



Human-Centered Design Specialist—Public Sector

SALARY RANGE (2018): \$50,000–\$102,000, averaging \$80,000

My organization is composed of an intentionally eclectic collective of scientists, mavericks, data geeks, design thinkers, and do-gooders united in a singular desire to outsmart infectious disease. In today's highly connected world, the global population has become increasingly vulnerable to infectious disease and the devastating impact of an outbreak. Using cutting-edge data analysis, proprietary technology, and actionable knowledge in the service of preventing and detecting disease, we work to mitigate many of today's most pressing global health issues. Drawing from a range of expertise (including epidemiology, medicine, ecology, mathematical modelling, geospatial analytics, data science & engineering and design) my role as an HCD specialist is based on creating and testing user experiences and designs of compelling web and mobile products, and insightful data visualizations. This role provides me with a rare opportunity to apply design craft and thinking to the development of socially meaningful, innovative technologies related to global health. I see my role as pivotal to improving the experiences of clients as well as important to driving tangible business results.

The Tip: Experience as many different groups as possible so you can watch how people interact and absorb information.

PRIORITY KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:

Systems Thinking

Knowledge & ability to:

- Understand systems thinking
- Analyze and map systems
- Thrive in ambiguity and manage complexity
- Recognize trends, opportunities and underlying patterns

Human-Centered Design & Design Thinking

Knowledge & ability to:

- Apply human-centered design principles to solve problems
- Think laterally
- Identify patterns
- Work with third-party groups, such as think tanks, labs and accelerators
- Ability to formulate research questions
- Conduct secondary, qualitative and/or quantitative research

Communication, Collaboration & Facilitation

Knowledge & ability to:

- Use contextual knowledge
- Communicate effectively in all formats
- Design and facilitate collective impact initiatives
- Facilitate small & large groups
- Cultivate new collaborations and partnerships across sectors
- Develop & execute workshops, training sessions and/or events
- Use technology and specialized collaboration tools
- Compelling presentation & report writing skills

Changemaking

Knowledge & ability to:

- Be authentic, empathetic

Oversight & Knowledge Management

Knowledge & ability to:

- Direct coordination of activities across departments, stakeholders, clients & users
- Leverage stakeholder relationships
- Develop and implement program schedules
- Budget management & oversight
- Evaluate social, financial and collective impact

Core Transferable Skills

Be an expert at all core transferable skills:

- Thinking skills
- Communications skills
- Organizational skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Technical literacy

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synthesize key issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> and ethical • Apply changemaking principles to create impact • Ask questions • Embrace challenges as opportunities to create systemic change • Demonstrate long-term social impact and sustainability • Break down silos and leverage relationships
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BUILDING BLOCK EXPERIENCES:

<p>Education & Learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Communication (Information Design) with a minor in biology • Graduate studies diploma in Design Thinking for Transdisciplinary Education • Ongoing professional development courses to increase knowledge of data collection, how people learn and how human-centered design can facilitate both 	<p>My decision to return to school for a graduate degree in design thinking proved to be pivotal in finding my dream job.</p>
<p>Employment Experiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My first job was during a university work experience helping redesign the Doctors Without Borders website to increase donor traffic • Secured an after-school job as a unit clerk in the hospital where I transcribed doctor's orders and left messages for nurses, other doctors, the pharmacy, food services, lab services and physiotherapists. They all had their own way of doing things, but they had the same goals. Communicating with them effectively was like solving a puzzle. • My next job was during the summer at the infectious disease clinic where I was tasked with inputting data and producing reports of the results. I got to see how complicated one disease could be. 	<p>As a unit clerk, I observed how emotion affects people's decision-making when it comes to health care. I created some online forms that made it easier for the nurses to chart what they had completed. The other units saw what we were doing and loved how the communication was clear and it saved time, so they adopted my fillable forms. While working as a unit clerk, I met the doctors who specialize in infectious disease, which led to the summer job analyzing data.</p>
<p>Community Experiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed websites, as a volunteer, for a pet rescue society. It was more complex task than it first appeared because I could illicit emotions, which was good- but at the end of the day we wanted to attract responsible pet owners who would look after the pets. 	<p>Working alongside volunteers is very different than working with staff. You really have to develop your non-authority leadership skills.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteered at a hospital to gain a better understanding of health care system, so I volunteered at as many different units as possible, which led to my job as a unit clerk Participated in a human-centered design charrette and learned a lot from the experts 	
<p>Contextual Experiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through school projects, I became involved with researching rare diseases and created presentations for class. I loved the challenge of translating data into multifocal points of information for others to understand. 	I must know about my world and the people who live in it. I seek to learn about people from challenging situations and speak their language.
<p>Relationships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I seek to foster strong relationships with everyone I work and interact with. It is central to the human-centered design process. 	I follow established and budding human-centered design aficionados on social media and let them know when I like their work