

In my role as a Research Assistant at the Brown Arts Institute, I was involved in customizing the Brown ArtsCrew platform to meet the specific needs of its users. This platform will help streamline the scheduling process and provide an overview of events and information for ArtsCrew employees and members, enhancing the overall user experience. I worked with my team to conduct user testing, gather feedback, and iterate on the design based on this feedback. Through this work, I gained valuable experience in application design, using Figma for UI/UX design, and applying human and community-centered research methods to improve the platform.

Through this experience, I learned a lot about the design aspects of an application, particularly through continuous iteration, which was a key highlight of the project. My mentor was instrumental in guiding my team and I through this process, emphasizing the importance of detail and helping me understand the nuances of design systems, color schemes, and how these elements contribute to a cohesive user experience.

One of the most impactful learning experiences for me was understanding and applying Design Thinking. This approach taught me how to merge what is desirable from a human perspective with what is technologically feasible. The iterative nature of Design Thinking allowed us to remain open-minded, continually refining our solutions based on user interviews and feedback. My mentor's design camps were particularly helpful, where we learned about human-centered research and app prototyping. These camps gave me a deeper appreciation for the intricacies of user-centric design.

A significant breakthrough for the project was when we understood what the ArtsCrew employees and members truly wanted from the app. This clarity allowed us to strip away unnecessary features and focus on what mattered most. Personally, I had a breakthrough when I realized that simplicity is key—both in design and functionality. This experience helped me improve both my technical skills and broadened my understanding of how to create meaningful and effective digital solutions. I'm extremely grateful for this opportunity and for the mentorship that helped me grow as both a researcher and a designer.