

Sowmya Chandrasekaran

Design Researcher, Human-Centered Designer

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EXPERIENCE

- Program Manager, Lead by Design** Chennai, TN | Aug 2025 – Mar 2026
- **Conducted primary research:** field observations and interviews with over 100 users (educators and students) to identify and map their daily challenges and communication barriers.
 - **Designed and iterated play-based learning tools and classroom toolkits**, translating complex program goals and SDG concepts into accessible learning experiences through worksheets, activity sheets, visual resources, and prompt cards.
 - **Evaluated and refined learning activities** through participatory research and observational feedback with users (students and facilitators), using observation and feedback to refine content delivery, material formats, and physical toolkits, **resulting in an 85% project completion rate among students.**
 - **Collaborated with multiple stakeholders**, including program leadership, designers, facilitators, students, and the field team, to bridge the gap between field research insights and final framework implementation.
 - **Coordinated communication-design content** from ideation through execution, and contributed to the Creative Learning Labs framework.
- Junior Curator, Param Science Experience Center** Bengaluru, KA | Dec 2024 – Apr 2025
- **Researched and designed content experiences** and developed thematic visual concepts for interactive exhibits.
- User Researcher, Unnamalai Silks** Tamilnadu, TN | Jul 2024 – Oct 2024
- **Conducted user research and competitive analysis** to identify market gaps, purchasing habits, and consumer preferences.
 - **Mapped user insights to inform business strategy** and operational planning during the brand's transition from a B2B model to a direct-to-consumer (B2C) model.
- Student Design Researcher, ODDE Research Center, SMI Lab** Bengaluru, KA | Nov 2022 – Apr 2023
- **Conducted field and ethnographic research** to study local behaviors, daily habits, and environmental practices of regional communities.
 - **Used contextual inquiry and visual mapping** to translate complex systems and community behaviors into clear diagrams, uncovering key insights for the lab's human-centered design initiatives.
- Programmer Trainee – Developer, Cognizant Technology Solutions** Chennai, TN | May 2018 – Feb 2020
- Worked on developing system-level communication templates, ensuring consistency and usability across both digital and postal channels.

EDUCATION

- Master of Design in Human-Centered Design,** Bengaluru, KA | Aug 2022 – May 2024
Srishti Manipal Institute of Art, Design, and Technology
- Master of Science in Computer Science, Bharathiar University SDE** Coimbatore, TN | Jun 2020 – Aug 2022
- Bachelor of Science in Computer Science, Ethiraj College for Women** Chennai, TN | Jun 2015 – May 2018
- All India Sr. School Certificate, CBSE, in Phy,Chem,Math,CS, DAV BHEL School** Ranipet, TN | May 2015

RECOGNITION

- India HCI '23, International Conference** Oct 2023
Presented design research project [“Interactive Storytelling for Children.”](#) 
- NAOP (National Academy of Psychology) '23, National Conference** Mar 2023
• Presented the design project “Close-Knit toolkit” and moderated the Symposium “Juxtaposition between Psychology and Technology in Health Communication.”

SELECTED WORKSHOPS & FACILITATION

- Leaf it to me**  , *Storytelling-based Creative hands-on Workshop for Children* Bangalore International Centre (BIC) | Jul 2025
- Designed and facilitated interactive storytelling workshops for children, developing activities that combined storytelling, conversation, imagination, and creative participation.
- Stories on a Sunday**  , *Interactive Storytelling-based Workshop Session* Bangalore International Centre (BIC) | Jan 2024
- Designed and facilitated Interactive weekend reading and narrative events hosted at the BIC library, focused on self-care, creativity, and wellbeing for children and young teens.

SKILLS

Design/Research: Contextual, Qualitative, Practice-based, Participatory, User Research, Ethnography, Behavioral Research, Learning Design, Stakeholder Mapping, Persona Development, Heuristic Evaluation, Workshop Facilitation, **Tools:** Adobe XD, InDesign, Illustrator, Figma, Canva, Miro, **Code/Web:** C++, C, JavaScript, COBOL

CERTIFICATES

Introduction to User Experience Principles and Processes — *University of Michigan*, **Modern Art & Ideas** — *The Museum of Modern Art*, **Learning Design for Sustainability** — *LinkedIn Learning*, **The Monsoon School – Adaptive Ecologies and Climate Extremes** — *Manipal School of Architecture and Planning, MAHE* | Conducted field research and designed installations to communicate complex ecosystems., **Engaging in and with Aqueous Ecologies** — *Srishti Manipal Institute, India; Department of Landscape Architecture, Cornell University, USA; School of Architecture and Cities, University of Westminster, UK* | Presented visual mappings and narratives of the design research project.