

Ahmad Bilal

Product Designer & Design Engineer

I'm a product designer who builds what I design, from research and visual design through to production code.

Experience

Forward Deployed Full Stack Design Engineer

Paira (Contract, Sep 2026 – Present)

Detroit double-dating app where singles meet in groups of four at partner venues. I take the founders' briefs to production across its React Native app, portal and Supabase backend.

- Built **photo moderation** on Amazon Rekognition that removes a photo only on a clear policy violation, protecting members' photos from outages and bad uploads.
- Designed the **moderation filters** and tuned them on real images, so ordinary beach and swimwear photos pass while risky content is still blocked or held for review.
- Built push campaigns (with an audience preview before sending) and one-step venue partner setup in the portal, so the team **runs both without an engineer**.
- Shipped the **Android release** and in-app update prompts, moving members onto new builds without waiting for app store releases.

Founding Product Designer & Lead Researcher

Articos · a Disrupt Labs product (Oct 2025 – Present)

AI user-research platform that generates personas, runs simulated interviews and writes a report you can audit, in place of studies that cost \$5k–\$30k and take weeks.

- Led the research, design and production build, taking Articos from first prototype to a live product that **grew about 10× in active users** in six months.
- Designed and coded the product and its design system, shipping **~119K lines of TypeScript/React** with 1,669 passing tests, then handed it to the engineering team.
- Architected the LLM harness for a self-correcting 8-stage report engine, reaching **4.4× the accuracy of plain prompting** across 15 studies.
- Designed the report layout, placing **the source quote under every claim** so researchers can verify findings before export.
- Replaced one-click report generation with a guided review flow after every one-click report needed edits, **raising researcher trust** (4 of 5 in a week-six survey).
- Designed the brand and built the marketing site (shaders, GSAP, Lenis), **increasing conversion by 24%**.
- Co-authored the go-to-market strategy after running **24 discovery and demo calls** with agencies in the US, UK and Canada.

Principal Product Designer

AutoLeap (May 2023 – Nov 2025)

Repair-shop management SaaS for SMBs and enterprises across North America: scheduling, invoicing, reporting and digital inspections.

- Led the design org for a \$250M+ automotive SaaS platform, partnering with VP Product to drive enterprise adoption across **500+ Canadian repair shops**.
- **+20% ACV growth** via AI-powered Digital Vehicle Inspection upsell experience.
- **+15pt NPS, -23% churn** through systematic VOC research and rapid UX iteration.
- Led native Android app design replacing the mobile web experience, driving **technician NPS from -35 to +55**.
- Delivered a design system that generated production code, **slashing development hours by 40%**.

Contact

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Portfolio: <ahmad.design>

Location: Remote, worldwide

Publications

Grounded Simulation: Task-Preserving LLM Personas for Synthetic User Research
Under peer review · [SSRN 6503241](https://ssrn.com/abstract=6503241)

Context-Free Grammar (CFG)-based English/Urdu Translation System from Video & Audio to Pakistan Sign Language (PSL) Gestures
Peer-reviewed · [IEEE ICICS 2024](https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/abstract/document/10554444)

Auditing Class-Conditional Acquisition Confounding Across Five Open Tuberculosis Chest X-ray Corpora
Preprint · [medRxiv](https://medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2024.08.28.24311111v1) · [SSRN](https://ssrn.com/abstract=4844444)

Education

BS, Software Engineering

University of Management and Technology

MITx MicroMasters, Data, Economics, and Design of Policy (in progress)

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MITx)

Skills

Product & Visual Design: Interaction design, UI and visual design, design systems (tokens, Tailwind), prototyping, information architecture, brand and marketing sites

Research: User research, usability testing, Jobs-to-be-Done, interviews, A/B testing, UX audits, LLM evals

Build: TypeScript / React, Next.js, React Native / Expo, Supabase / Postgres, agentic coding, cross-model routing

Tools: Figma, Claude Code, Codex, Cursor, GitHub, Netlify, Adobe CC, Mobbin

Founding Design Engineer

Refined Implementation (May 2022 – May 2023)

Refined Path, an instructional-coaching SaaS that helps US K-12 school districts turn daily coaching into system-wide improvement.

