

Nelson Sharma

Design Manager — Design Systems · Frontend Design Implementation · Team Enablement

nelsonsharma1@gmail.com · nelsonsharma.com · linkedin.com/in/nelson-sharma
Guwahati, Assam, India · Open to Bengaluru, hybrid or remote

SUMMARY

Design manager with seven years at a 13-year-old employee-engagement platform, the last two and a half leading a team of twelve across product design, UX, visual and graphic design, illustration, and design engineering. I hire my own team and coach for judgment rather than throughput.

In 2026 our stakeholders moved design implementation in-house to the design team — agentic AI had matured enough, with sufficient built-in guardrails, for designers to carry a Figma design through to the frontend themselves. Our frontend team authored strict policies to govern it: designers work in HTML and SCSS only, any TypeScript change is flagged to engineering, and everything clears multiple QA passes before it ships.

We still design in Figma. What changed is that the design is now finished in the codebase rather than handed over as a mockup — and the handoff was where the work used to degrade. Removing that transition means we iterate against the running application, stakeholders sign off on the real product instead of a picture of it, and drift between the approved design and the live implementation is prevented at source rather than caught in QA. My part is making my team capable of working that way, and proving it at volume: the two projects below are mine, 144 commits and roughly 1,200 files, delivered while running the team.

EXPERIENCE

Vantage Circle

Jun 2019 – Present · 7 years

Guwahati, India — employee engagement platform (rewards, recognition, perks, wellness). Multi-tenant Angular SPA shipping to six regions, including a full white-label build.

Design Team Manager

Apr 2024 – Present

- Lead a multidisciplinary team of twelve — product and UX designers, visual and graphic designers, illustrators, and design engineers. I hire my own team and own their growth, craft standards, and delivery, coaching each discipline differently toward the same through-line: taste and restraint, not tooling.
- Operationalized a stakeholder mandate to move frontend implementation into the design team (2026).** Brought the designers on my team who work in code from Figma-only handoff to shipping their own HTML and SCSS inside the frontend team's governance — TypeScript flagged to engineering, multiple QA gates before release. Built the practice, training, and review habits that turned a policy into a functioning workflow, and ran the deepest adoption of it in the company myself while the team came up to speed.
- Cut the design-to-implementation transition out of the delivery cycle: iteration against the running application, stakeholder sign-off on the real product rather than a mockup, and implementation drift prevented at source instead of caught in QA.
- Made AI agents a first-class tool for the team, automating the mechanical half of design work. The mandate I set: think more, do less.
- Introduced a scored-ideation practice so polish work stops being unreviewed change. On a single profile widget: **174 ideas rated against one rubric, 5 shipped, 2 escalated as global proposals, 167 dropped with a written reason** — so nobody re-litigates them six months later.
- Established written decision logs as a team standard. The token file is the cheap half of a design system; the record of what we refused and why is what keeps people consistent without asking me.

UI Designer

Aug 2022 – Present

- Continued as a hands-on individual contributor while managing, owning end-to-end product design from research through to shipped frontend code.
- Delivered the two projects below — a design-system consolidation and a mobile/tablet rebuild — directly in the production codebase. Working in code changes what I can design; the strongest ideas in both weren't specifiable as static screens.

Graphic Designer | Digital Illustrator

Sep 2019 – Jul 2024

Held concurrently with the UI Designer role from Aug 2022.

- Produced brand, marketing, and in-product visual work across the platform and its sub-products, and built the illustration and iconography vocabulary the product still uses.
- Carried the visual-design workload alongside product design for two years before handing it to the team I went on to build.

Graphic Design Intern

Jun 2019 – Sep 2019

SELECTED PROJECTS

Design system consolidation — "Almost the same, never the same"

May – Jun 2026 · Angular 20, SCSS · 55 commits, 609 files, +13,784 / -7,993

Thirteen years of hardcoded values had produced a visual language that was almost the same everywhere and never quite the same anywhere — nothing you could file a bug against.

- Audited the stylesheets before designing anything: **249 distinct hex colours used 1,693 times**, falling into **26 clusters** too close to tell apart on screen and accounting for **67% of all colour usage**. One cluster held **23 different off-whites**.
- Reframed it from an aesthetic complaint into a customer-visible defect: in a multi-tenant product where every client sets their own brand colour, a hardcoded purple renders inside the interface of a customer whose brand is maroon.
- Split the work in two — the decision that made it shippable. A codemod performed **~3,876 literal-to-token substitutions under a zero-pixel-diff constraint**, making three thousand changes verifiable as a class instead of unreviewable line by line. Human judgment handled the rest.
- Collapsed **twelve button styles into five tiers**. Every variant kept is a decision the next person doesn't have to make.
- Shipped with **121 QA fixes across 5 validation passes and 27 component areas**, a 59-item QA plan triaged before implementation, and **~4,400 lines of documentation** — including a 28-entry decision log and a handover field guide for module owners.

Mobile & tablet rebuild — "Making a 13-year-old platform work on phones"

May – Jul 2026 · ~7 weeks · 89 commits, 647 files, +22,759 / -9,779

The brief was "improve the mobile view." What it turned into was writing the mobile layer the product never had.

- Found the root cause as a contradiction between two numbers: the app decided "is this a small screen?" in **TypeScript at 959.98px** and in **CSS at 767px**. In the gap — every iPad in portrait — it rendered mobile component structure with desktop styling. Nobody had filed it, because it was correct on phones and correct on desktop.
- There was no breakpoint system to correct; the checks had been written years apart by different people, each solving one screen. I wrote the shared definition of "mobile" that had never existed.
- Rebuilt **~60 components** for small screens and designed a **mobile-only Redeem hub** with no desktop equivalent. Kept **88% of the work in styling and markup**, within the designer scope our frontend policy defines — breakpoint logic and a scroll directive went to engineering as flagged TypeScript.
- Deleted a good-looking hover state because it advertised a click the row didn't respond to. The affordance has to tell the truth.

HOW I WORK

- **Finish the design where it ships.** A mockup is a proposal. The approved thing and the shipped thing should be the same artifact, and the cheapest way to guarantee that is to close the gap rather than police it.
- **Measure before you move.** Both projects opened with an audit, not a mockup. Everything after was cheaper for it.
- **Decide what a system won't contain.** Restraint is the scarce skill, and the one I coach hardest.
- **Size a change by how easily it undoes.** I've shipped work and rolled it back the same day — the design was right, the rollout wasn't.
- **Write the reasons down.** A system is a record of decisions, not a file of tokens.

SKILLS

LEADERSHIP	Team leadership and mentoring · DesignOps · Design management · Hiring and growth · Cross-functional collaboration · Craft and QA standards
DESIGN	Product & UX design · Design systems and tokens · UX research and usability · Visual and graphic design · Illustration and iconography · Responsive, mobile and tablet design · Prototyping
HANDS-ON	Figma · Design systems · Adobe Suite · Framer · Affinity · Canva · Claude Code · Microsoft Suite
WORKING KNOWLEDGE	Angular · React · SCSS · CSS · HTML · Git · Vercel · Cloudflare

CERTIFICATION

Enterprise Design Thinking Practitioner — IBM

May 2025