Winston Zhao

winstonzhao.ca hello@winstonzhao.ca /in/zhaowinston

Experience

Open to S26 opportunities

Design Engineer @ TextQL

JAN 2026 – PRESENT · NEW YORK

Designing and building visual experiences for modern data workflows.
Creating web interfaces, graphics, and animations.

Product Designer @ Yelo

JAN 2026 – PRESENT · NEW YORK

Designing for social-driven mobility and creating new mobile experiences.
Forbes 30 Under 30, backed by Teamworthy Ventures and PivotNorth Capital.

Product Design Intern @ Augwa

MAY 2025 – AUG 2025 · OTTAWA

Owned UI/UX and branding across web and mobile products, informed by competitive analysis and user research.
Built a **tokenized design system** (20+ new components) enabling scalable UI consistency and faster developer handoff.
Shipped desktop and mobile application designs to streamline core workflows and support on-the-go use cases.

Product Design Intern @ Full Sprint / Heatmap.com

MAY 2024 – AUG 2024 · SAN FRANCISCO

Contributed to an extensive platform redesign, guided by IA audits and competitive analysis, to reduce cognitive load.
Implemented a modernized design system with **32 new components** to standardize UI patterns and streamline future development. Final design enabled **10x easier navigation** and **4x faster load times**, resulting in higher product ROI.

Leadership

Campus Leader @ Figma

AUG 2025 – PRESENT · WATERLOO

Representing Figma on campus by leading new workshops and events. Organized a designathon with 100+ attendees and ran a custom boba truck activation. Building a vibrant community of student designers at the University of Waterloo.

Co-Founder / Product Designer @ Villio AI

MAY 2025 – PRESENT · WATERLOO

AI powered platform that manages digital municipal infrastructure. Designed the MVP. Met with municipalities + VCs and explored product potential. Leading the founding team; currently running as an early-stage startup.

President / Director of Design @ GBDA Society

DEC 2024 – DEC 2025 · WATERLOO

Led the F25 team and W25 design for the student society of the Global Business & Digital Arts program @ UWaterloo.
Launched the first logo redesign since 2016. Organized Mosaic 2025, UWaterloo's largest Innovation Challenge.

Design Lead @ Hack404

MAR 2025 – AUG 2025 · TORONTO

Led a team of designers for Hack404, a future-focused hackathon for 200+ high school and university students.
Directed UI/UX, branding, and media. Experimented with emerging trends and creating cohesive visuals.

Co-Founder / Product Designer @ Elapse

NOV 2022 – JAN 2025 · TORONTO

Led a team of 8 to design and develop a smart tournament companion app for the Vex Robotics Competition.
Reached **3,500+ users** globally with 4.8 stars. Users reported **3x faster** data access and better UX over competing apps.

Education

University of Waterloo

2024 – 2029

Global Business & Digital Arts (GBDA) with co-op

Awards

First Place (UW Blueprint Designathon '25) • First Place (UWUX Design Sprint '25) • First Place (UWUX Designathon '24)
Best Pitch (UXL Designathon '25) • Second Place (YRHacks '24) • Best Design (Alicehacks '23)
Honors (Awwwards.com) • Second Place (Skills Ontario Web Design '22, '21)

Community

Co-Director @ SummerHacks • Curator @ Waterloo Commons • VP Internals, Prev. VP Design @ UW Data Science Club
Design Lead @ Hack404 • Designer @ IgnitionHacks • Organizer @ Mosaic 2025 (GBDASoc) • Workshop host @ Hack the 6ix 2025, Hack 404 2025, NRG Hacks 2025, Mosaic 2025, GeeseHacks 2025, Winterhacks 2024

Skills & Tools

UI/UX Design, UX Research, Design Systems, Human Centred Design, Design Thinking, Graphic Design, Branding, Frontend Development, Team Leadership

Figma, Sketch, Adobe Creative Suite, Next.js, React, JavaScript, HTML/CSS, Dart/Flutter, Kotlin/Jetpack Compose, Swift/SwiftUI, React, C++, Python