Elizabeth Hitchins

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Interaction Designer & User Researcher

I design user centric digital products and services. I love working in an agile, collaborative way. I have experience in ecommerce, financial, pharmaceutical and public sector projects.
I like to lead on accessibility, threading proven principles through design & code. I specialise in Government Digital Services (GDS) projects for the public sector and have spent time as a GDS user research assessor.
I also work in creative fashion projects.

EXPERIENCE

Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, Hybrid working — *Lead user researcher*

JAN 2024 - APR 2024

Working on the discovery and alpha for the data improvement programme. Focusing in the collection and ingestion of key data sets from public bodies that received funding.

Government Legal Department, Hybrid working — *Lead user researcher*

SEPT 2023 - JAN 2024

Working on the discovery for a new Legal Practise Management Service and Intranet to work across the different parts of the department. Concentrating on research with litigation and advisory lawyers as well as business support services and finance. A second discovery into the intranet was also done.

Cabinet Office, Home based — *Lead user researcher*

JUNE 2022 - SEPT 2023

Working on the Discovery and Alpha phases of the Covid19 Listening Exercise. Working with SaaS vendors to provide a well-researched interim and subsequent main release. A mix of social research and digital research, working with the online and offline journeys.
Developing processes and templates for this sensitive project as well as focus groups for creative projects such as the Tapestry project for the Covid19 Inquiry hearings.

Working on several smaller projects within the Cabinet office regarding automation of processes, fast stream programme and assessment frameworks.

SKILLS

- User research
- Interaction design
- Content design
- User experience
- Service design
- Journey mapping
- User research
- SEO & analytics
- Accessibility
- Ecommerce
- Business development

UI DEVELOPMENT

- HTML5/CSS3
- SASS
- Javascript
- Jquery
- Liquid
- Bootstrap
- Zurb Foundation
- MVC
- Node.js
- NPM
- Php
- JSON

LANGUAGES

English native speaker, with elementary Japanese

proficiency.

Also providing digital accessibility reports and statements for other smaller internal services.

Department of Education, Home based — *User researcher*

FEB 2022 – JUNE 2022

Working with professionals that support children and families below the threshold for social care. Short discovery on the referral process for families from professionals in education, health and enforcement leading to an Alpha phase around a new referral form into local authorities to request help.

DEFRA, Home based — *Social User Researcher*

JULY 2021 - FEB 2022

Working with farmers and farming representative groups to co-design the Sustainable Farming Incentive scheme that aims to support environmental practices and wildlife benefits.

Working with farmers around land management and implementing a series of actions on their farms that support the scheme objectives.

Homes England, Coventry — *User Researcher and Interaction Designer*

JAN 2020 - JULY 2021

Working across digital portfolio projects essential to the digital transformation of Homes England. Involved in coaching the wider business as well as recruitment to put Homes England on a GDS path. Digital accessibility consultant and neurodiversity champion.

Education & Skills Funding Agency, Coventry — *Programme Lead User Researcher and Interaction Designer*

MAR 2018 - DEC 2019

Working with the Data collections project and across the Data Science teams to improve the quality of the research process and reputation among stakeholders. Running discovery, Alpha and Beta on a complex data driven service that deals with over 8bn of government funding. GDS assessed.

HMRC, Telford — *Interaction Designer*

AUG 2017 - MAR 2018

Designing the new Income Tax section of the Business Tax Account for the Making Tax Digital project pilot. Working with fully coded and scenario based prototypes to enable research with different user data. Working closely with content design, research and the business to match policy and user needs. Collaborating with other scrum teams that touch the service.

Hunter MacDonald, Birmingham — *Senior Interaction Designer & User Researcher*

JUL 2017 - AUG 2017

Providing user experience and research expertise for a key client in the legal sector. Translating legacy forms to a new digital platform and embedding user-centred design activities into an agile workflow to deliver timely findings. Working in an open and iterative way that puts users first to contribute to the user centric design transformation within the client agency.

