

MARIA SHURUPOVA

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I am a US-based game designer who believes in the power of games to bring positive change. My passion lies in creating immersive **systems** and meaningful **experiences** infused with empathy.

EXPERIENCE

Systems Design Intern – UCONN. VR game “Multicultural Aleppo” *(June 2023 - Aug 2023)*

- Designed a Quest System that delegates events, stores multiple objectives, and connects to subtitles. Created narrative and technical implementation of 7 quests within the system;
- Developed a 3D UI Journal with collectibles, quest tracking, and a dialogue log;
- Scripted Interactable Objects System in Unity C# with 3 different functionalities, including additional mechanics of scanning objects for a journal and a mini-game of Backgammon;
- Played a key role in content design creation; proposed features and ideas that were later implemented, resulting in an immersive and seamless gaming experience;
- Created and supported methodologies document, art direction framework, and task management via SharePoint to ensure the demo completion over the summer.

Game Design Intern – UCONN. Mobile application “Zuri” *(June 2022 - Aug 2022)*

- Conceptualized and led the development of three educational mobile games for sexual and reproductive health with features such as interactive dialogue and mini-puzzles;
- Created 2D assets in Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator, made trailers in Adobe Premiere Pro;
- Made prototypes in Unity C# and Android builds for focus groups, developed design pillars based on the understanding of user motivations and behaviors;
- Assisted with quality assurance and playtesting, identifying potential areas for improvement and optimizing user experience, and keeping the detailed log;
- Assembled detailed game design documentation and delivered monthly reports that bridged a connection between medical professionals, design team, and investors;
- Communicated efficiently with a diverse team of 14 professionals, regularly provided valuable feedback, and received input, contributing to the collaborative success.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Solo-developer of *Doppel Diner*: a retrofuturistic cooking simulator for Bipolar Disorder awareness. The game was awarded a GGJ x Endless Microgrant for Educational & Learning games (2022); showcased on BostonFig (2022, 2023), Made In MA at PAX East (2023), RPI GameFest (2023);
- Grantee in Virtual Exchange Program, International Scholars by IGDA Foundation (2023);
- Mentee in Q4 Women in Games International Mentorship Program (2022).

EDUCATION

- **MFA in Digital Media and Design** *(June 2024)* University of Connecticut
- **BA in Game Design and VR** *(2021)* Higher School of Economics Art and Design School
- **Game Design Exchange Studies** *(2021)* Uppsala University