

# ROBERT WILLIAMS

## HEAD OF DESIGN & RESEARCH

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Head of Design and Research with 25 years commercial experience successfully delivering compelling customer focused digital experiences for major brands across global markets.

Highly experienced people leader passionate about building, developing and scaling diverse high performing multidisciplinary teams of Designers, Researchers and Developers to thrive and deliver high quality human centred design solutions at pace.

Proven record successfully leading teams to deliver complex large scale transformational projects at Barclays, Microsoft and Nokia, for a wide range of products and services across multiple digital platforms. Defining the strategic vision, championing customer needs, fostering closer collaboration to improve customer experience and increase value to businesses.

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

#### Head of Design Research

##### Barclays Bank (2020 - Present)

Responsible for team leadership and management of over 20 Design Researchers, delivering customer insights through all stages of design development from discovery to optimisation.

- **Team building** - led the creation of Barclays first in-house Design Research team, justifying hiring, recruiting and scaling team from inception to 23 researchers, embedding insights internally saving the bank over £2m in external agency spend every year.
- **High performance** - improved team maturity through new tools and ways of working to deliver impactful customer insights quickly to enable evidence led design decisions across all products and services in Barclays UK. Accelerated time to insight from 2 weeks to 2 hours, and engaged product teams directly with customers, with over 1000 customers interviewed in the 1st year.
- **Benchmarking and optimisation** - developing a program to foster greater innovation and raise the bar on creating competitive digital experiences, challenging acceptance levels for MVP.
- **Inclusivity** - championing inclusivity in research through multiple team initiatives to drive better understanding of banking needs of vulnerable, ethnic and customers with accessibility needs.

#### Head of Customer Experience (UI/UX)

##### Barclays Bank (2015 - 2020)

Responsible for team leadership and creative direction of UX, UI designers and developers, creating and delivering compelling digital customer experiences to over 20 million Barclays customers through flagship public and secure banking responsive websites and app.

- **Team development** - helped to grow the team from 5 to 50 designers fostering greater diversity in the team. Improved consistency, efficiency and quality through design crits and show & tells. Generated talent pipelines and innovation through university & D&AD new blood partnerships.
- **Customer focused** - proven record of successfully leading teams through the end to end design process for the full range of financial products, ensuring the delivery of customer focused design solutions which demonstrate significant reductions in customer problems/complaints and increases in engagement/revenue.
- **Design system** - led the design and build of Barclays Design Language, a unified digital toolkit of responsive web components for desktop, tablet and mobile web. Proactively promoted, shared and adopted across Barclays increasing brand consistency, customer satisfaction, mobile first optimisation and faster delivery. Significant improvements to build quality and time, with page loading accelerated 16 times faster, and implementation bugs reduced to zero defects.
- **Digital design brand guidelines** - build efficiencies and consistency through extensive templates and guidelines for all digital experiences approved by Global Brand and used by all internal teams and external agencies.
- **Responsive web redesign** - led the redesign of main public and secure banking websites resulting in significant improvement in mobile and tablet experience, increasing task completion by 200% and NPS by over 70%. Improved tech collaboration resulting in higher quality and faster delivery.

### KEY SKILLS

- 👤 People Leadership
- 🚀 Team Development
- 📌 Strategic Direction
- 📄 Product Design
- 📱 UI Visual Design
- ✅ UX User Experience
- 🔍 Design Research
- 📦 Design Systems
- 🤝 Cross Functional Collaboration
- ❤️ Coach & Mentor

### AWARDS & TALKS

- 🏆 **Barclays Annual Exceptional Achievement Award**  
**Barclays Bank**  
Individual winner for 2 years for Online Banking design direction and British Airways partnership design pitch.
- 🏆 **Barclays New Blood Judge D&AD**  
Setting brief and judging student competition, awarding 15 pencil winners over 2 years.
- 🏆 **Designing the Future of Banking: Insight into Principles for Digital Design**  
**ACI Customer Experience Management Summit**  
Speaking about the digital design principles used to create customer focused experiences at Barclays.
- 🏆 **Creating a Global Language with Nokia's Iconography**  
**Nokia Digital Design Event**  
Figure head for Nokia's iconography design, presented and interviewed by global press and bloggers in London, Beijing, Delhi and Bangkok.
- 🏆 **Nokia Achievement Award in 2009, 2012 & 2014**  
Recognition for team and project leadership.
- 🏆 **V&A British Galleries Kiosk Interface Design**  
**BAFTA** nomination:  
"Best use of multimedia for education purposes".

