing strategy.
Mar 2015 - Mar 2017	UX designer: Pearson UX design, user research and usability testing for K-12 and post-schools digital education products. Collaboration with the efficacy manager to design a variety of research tools and facilitate user & efficacy research (with adults, students and scholars). Authoring, design and facilitation of in-house design-thinking training.
Oct 2014 - Feb 2015	Freelance UX designer and front-end developer UX design, front-end development and product management. Clients included iKineo, Explore Sideways, Sanlam, Ernst & Young, Lottos Online and Inksaver.
Apr 2011 - Sept 2014	UX designer, front-end developer & project manager: Siyavula Education UX design and research, project management, front-end development and QA testing, authoring, copywriting, typesetting and publishing for Siyavula's open-source STEM textbooks and online learning platform.

Education

2020 - 2025	Bachelor of Arts University of South Africa Majoring in Anthropology and Archaeology.
-------------	--

2011 – 2014	M. Phil. in Information Technology, specialising in Human-computer interaction University of Cape Town Dissertation: “ <i>Designing an interface to provide new functionality for the post-processing of web-based annotations.</i> ”, supervised by Prof. Gary Marsden.
2004 – 2007	Bachelor of Music University of Cape Town Specialising in Western Classical Performance (cello).

Skills

- **People management**, mentorship, coaching, performance management, career guidance and development, conflict resolution.
- **User experience** and **user interface** design, including native app and responsive/mobile design.
- **Human-centred design** techniques including: stakeholder interviews, contextual inquiries, personas, workflows, user journeys and requirements, sitemaps, wireframes, prototyping, user research and heuristic evaluation.
- **Usability** test design, facilitation and analysis.
- **Research** study and tool design and implementation.
- Qualitative and quantitative **data analysis**, particularly for user behaviour, user journey flows/drop offs and user feedback.
- **Front-end development** experience, good knowledge and understanding of WordPress, HTML, CSS and JS.
- Knowledge and understanding of **accessibility** guidelines and best practices.
- **Facilitation** of workshops, talks, participatory design sessions and training.
- **Project management** and administration.

Software and tools

- **Design software:** Figma, Adobe CC, Miro, Lookback, Maze, Usertesting.com.
- **Tools:** MSOffice, GSuite, Google Analytics, WordPress, GitHub, Atom, LaTeX.

Publications

Jun 2014	Designing an interface to provide new functionality for the post-processing of web-based annotations University of Cape Town Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy in Information Technology. [download available here]
----------	--

Jan 2013	Everything Maths Literacy Grade 10 Siyavula Education Project management, textbook content coordination, authoring, editing, graphic design, proofreading.
Jan 2012	Everything Maths Grade 10 Siyavula Education Technical editing, textbook authoring, graphic design, proofreading.

Workshop and conference highlights

Dec 2025	UX South Africa Conference Online Conference paper/presentation entitled “ <i>Everything is awful. Staying sane and doing good in a world gone mad</i> ”.
Nov 2020	UX South Africa Conference Online Conference paper/presentation entitled “ <i>Love in the time of Coronavirus: What a pandemic can teach us about creating a more caring, inclusive, and equitable world</i> ”. Co-presented with Stephen Barnett.
Nov 2018	Agile Testing Days Potsdam, Germany Co-facilitated the “ <i>More heart and more humans with Inclusive Design</i> ” workshop with Stephen Barnett. This workshop was rated by participants as one of the “Top 10” workshops of the conference.
Aug 2018	Google UX Masterclass Cape Town Co-facilitated the first Google UX Masterclass held in Cape Town, with Marli Ritter and Maureen Macharia.
Nov 2017	UX South Africa Conference Cape Town Co-facilitated the “ <i>Inclusive Design: more heart, more humans</i> ” workshop with Stephen Barnett.
Nov 2015	UX South Africa Conference Cape Town Conference paper/presentation entitled “ <i>UX in the real world (or how an electric can opener changed my life)</i> ”

Other

- Member of the ACM Special Interest Group for Computer Human Interaction ([SIGCHI](#)) and the ACM Council on Women in Computing ([ACM-W](#)).

- Member of Anthropology South Africa, the South African Archaeological Society; the Society of Africanist Archaeologists and the World Archaeological Congress.
- Freelance musician. Co-founder and manager of the [Night Light Collective](#), Goldfox duo and [Betwixt](#) music series.

Interests

Professional: human-centred design and research, anthropology, education, inclusive design, accessibility, participatory co-design and cognitive psychology. Public health, social innovation, sustainability and gender equality.

Personal: music, archaeology, history, astronomy, photography, and my cats and awesome and adorable Rough Collies - autographs and doggo introductions available on request! 😊

Portfolio and References

Product design portfolio available on request.

Clint Bryce

Former manager: Luno
clintbryce@icloud.com
+27 79 522 4125

Maxine Craik

Former manager: Takealot.com
maxine.craik@takealot.com
+27 79 100 3665