- **Solo-built a full K-12 instructional-coaching SaaS front end** in ~5 months (~44K LOC), which the client's engineering team then productionized.
- Built the design system (14-level type scale, tokens) and **5 GPT-4 coaching-analysis features**.
- Built teacher-observation features, instructional-coaching planning, multi-role access and user flows.

Instructional Designer

Strategyn (Sep 2021 – May 2022)

Strategyn created Jobs-to-be-Done (JTBD) theory. I led design of the courses and tools that teach its methodology.

- Redesigned and improved JTBD & ODI curriculum and course content, **boosting course completion by 18%**.
- Prototyped a self-serve onboarding app in Figma to cut time-to-productivity and improve user retention.
- Authored cheat sheets and research toolkits **adopted by 150+ practitioners**, raising engagement.

User Experience Consultant

Thriftify (Apr 2021 – Sep 2021)

Circular-fashion marketplace linking charity shops and shoppers in Ireland, the UK and Germany.

- Set up company-wide UX processes to measure and improve customer and retailer experiences.
- Revamped website flows and navigation menus, **increasing time on the homepage by 30%** and traffic to previously neglected pages.
- Collaborated with product, sales and marketing teams on a mobile onboarding app, **reducing product upload time by 40%**.

Senior Product Designer

Careem (Uber) (Dec 2020 – Apr 2021)

Internal tools for Careem's customer-support operation.

- **Reduced average handling time by 1 min (-10%)** by unifying fragmented support tools for 3,200+ agents.
- Ran SUS and qualitative studies with 800 agents, implemented improvements and **raised the usability score by 11 pts**.
- Built Tableau & R dashboards with the data science team, surfacing real-time support KPIs to stakeholders and investors.

User Experience Consultant

Ernst & Young (EY), Asia Pacific (Feb 2020 – Jul 2020)

Advisory team on KSA's Vision 2030, re-imagining government services and the tech skills future government workers need.

- Designed the Imagining Gov 2021 tech-event journey for visitors, speakers and sponsors, integrating storytelling across all event collateral.
- Co-authored a tech-skills white paper **cited in the Vision 2030 roadmap**, which was presented to cabinet officials.

Awards & Community

Panelist

IxDF AI Summit, 2026

Design Thinking Mentor

Google I/O

Pakistan Design Community Leader

UXDP

Rector Award for Innovation &

Entrepreneurship

UMT, 2018

Speed Programming Competition Winner

All Pakistan ExciteCup, 2015

Projects

ahmad.design

Designed and built my portfolio from scratch in static HTML, with its own type system, generative dither-poster hero art and stepped, no-easing motion.

PVARA foundation design, 2025

Researched and designed the groundwork for Pakistan's Virtual Assets Regulatory Authority before it had a public site, benchmarking VARA (Dubai) and ADGM to shape its service experience and citizen tools.

Tuberculosis screening for Pakistan

Built an AI tool that screens chest X-rays for tuberculosis on open foundation models (Rad-DINO, TorchXRyVision). It scored AUROC 0.92 on public benchmarks but 0.78 on 3,008 unseen hospital scans, and tracing that gap became my medRxiv audit.

Banknote facility BIM simulation

Directed an agentic AI pipeline that turns a site photo into an interactive 3D BIM environment in Unreal Engine, with IFC4-compliant modeling and computer-vision geometry extraction.

Claude Code TUI design system

Designed a terminal design system for Claude Code as a self-initiated study, deriving hierarchy from weight, case, color and space inside a monospace grid with ANSI and NO_COLOR support.

1973 Alto OS replication

Designed and built an agentic OS prototype, modeled on the Xerox Alto, where AI agents run apps and generate new ones through an iterative build-and-refine loop.

Bird flocking simulation

Built an interactive 3D flocking simulation in the browser with Three.js and React, implementing Craig Reynolds' Boids algorithm across 100+ agents.