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE *(continued)*

### Senior Design Manager - Mobile Phones User Experience

#### Nokia & Microsoft (2014)

Team Leader and line manager for visual designers in London, responsible for creative direction for design concepts and graphical assets delivery to mobile phone products.

**Android Flagship Devices** - trusted to lead the creative direction for a critical project to improve the user interface of poorly perceived Nokia X devices, developed clear structured design approach and inspired innovation across international design sites, commended by senior management for direction on a complex project.

### Head of Iconography Design

#### Nokia (2012 - 2014)

Responsible for creative direction of branded iconography across all consumer products and marketing, driving consistency of brand and quality of asset delivery.

**Design direction** - led team and product delivery through change after re-org, defined clear design approach to enable efficient use of limited design resources and drive consistency in all deliveries. Awarded the Nokia Achievement Award for strong proactive leadership and quality of work delivered.

### Senior Design Manager - Digital Graphic Design Team

#### Nokia (2008 - 2012)

Creative direction and team leader for team of designers in Helsinki and London. Responsible for delivering unified branded digital identity system across all mobile products through iconography, photographic and illustrative digital content, UI graphical component toolkits and conceptual vision in forward projects.

- **Team impact** - built design team, refocussed and defined the teams remit, influenced senior leadership to understand the teams value and gained approval recruiting internationally, growing the team from 2 to 10 designers.
- **Global delivery** - successfully led multiple high profile brand level UI projects, presented and approved at executive board level, managed delivery of designs to millions of products globally.
- **Press spokesperson** - Nokia Design spokesperson, engaging world press during several Digital Design Events, creating/presenting global design story with Q&A and interview sessions.

### Design Specialist Visual Communications

#### Nokia (2006 - 2008)

Responsible for delivering a unified in-box and in-device consumer experience for the emerging market business unit within Nokia. Led the crafting of graphical assets and vision across packaging, hardware, UI graphical themes & background wallpapers, app design and tutorials.

**Human technology** - utilised valuable insight through global market research to design for emerging markets, collaborated with multiple design disciplines to successfully develop solutions which made mobile technology approachable and coherent.

### Senior Designer

#### Oyster Partners / Framfab / Digitas LBi (1998 - 2006)

Responsible for delivering compelling digital consumer experiences across web, kiosk and mobile for major global brands. Successfully created and art directed conceptual designs, new brand identities, global style guidelines, screen designs, digital marketing, animations, photographic and illustrative content.

**Clients included:** British Telecom, Orange, Vodafone, Epson, NHS, Mercedes-Benz Automotive, Easyjet, Eurostar Trains, V&A Galleries, Rockstar Games, MARC Restaurant Group, Knight Frank Estate Agents, BHS Retail, Halifax Banking, EMAP Publications ...and more.

## EDUCATION

### BA (Hons) Graphic Design

#### The Arts Institute at Bournemouth

### Foundation Studies: Graphic Design

#### Ravensbourne College of Art & Design

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

👤 **Human Centred Design Practitioner Certificate**  
**Luma Institute**  
Design methodology/thinking toolkit for org level impact.

🎓 **Senior Leadership**  
**Wharton School of Business**  
Business and management training for top new leaders at Nokia.

🎧 **Media Training**  
**Kay Avila Coaching**  
Radio and broadcast interview techniques and training.

## TECHNICAL SKILLS

🖥️ **Mac & PC**

📏 **Sketch**

🎨 **Figma**

🎨 **Adobe Creative Suite**  
Photoshop  
Illustrator

📊 **Microsoft Office**  
Powerpoint  
Word  
Excel

▲ **Atlassian**  
Confluence  
Jira

## INTERESTS

📷 **Photography**

❄️ **Snowboarding**

🚴 **Cycling**

🎬 **Films**

➔ **Travelling**