

## Sara Izadi-Najafabadi

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### CAREER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Led 10+ research projects (e.g., UX health and accessibility), earning 22 awards for scientific contributions.
- Spearheaded and executed six UX research projects employing a mixed method approach (qualitative and quantitative), including surveys, interviews, card sorting, heuristic evaluation, competitive analysis, and usability tests to focus on underlying needs and pain points of over 5,000 participants.
- Communicated research findings to diverse audience (e.g., researchers, students) in 29 scientific publications (400+ citations) and 31 conference presentations (8 international, 8 national, and 13 regional), resulting in 3 awards.
- Mentored and coached over 20 junior researchers and designers, including reviewing studies and coaching on research and design best practices.

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**UX Researcher** • Microsoft (Contract), Vancouver, BC • 04/2024 – present

Microsoft is a global technology company renowned for its innovative products and services across various domains. Within Microsoft, Customer Zero Research Team as a part of the Microsoft Digital Studio is dedicated to research and development, focusing on enhancing user experiences with products such as Copilot, Viva, Teams, Outlook, and more.

- Utilizing mixed methods UX research techniques to understand employee needs and behaviors in Microsoft's deployment of Copilot in M365 and Viva Employee Experience platform, contributing to the enhancement of daily workflows and productivity.
- Independently managing the creation, administration, and analysis of surveys, employing tools like Qualtrics.
- Performing statistical analysis on structured data and unstructured datasets, utilizing tools such as SPSS, or R.

**Senior UX Researcher** • Freelance, Surrey, BC • 06/2023 – present

As a Freelancer, I Initiated and led the formation of a collaborative team comprising 3 junior UX designers and 3 junior UX researchers, assuming the roles of Project Manager and Senior UX Researcher to guide and support the team's endeavors.

- Leading cross-functional teams, overseeing the execution of multiple research projects remotely. Projects ranged from serving diverse clients, including automotive-tech start-up companies to academic groups.
- Managing end-to-end UX research projects, from persona creation to usability testing, to deliver actionable insights and drive informed decisions for designing new products including a car management mobile app for service providers.
- Conducting UX research with 21 youth and adults with disabilities to ensure product accessibility and inclusion.
- Leveraging advanced UX research tools, including Optimal Workshop for surveys and card sorting, Miro for collaborative activities, and Figma for design and prototyping.
- Directing strategic redesigns of prominent websites, utilizing insights from surveys, interviews, heuristic evaluation, competitive analysis, card sorting and usability testing to optimize information architecture and user experience.

**UX Researcher** • BC Cancer, Surrey, BC • 10/2020 – 04/2024

The Canadian Centre for Applied Research in Cancer Control (ARCC) at BC Cancer is a pan-Canadian hub specializing in health economics, services, policy, and ethics for cancer control. Through collaboration, ARCC drives policy-relevant research and education, contributing to advancements in cancer control.

- Led UX research remotely, utilizing surveys as a research method both before and after implementing telehealth services during the COVID-19. This initiative resulted in a notable 50% increase in patient satisfaction, particularly in rural areas.
- Collaborated with cross-functional collaborators to manage patient recruitment and screening for 2 pan-Canadian studies with over 5,000 participants, achieving a 55% participation rate.
- Applied statistical analysis techniques, including descriptive, inferential, and multivariate statistics, including regressions, ANOVA, and t-tests, to analyze large administrative datasets. Employed programming software such as SAS, SPSS, and R.
- Reported findings to diverse stakeholders, including executives and healthcare professionals, via 2 scientific publications and 3 conference presentations.

**Research Associate** • University of British Columbia • Vancouver, BC • 05/2016 – 01/2021

The University of British Columbia (UBC) is a leading public research and teaching institutions and is consistently ranked among the world's 40 best universities. UBC offers more than 64,798 students a range of innovative programs and attracts \$669.1 million per year in research funding from government, non-profit organizations, and industry through over 9,544 projects and grants.

- Employed programming languages, including Python and MATLAB, for the manipulation and computational analysis of large and complex brain imaging datasets, comprising over 360 MRI images.
- Designed and led human subject studies, securing \$150k grant funding, resulting in 7 manuscripts (100+ citations), 19 conference presentations, and 1 newsletter article.
- Spearheaded a UX research initiative, utilizing surveys and interviews, to design a web-based rehabilitation platform tailored for individuals with disability and their families.
- Conducted UX research within BC's community-based rehabilitation centers, culminating in the organization of 20 webinars focused on Evidence-based Practice.
- Enhanced UBC campus accessibility by conducting in-depth interviews and focus groups with 14 students with disability to assess their needs. Subsequently, provided actionable recommendations to the UBC administration and received GSS Leadership and Service Award for this work.

## **EDUCATION**

**PhD, Rehabilitation Sciences** • 2021 • University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC

**MSc, Occupational Therapy** • 2012 • Shahid Beheshti Medical University, Tehran, Iran

**BSc, Occupational Therapy** • 2010 • Shahid Beheshti Medical University, Tehran, Iran