CV of Failures | Samantha McDonald

You learn much more from failure than success. This CV probably omits a lot of things that I forgot, but here are some of the ones that came up when searching my email for "we're sorry to inform you" or "unfortunately, we cannot accept".

Jobs I Didn't Get:

From 2024 to 2025, I applied to over 200 jobs across UX, Research, Design, Teaching, Management, and Human Factors Engineering.

I had four interviews and two offers. [The job market is dreadful](#).

Graduate programs I didn't get into:

Ph.D. Information Management and Systems at the University of California Berkeley.
Ph.D. Computer Science Program at Stanford University
Ph.D. Program in the Human-Computer Interaction Institute at Carnegie Mellon
Ph.D. Georgia Institute of Technology's School of Interactive Computing
Ph.D. University of Michigan School of Information
Ph.D. University of Washington's Human Centered Design & Engineering PhD program
Ph.D. Information Science at Cornell University
Ph.D. University of Maryland Graduate School

Scholarships I did not get:

2016 2015 2016 Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) National Science Foundation
Canada Fulbright - 2015 (Sustainability at Toronto)
Google Anita Borg Memorial Scholarship - 2016

Research and Internship Opportunities I didn't get:

Iowa REU - Summer Program for Interdisciplinary Research and Education at Iowa State
2015 2019 Facebook UX Research

Publication Rejections:

2019 Government Information Quarterly Journal
2019 CSCW Doctoral Consortium
2019 APSA - Poster

2018 APSA - Panel

Other rejections that still hurt:

2019 Yosemite Wilderness JMT SOBO Lottery Permit
2016 MIT Lincoln Labs Internship

Things that I decided to decline:

2025 Human Factors Engineer, Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Lab
2013 Intern for the 2013 Office of Naval Research (ONR) Naval Research Enterprise Internship
Program (NREIP), Philadelphia
2019 PhD IUPUI
2019 PhD Computer Science UC Boulder