

Sai Siddartha Maram

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Education

Ph.D., University of California, Santa Cruz, USA – Human Computer Interaction August 2021 – March 2026

B.E. in Computer Engineering, Thapar University, Punjab, India August 2016 – May 2020

Work Experience

UX Research Intern, Microsoft, USA June 2025 – September 2025

- Designed and deployed an **UX workflow leveraging OpenAI agents and Power Automate** to conduct unmoderated playtests. This design and deployment cut external vendor costs by **\$200K annually**.
- Designed and developed **AURA Canvas**, an **LLM-based data analysis tool** supporting thematic analysis, **reducing researcher workload by an average of 5 hours per study**.
- Drove a **17% increase in voluntary user feedback** by conducting **6 co-design sessions** refine the Xbox Gaming Copilot feedback system.

UX Research Intern, Microsoft, USA June 2024 – September 2024

- Identified **8 critical design and functionality misalignments** across the Xbox and Microsoft Family Safety apps following **13 usability studies**. This research directly informed the decision to **merge 3 redundant features**, resulting in **projected savings of \$100K** in annual engineering and computing costs.
- Collaborated with UX researchers and leadership to design and deploy an **LLM-based sentiment analysis pipeline**, successfully reducing the time-to-detection for critical parental control UX issues **from a monthly cycle to instant triage and response**.
- Conducted **co-design sessions** with parents to identify **4 key approaches** for fostering good gaming habits and enhancing positive family gaming experiences (e.g., reward systems).

UX Research Intern, Meta, USA June 2022 – September 2022

- Led **18 co-design sessions with Facebook/Instagram users** that drove the development of high-impact features for Meta, including Facebook Sports Cards, Spotify Connect, and Map Sharing. **These features are now live on Facebook and Instagram, serving millions of users globally**.
- Executed **10 usability studies and quantitative surveys** to validate features such as Spotify Connect and Facebook Sports Cards. Analyzed data using **statistical methods (Python and SQL)** to ensure design decisions were data-driven.

UX Researcher, GUII Lab, USA June 2021 – June 2024

- Developed an **LLM-based framework**, using **Google Gemini embeddings** and **OpenAI embeddings**, to analyze gamer perceptions of religion in videogames across **Reddit**, resulting in publications at **CHI Play'24** and **best paper at DIS'25**.
- Conducted **10 in-depth user interviews** with cultural stakeholders to create a **design framework** for referencing and evaluating **cultural elements in videogames**, resulting in publications at **CSCW'23**, **CHI'22**, **ICEC'22**, and **FDG'23**.
- Collaborated with **15 faculty** to develop **LLM-based learning systems** and **curriculum**. Identified **8 strategies for LLM-based reflection and learning**, resulting in publications at **ACM CHI'23**, **ISLS 2025**, and **BJET 2025**.

Skills

Research Methods: User Interviews, Game User Research, User Journeys, Card Sorting, Diary Studies, Thematic Analysis, Grounded Theory, Participatory Design, Co-Design, Usability Testing, Information Architecture, Surveys, Statistical Analysis, Prototyping

Tools & Technologies: Figma, NVivo, Dscout, Qualtrics, Atlas, Python (Advanced), SQL (Advanced), R, HTML, CSS, JavaScript, ML/LLMs, MCPs