Keerthana Govindarazan, PhD Student, Pennsylvania State University

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Architect turned UX researcher specializing in how design and technology shape user cognition, emotion, and behavior. I am passionate about applying qualitative and quantitative research methods to understand users' needs, and actions to generate insights for user-centered design decisions. I am currently studying customization features in generative AI platforms like ChatGPT and their effects on user trust and agency.

EDUCATION

PhD in Mass Communications **Aug 2024 –** *Dec 2026*
Pennsylvania State University (PSU) • State College, PA

MS in Architecture **Aug 2022 –** *Dec 2025*
Pennsylvania State University (PSU) • State College, PA

Others: M.Sc. Psychology, Tamil Nadu Open University (2019–2021); MS in Computational Design, École des Ponts ParisTech, France (2016–2017); Bachelor of Architecture, Anna University, India (2010–2015)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant **Aug 2024 –** *Present*
Bellisario College of Communications, PSU • State College, PA

- Developing methodological guidelines for conducting qualitative interviews using large language models as synthetic participants to scale and accelerate UX research.
- Leading an experimental study revealing how subtle ad cues in user prompts bias AI-generated responses toward brands, uncovering a novel "ad-to-prompt" effect with implications for advertising.
- Directed lab operations and participant coordination across UX/media psychology studies while training researchers in BIOPAC, and VR in the Media Effects Research Lab.
- Assisted graduate quantitative methods course, enhancing student research through detailed feedback and statistical guidance in SPSS and JMP.

Visiting Researcher **May 2025 – July 2025**
Sungkyunkwan University• Seoul, South Korea

- Co-led cross-cultural research with Drs. Shyam Sundar, Jinyoung Han, and Hayeon Song on human-AI interaction. Collaborated on the AI Sycophancy Study, examining how overly agreeable AI responses influence user trust, reliance, and decision confidence.
- Led the AI Modality Project, conducting interview and experimental studies comparing mobile vs desktop AI interactions to identify UX design implications for device-based personalization.

Research Assistant **Aug 2022 - Aug 2024**
Stuckeman School of Architecture, PSU • State College, PA

- Conducted VR-based user studies on environmental design and eating behavior, measuring emotional and behavioral outcomes in immersive mixed-reality settings.
- Provided VR support using Unity and Twinmotion for Directed Research Studio (Spring 2023 and Fall 2023) for 4th and 5th year undergraduates in the department of Architecture.
- Organized a symposium on Immersive Technology and Embodied Cognition, expanding research visibility and academic partnerships within campus.

DESIGN EXPERIENCE

Founder & UX Designer, Tuko Design House – Atlanta, GA **2020–2022**
Designed UX/UI products and interactive AR filters using Spark AR to help small businesses increase audience engagement; delivered branding and visual design solutions aligned with client goals.

UX/UI Designer, Takeleap (Interactive Tech Agency) – Chennai, India **2017–2018**
Created immersive experiences for Oculus Rift, HTC Vive, and HoloLens; led wireframing, prototyping, and concept development for interactive marketing applications.

Other Design Roles (2013–2017): Digital Fabricator (Paris), Freelance Designer (Chennai), Computational Design Intern (Barcelona), Intern Architect (Chennai)

SKILLS

Research Methods: Usability Testing, Semi-Structured Interviews, Surveys, Experiment Design, Thematic Analysis, VR User Studies.
Tools: Qualtrics, SPSS, R, JMP, Process Macro, Python, Unity (basic), Engage VR, Figma, Illustrator

LEADERSHIP

International Student Orientation Leader, Penn State Global (Apr 2023 – Aug 2024) – Supported onboarding and community building for incoming graduate students.

Treasurer, *Nritya* – Indian Classical Dance Club (Jan – Jul 2023) – Managed budgeting and event logistics for cultural performances.

Secretary, Graduate Research and Innovative Design (Aug 2022 – Sep 2023) – Coordinated research talks & interdisciplinary design initiatives within the architectural graduate community.