Skills Funding Agency, Coventry — *Senior Interaction Designer & User Researcher*

DEC 2015 - MAR 2017

Working to create user centric innovative solutions during the Discovery, Alpha and Beta stage of the Digital First Careers Service. Working with fully coded, responsive prototypes & collaborative working. Threading accessibility through from the very start.
Part of a multidisciplinary agile team working on a 2 week rapid sprint cycle.
Qualitative and quantitative user research was essential to the role, conducted in a lab environment, guerrilla, focus groups, surveys as well as field research with our users and stakeholders.

Ptype | UX Agency and Axure Training, San Francisco — *UX Strategist, Designer & Developer | Axure Trainer*

DEC 2014 - DEC 2015

Working on end to end projects through the full UX cycle.
- Requirements (Goals & User Stories)
- Competition (Research & Analysis)
- User Research (Personas, Scenarios & Journey Map)
- Content (Analysis & Mapping)
- Structure (Information Architecture, Sitemap & Flow Diagrams)
- Interaction Design (Prototypes & Wireframes)
- User Testing (Validation & Analysis)
- Completion (Visual Design, Documentation & Specs, Front End Development)

createyourtemplate GmbH & Co. KG, Berlin — *Creative Ecommerce Consultant*

JAN 2007 - OCT 2014

Responsible for project planning, eBay design/website implementation and coding.
Key responsibilities:
- Customer Account Management
- Acquiring new business and contracts

- Business development
- Ecommerce theme design & development
- eBay design & development
- Balsamiq wireframing
- Internet marketing & SEO
- Networking/Building relationships with partners
- Design planning and concept management
- eBusiness support and advice
- Multichannel integration into client business

Frooition, Dudley — *Ecommerce Consultant*

JUNE 2005 - DEC 2006

I was responsible for managing and implementing search engine optimisation and affiliate techniques for Frooition customers. I was also part of the Managed service ecommerce team on behalf of larger corporate clients.

Prior to June 2005 I worked as a Chemist and Information scientist in the Pharmaceutical sector.

EDUCATION

DeMontfort University, Leicester — *BSc HONS Chemistry (Pharmaceutical)*

SEPT 1998 -JUNE 2002

2:1 achieved and award received for research work.

PROJECTS

National Careers Service — *Interim frontend development & design*
Frontend development & design of the National Careers service digital offering continued improvement in response to user needs.
https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/

Submit learner data — *Programme lead user researcher*
Research and digital transformation in the Data science directorate at the Education and Skills Funding Agency. Flagship project through to Beta.
https://submitlearnerdatabeta.fasst.org.uk/

REFERENCES

Helen Cassidy — *Product owner, National Careers Service*
"Liz has been an absolute gift to the National Careers Service development team. Her ability to translate and respond to user needs with beautiful front end design is second to none. With her

technical prowess and her empathy for the user, Liz would be an asset to any organisation and I would jump at the chance to work with her again in the future. She is a highly proficient interaction designer and front end developer and nothing is ever too much trouble. Liz fits into an agile development team very well and her iterative, high fidelity prototyping skills are excellent. She really mucks in and has mentored and developed skills not only within the team but in the wider organisation too. A real champion of accessibility, she will always lead the way to good user centric design."

Gary Griffiths — *Scrum Master and Solutions Architect*
"Liz is an extremely capable and dedicated UX and UI Front-end Designer and Developer.
As part of the agile scrum team at the SFA she was responsible for producing fully mobile responsive web site prototypes and final designs that complied with the Government Digital Service standards on project with extremely aggressive timescales, often completing work in her own time to ensure deadlines were met. She also fulfilled the role of quality assuring the developer's and supplier's work in the final stage of the project to ensure the project went live on time. Highly recommended."

PERSONAL

I am a creative person who loves to create art in many forms. I am a creative director,makeup artist and kimono stylist :
http://www.kimonostylist.co.uk & http://www.beautifreax.com