

Harsha Pillai

Product Designer

Product Designer and Strategist with end-to-end experience owning discovery, interaction design, and product decisions from problem framing through measurable impact - across early-stage SaaS, research environments, and AI-assisted development.

Product Designer I / ProductStak

Oct 2025 - Present, Remote

Embedded across 5+ VC-backed early-stage teams as a design partner, leading full product design cycles from discovery and problem framing through prototyping and customer validation, developing RBAC frameworks, multi-persona user flow systems, and design strategy for complex B2B SaaS platforms across real estate, construction tech and field operations.

Designed AI-native product features including agentic inbox flows, contextual AI sidebars, and multi-role dashboards in Figma.

Audited and rebuilt design system components for accessibility, raising WCAG AA compliance from 30% to 100% and writing HTML/CSS during handoffs to ensure accurate, inclusive implementation.

Leveraged AI-assisted tooling to accelerate design iteration and exploration while building functional MVP sandbox environments with Claude Code, contributing to 8+ LOIs across the portfolio.

UX Design + Research Intern / MarketEQ Digital

June 2025 - September 2025, Remote

Redesigned onboarding and hiring workflows through process audits and user flow consolidation, reducing friction by 40% and strengthening cross-team handoffs.

Prototyped a chatbot-driven request flow and validated through usability sessions and survey analytics, contributing to a 70% retention increase during testing.

Delivered stakeholder-ready UX findings and recommendations that supported faster alignment and iterative decision-making.

Exhibition Experience Designer / School of Visual Arts

September 2023 - May 2025, New York City, NY

Designed and delivered 5+ public exhibitions for 80+ attendees each – translating complex research into accessible, navigable experiences while managing timelines, logistics, and stakeholder constraints end-to-end.

Architectural Designer / OKW Architects

June 2022 - May 2023, Chicago, IL

Produced 3D models, renderings, and presentation materials supporting mixed-use development proposals that contributed to client approvals and funding decisions.

Supplemental Instruction Leader / RIT Academic Success Center

January 2018 - June 2018, Rochester, New York

Facilitated bi-weekly peer learning sessions for 100+ Computer Science II students. Prepared worksheets and study guides with the professor.

Technical Assistant / United Nations

July 2017 - Aug 2017, Bonn, Germany

Rebuilt the structure of a 1,000+ asset internal portal, improving findability and navigation speed by 20%; standardized documentation through updated sitemaps, UX flows, and shared asset libraries.

Education

School of Visual Arts

MFA Product Design 4.0 GPA
New York, NY

Illinois Institute of Technology

Bachelors of Architecture,
Minor in Comp Sci. 3.34 GPA
Chicago, IL

Certifications & Recognition

UX Foundations

Design Lab

Speaker

NYCxDesign Week 2025

Author on Medium

350+ monthly views

Skills

Product & Design Interaction Design, Information Architecture, Visual Design, User Research, Content Design, Wireframing, Prototyping, Design Thinking, UX Writing, Workshop Facilitation, Stakeholder Communication

Design System Component libraries, documentation, onboarding resources, templates & playbooks, cross-team alignment

Accessibility WCAG 2.1 AA/AAA, inclusive design, accessible component patterns

Research User Interviews, Usability Testing, Surveys, Heuristic Evaluation, Affinity Mapping, Research Synthesis, Journey Mapping

AI Tools Cursor, Claude Code, Sanity, Figma Make, Codex, Magic Patterns MCP, VO, UXpilot