

# LOIC SANS

## Senior Product Designer / UX Lead / Head of Design

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### PROFILE

Product designer with 15+ years across UX strategy, UI, design systems, user research, and front-end. I've spent most of that time in the player-coach position: leading design teams while staying hands-on with the work. I build UX functions inside engineering-first organizations, which means I'm as comfortable negotiating research budget with a CTO as I am deep in Figma at component level.

A lot of my work has been in domains where design actually has consequences: sustainable agriculture, international development, fintech, on-demand media. Users who can't afford bad experiences. That shapes how I think about quality. Currently at LiteFarm (UBC), leading UX for an open-source farming platform used by thousands of farmers across 75+ countries, including sensor-driven IoT interfaces for irrigation and environmental monitoring.

### EXPERIENCE

#### Design Lead

Sep 2023 – Present

LiteFarm, University of British Columbia | Remote / Helsinki

- Own the entire UX/UI process for an open-source farming platform used in 75+ countries. Research, wireframes, prototypes, final UI, all of it.
- Design interfaces for sensor-driven IoT products: irrigation management and environmental monitoring. The challenge is turning hardware data into something a farmer in rural Kenya or Colombia can actually act on.
- Built the design system from zero. Components, patterns, tokens, documentation.
- Integrated AI tools into the research workflow to compress the distance between raw qualitative data and usable insight.
- Work cross-functionally with engineers, product managers, UBC research fellows, and external funders. Competing priorities are the job.

#### Head of Design & UX

May 2012 – Nov 2022

Akvo | Remote / Amsterdam, Netherlands

- Led a team of 6 UX/UI designers and front-end developers for 10 years. Hiring, coaching, performance reviews, the full picture.
- Built the UX function from scratch inside an engineering-first organization. No design team, no process, no shared language when I started. A fully operational team with clear standards when I left.
- Designed tools and interfaces for the Dutch Government, UNICEF, UN Environment Programme, and Plan Finland. High-stakes stakeholder environments with real user impact.
- Steered the design team through a company-wide pivot from SaaS product to digital consultancy, rethinking how the team worked, not just what it made.
- Introduced persona-driven research and Lean UX. Got engineers and product people into the habit of testing ideas with real users before building them.
- Served as the counterpart to engineering leadership on UX resourcing, quality, and planning. Half design director, half negotiator.

#### Head of Design

Oct 2007 – Aug 2011

Blinkbox Entertainment | London, UK

- Founding team member. Built the brand identity, website, and video player from zero for what became the UK's leading on-demand video service.
- Designed across iPad, Smart TV, and mobile. Different interaction models, one coherent experience.
- Platform grew to 2M+ monthly users before acquisition by Tesco.

#### Head of Design

Aug 2011 – May 2012

Arkkeo Oy | Helsinki, Finland

- Branding, UX/UI, and early product strategy for a fintech startup. Market research, user testing, prototyping, and front-end development.

## Product Designer (Freelance)

2004 – Present

Nicely Design | Helsinki / London / Paris

- Ongoing independent practice running in parallel with full-time roles. UX research, UI design, prototyping, and front-end development for clients across digital, creative, and nonprofit sectors.
- In 2022–2023, used this period to invest deliberately: completed two Professional Diplomas at Glasgow Caledonian University (UX Design; Visual & UI Design) and multiple IxDF certifications, while continuing to freelance on UX and photography projects. A planned reset, not a gap.

## UI/UX Designer & Frontend Developer

2003 – 2007

Various (Teachers TV, Mirror Group/Hotonline, PHP, NM Creative) | London / Paris

- Front-end specialist in web standards, accessibility, HTML/CSS/JS. Built and redesigned products for media and e-commerce clients during the early standards-based web era.

## AI IN PRACTICE

I've been integrating AI tools into research, synthesis, and design workflows since 2023. This is not credentials-for-show: I use AI to accelerate the gap between user interview data and design decisions, to prototype conversational flows, and to run faster synthesis across large qualitative datasets. I also run a side consultancy helping design teams bring AI into their workflows without losing their own judgment in the process.

Google AI Professional Certificate (Agentic AI, AI for Research, AI for Design) Google / Coursera 2026

Agentic AI and AI Agents: A Primer for Leaders Vanderbilt University / Coursera 2026

AI for Designers Interaction Design Foundation 2024–2025

Adobe Firefly & Generative AI IxDF 2024

## SKILLS

**Design & Interaction:** UX strategy, interaction design, UI design, design systems, user research, journey mapping, wireframing, prototyping, information architecture, micro-interactions, responsive/multi-device

**Leadership & Process:** Team management (up to 6 reports), UX competence building, stakeholder negotiation, Lean UX, agile integration, design thinking facilitation, mentoring & coaching, quality standards

**Tools:** Figma, FigJam, Adobe Creative Suite, Miro, Sketch, GitHub

**Technical:** HTML, CSS/SASS, JavaScript, design tokens, prompt engineering, AI research tools

**Languages:** French (native), English (fluent, 25+ years as working language), Finnish (conversational)

## EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

Professional Diploma in UX Design Glasgow Caledonian University / UX Design Institute 2022–2023

Professional Diploma in Visual & UI Design Glasgow Caledonian University / UX Design Institute 2023

UX Management: Strategy and Tactics Interaction Design Foundation (IxDF) 2023

Design Systems Blueprint Interaction Design Foundation (IxDF) 2024

Diploma in Computer Programming C.N.A.M, Paris 2002

BA Maths & Computer Science Université de Bordeaux 1998–2000

## ALSO

- Street and urban photographer with a separate brand and body of work at loicsans.com. The way I photograph, isolating the subject, reading the light, cutting the noise, is the same instinct I bring to interface design.
- Building a side consultancy helping design teams integrate AI tools without losing their judgment. Currently working with two clients.
- Based in Helsinki. Available immediately. Open to hybrid, on-site, or fully remote. Happy to discuss relocation for the right opportunity.