

Torrin Leonard | Full Stack Software Developer

AI & UI Specialist • Web App Architect • Open-Source Contributor

Located Waterloo, Ontario, Canada • 8+ years professional experience

Email: torrin@torrin.me • Website: torrin.me

LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/torrin-leonard-8343a1154 • GitHub: github.com/torrinworx • GitLab: gitlab.com/torrin1

Summary

Full-stack developer with 8+ years of professional experience spanning startups, contract work, and open-source contributions. Mentored by senior engineers and experienced in working on larger codebases, code review, and collaborative product development. Skilled in building production-grade web apps, automation pipelines, and custom UI frameworks with a focus on performance, accessibility, and scalability. Thrives in environments where design and technical decisions intersect, driving projects from concept to deployment.

Skills

- **Frontend:** React, Three.js, WebGL, Vite, Custom UI libraries, Accessibility (WCAG)
 - **Backend:** Node.js, Express, Django, FastAPI, Go, Rust
 - **Databases:** MongoDB, MariaDB, CockroachDB, Arweave
 - **DevOps:** GitHub Actions, Docker, GitLab CI/CD, NGINX, Linux (Ubuntu/Arch), DigitalOcean, AWS
 - **Testing:** TestCafe, manual + cross-browser QA, accessibility audits
 - **AI/ML:** OpenAI API, Hugging Face, Qdrant, Whisper, Ollama
 - **Other:** Bash scripting, Blockchain dev (Ethereum, Polygon, Cardano), sprint planning, mentorship
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Highlights

- **OpenGig.org (Open Source, from scratch)** – Architected and launched a full-stack cooperative gig platform in pure JavaScript (frontend + backend) with MongoDB. Custom Vite + Bash build system, GitHub Actions CI, and bare-metal deployment to a DigitalOcean Droplet connected to a managed DigitalOcean MongoDB. Integrated my `destam-web-core` and `destamatic-ui` libraries; runs without Docker for lean, fast deploys.
- **AI-Driven Proposal Product** – Built from scratch and deployed a full stack AI proposal product that automated client proposals creation.

- **Open-Source Plugins** – Creator of Blend_My_NFTs (1,000+ GitHub stars), used by dozens of NFT projects and studios worldwide. Engaged with users and created YouTube tutorials with 200,000+ channel views.
 - **Reusable UI Frameworks** – Developed UI components that significantly reduced feature delivery time across Equator Studios' GIS and AI interfaces.
 - **Mentorship & Collaboration** – Mentored junior engineers, improved onboarding workflows, and participated in peer code reviews to raise team code quality.
 - **Startup & Client Experience** – Co-founded a creative engineering studio, shipped multiple NFT collections, and worked with clients across Web3 and SaaS.
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Experience

Full Stack Software Developer — Equator Studios

March 2023 – Present | Hybrid / Waterloo, ON

- Led development of an AI-driven proposal generation tool; integrated ChatGPT and vector search, reducing manual proposal work.
- Designed and deployed internal and production infrastructure (CI/CD pipelines, Dockerized services, GitLab CI/CD) to ensure reliable deployments.
- Built a reusable UI framework for GIS mapping and AI apps, cutting frontend development time and improving reactivity, performance, and load times.
- Collaborated with senior devs, participated in code reviews, and mentored junior engineers to raise overall code quality and process maturity.
- Implemented Stripe payments and managed server/domain configuration, uptime monitoring, and security compliance.

Co-Founder, CEO, Lead Developer — This Cozy Studio Inc.

October 2021 – January 2025 | Waterloo, ON

- Built and maintained NFT generation pipelines (rendering, storage, minting); used in 5+ large-scale NFT drops.
- Created Blend_My_NFTs (1,000+ GitHub stars), adopted by creators and Web3 teams worldwide.
- Managed product roadmaps, client communications, and automated production workflows with Python, reducing manual work.
- Led a small engineering and 3D modeling team and directed technical architecture decisions.

QA, Accessibility & Automation Tester — League

March 2021 – May 2022 | Remote

- Wrote and maintained TestCafe automation suites (TypeScript/JS) to support CI pipelines, reducing regression bugs between releases.
- Partnered with product managers and engineers to prioritize fixes and ship accessible (WCAG-compliant) releases.
- Improved team velocity by automating repetitive regression testing and triaging defects.

Founder & CEO — Pivot Careers

August 2020 – October 2021 | Waterloo, ON

- Designed and validated an employee onboarding and training platform via user interviews and prototyping.
- Automated early course creation flows and built wireframes, laying groundwork for MVP development.

Software QA Tester — TunnelBear

April 2017 – February 2021 | Remote / Toronto

- Tested VPN and password manager products across platforms; authored clear bug reports and verified security/UX issues pre-release.
- Collaborated with engineers and PMs to ensure smooth, high-quality releases.

Software Assurance Engineer — worX4you Inc.

June 2013 – June 2025 | Contract / Various Clients

- Delivered QA and automation services to startups (THRILLWORKS, League, TunnelBear, Hubba, Hopscotch).
- Gained early exposure to startup operations, product lifecycles, and agile methodologies while performing test automation and accessibility audits.

Education

University of Waterloo — Honours Co-op, Astronomy & Physics

Expected Jun 2026

Laurel Heights Secondary School (formerly Sir John A. Macdonald)

Graduated Jun 2021

Extras

Notable Open-Source & Personal Projects

OpenGig.org — Open-source cooperative service platform for gig workers and customers

Repo: github.com/torrinworx/OpenGig.org · Live: OpenGig.org

- Built from scratch as a full-stack pure JavaScript app (frontend + backend) backed by MongoDB.
- Architecture: custom Bash build script using Vite; runs on bare metal without Docker for lean, fast deploys.
- CI/CD: GitHub Actions workflow builds and deploys via custom scripts.
- Infra: Deployed to a DigitalOcean Droplet and linked to a managed DigitalOcean MongoDB instance; served behind NGINX.
- Codebase integrates my libraries: `destam-web-core` (state sync, websocket auth, backend routing) and `destamatic-ui` (custom UI + DOM reactivity).
- Project embodies Open Source Service principles (open code, transparent costs/metrics, and community-driven governance).

Blend_My_NFTs (Blender add-on) — Blender plugin to procedurally generate and pipeline 3D NFTs (1,000+ stars on GitHub).

destam web core — Full-stack state syncing, websocket auth, and backend routing core library.

destamatic-ui — Custom UI + DOM reactivity libraries used across portfolio and projects.

MangoSync — Local music player with Whisper-based auto-lyrics transcription and enhanced metadata.

torrin.me — Custom UI + WebGL portfolio site with real-time theming and blogging engine (torrin.me).

Bitorch — Open Source Distributed AI Inference Network

- Developed and tested FastAPI backend components, inference endpoints, and environment config scripts.
- Set up and managed local Docker instances to run AI models for proof-of-concept distributed inference.

Certifications & Courses

- Harvard CS50 Introduction to Computer Science
- W3C Web Accessibility
- MIT 16.00x Intro to Aerospace
- ANU-ASTRO1x Mysteries of the Universe
- St. John Ambulance Emergency First Aid + CPR