

# Chris Hugelmann, PhD

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Games user researcher and games studies scholar with dual US/Canadian citizenship with 8+ years of experience in user experience design, user interface design, and user research. I excel at communicating with stakeholders, learning their needs, and translating those needs into mixed-methods research that is timely, rigorous, and actionable.

## Experience

### **User Researcher | NetEase Games Montreal | NOV 2023 – PRESENT**

Projects I worked on: [FragPunk](#); [Ananta](#); [Blood Message](#); [Spellcasters Chronicles](#); [Dunk City Dynasty](#); Unannounced project

- Lead user research projects on six games across multiple genres and production stages, owning end-to-end timely research and regularly collaborating with overseas partners
- Deliver high impact game design recommendations grounded in data that consistently improve key performance indicators for appreciation and usability
- Iterate on current research processes and enable new methodologies, implementing new technology and defining guidelines to increase flexibility and efficiency in the team's research

### **User Research Intern | Bungie | MAY 2023 – AUG 2023**

Projects I worked on: Unannounced project

- Led in-person observational usability playtests on an unannounced project
- Conducted extensive qualitative and quantitative analysis from survey data to determine market fit for early concept art
- Working with directors, led an international appreciation survey, owning the research process end-to-end, leaving an analysis plan for researchers to utilize after my internship concluded

### **Service Design Researcher | Customer Experience Division, City of Toronto | SEP 2022 – OCT 2023**

Projects I worked on: MyToronto Pay; Parking permits

- Led discovery research, data collection and analysis on multiple city service projects
- Utilized methods like journey mapping, 1:1 interviews, and A/B testing to co-design service improvements with civil servants and city residents alike, increasing user adoption of city service projects and increasing efficiency KPIs
- Offered expertise and guidance to other divisional teams within the City of Toronto as a subject matter expert on how to use iterative design and rapid prototyping to improve the design of City services

### **User Researcher, Community Engagement | Adobe | JAN 2022 – FEB 2022**

- Utilized digital ethnographic methods to uncover socialization painpoints for users of Adobe product Discord servers
- Recommended a new first time user experience (FTUE) to reduce "lurkers" to increase engagement
- Implemented new ways to reward pro-social behaviours through the gameification of participation in the Discord servers

## Education

### **Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) | Communication & Culture | Toronto Metropolitan University**

Dissertation: "Making identity and community: An exploration into the interfaces and interactions in online digital games"

### **Master of Information (MI) | UX Design / User Research | University of Toronto**

### **Honours Bachelor of Science (HBS) | Cognitive Psychology | University of Toronto**

## Skills & Software

LLMs / AI tools • Qualtrics • Adobe CreativeSuite • Microsoft Office Suite • Open Broadcaster Software • Evangelizing user research to broader team • Building/maintaining guides • Diligent documentation • Knowledge mobilization • Stakeholder management

## Currently Playing

Risk of Rain 2 (PC, 2020) • Sea of Stars: Throes of the Watchmaker (NSW, 2025) • Bloodborne (PS4, 2015)