

Design Researcher

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Company: Creative Niche

Location: Toronto

Category: other-general

The Lead Digital Design Researcher provides thought leadership, strategic advice, and expertise to senior stakeholders and design peers to develop and execute research activities of high complexity. Through uncovering broader patterns, opportunities are identified to enhance the user experience and interaction with products and services. The role supports and leads other Researchers, Senior Designers, and Strategists in planning and executing more complex projects. Responsibilities:

Leadership: 10%

- Advocates for the Design Research practice within the larger Design team and organization
- Builds and manages relationships with stakeholders within and outside the Design team, becoming a trusted advisor and seasoned subject matter expert
- Facilitates complex design critiques, evaluates designs for inclusivity and provides depth and breadth of expert advice and guidance to cross-functional team
- Provides leadership and direction to the larger Design team about Design Research standards, tools, channels, and processes
- Provides thought leadership, coaching, and guidance to more junior Design team members with advice and expertise that improves their capabilities and fosters growth development
- Fosters a positive work environment where diversity is valued, and people are treated with respect and dignity

Design Research Strategy: 30%

- Directs discussions with Design and cross-functional teams about Design Research strategy
- Provides strategic advice and recommendations about the role and application of Design Research and how it affects the products we design

- Directs Design peers on research methodologies, fielding and analysis to ensure craft excellence and consistency aligned to Design systems as products evolve
 - Shares relevant pre-existing research with Design and Product teams and other stakeholders to deepen understanding of topics of interest
 - Communicates Design implications and recommendations based on outcomes of research activities to Design and Product teams and other stakeholders
 - Contributes to the development of new approaches to research methodologies, fielding, and analysis and can articulate the rationale behind each to Design and Product teams and other stakeholders to make Design decisions
 - Initiates opportunities to collaborate with other Design Researchers to explore shared questions and create a deeper understanding of user behavior, motivations, needs, and mindsets across Journeys
 - Identifies key stakeholders and opportunities to create trust and elevate the reach and impact of research
 - Understands business needs, goals, and objectives and uses that understanding to evaluate, prioritize, and create research activities that bring clarity to stakeholders
 - Directs Design peers on research activities, ensuring business goals and objectives are supported
- Research and Testing (Execution, Synthesis, Analysis): 50%
- Co-leads planning by estimating timing and coordinating activities for highly complex group tasks and/or Design Research projects, potentially across multiple work streams, teams, or squads within a Journey
 - Works with senior Design team members, Design Managers, and stakeholders to develop systems for evaluating and prioritizing potential research topics, questions, and activities against Product and Design goals and objectives
 - Develops unbiased and non-leading questions for moderated or unmoderated research work which address Business and Design goals and objectives
 - Designs multi-stage research activities of medium to high complexity to evaluate prototypes, improve understanding of current context, or generate new understanding of changing user needs
 - Initiates opportunities to validate whether designs follow the principles and requirements of Accessibility and Inclusive Design, including a methodical application of metadata and hidden text to support assistive technologies
 - Moderates live sessions with internal and external users covering highly ambiguous or

complex topics

- Creates opportunities to engage and support non-researchers to conduct research activities and employ best practices
 - Collates and synthesizes complex or ambiguous data sets from primary or secondary research regarding topics of interest
 - Leads Design and Product team members and other stakeholders in synthesizing and translating quantitative and qualitative data into core themes, identifying implications and client needs, creating easily understood, actionable insights and making Design decisions
 - Contributes new practice examples, innovations, and proofs-of-concept from research and experiments in the field
 - Creates and presents engaging decks and Design Research work to senior/executive stakeholders
 - Completes ad hoc tasks or special projects as assigned
- Administration, Professional Development, and Training: 10%
- Attends one-on-one sessions with direct manager
 - Completes annual Performance Management activities
 - Identifies opportunities for own career growth and skills development (e.g., internal programs or external training, courses, conferences, etc.)
 - Completes mandatory and optional training courses
 - Promotes team and peer recognition via initiatives such as Performance Awards, Instant Thanks, and Showing Some Love
 - Attends one-on-one, team, and group meetings (e.g., performance reviews, manager touch points, Design Events, Chapter meetings)
 - Participates in internal initiatives, committees, councils, and activities (e.g., Performance, Employee Opinion Survey, Design Events, Social Committee, Day of Design, Chapters, etc.)

7-10 yrs experience Required

- Strong technical depth and breadth of expertise in Design Research practice theory / tools
- Preferred
- Expert knowledge of Design Research methodologies
 - Experience working on cross-functional teams
 - Experience launching digital products
 - Experience coaching and mentoring team members
 - Experience leading projects

Required

- University or college degree in Design or a related field or equivalent years of experience
- Level of Responsibility & Decision

What kinds of decisions does the job make?

What types of recommendations does the job provide to others?

- Responsible for deciding the best use of the elements and principles of design research to complete assigned tasks (methodology, analysis approach, participants, presentation approach, workshopping components)
- Makes recommendations on revising existing designs or components for upcoming products based on primary and secondary research
- Makes recommendations regarding which potential research activities should be prioritized
- Makes recommendations on what criteria should be used to prioritize research
- Makes recommendations on research activities to support thought leadership within Digital Design

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