# Nandha Kumar Ilangovan

Product Designer
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Portfolio: https://nandha.design | GitHub: https://github.com/killjay

## Summary

Product designer who ships working code, with 5+ years designing accessible enterprise, data-heavy and AI products. Most recently, as sole designer on an AI deployment platform, I designed an agent that turns GPU and model metrics into ranked, explainable fixes for non-technical users. I research, prototype in Claude Code, test with users, and present design rationale to leaders and engineers.

## Experience

**Senior Product Designer, Runara** | San Jose, CA, USA | Jun 2025 - Jul 2026

- Sole designer, also acting as PM, on an AI deployment platform (developer tools) for teams at companies including Meta and AMD. Tested every feature with about 150 beta users and presented work and findings weekly to the CEO, CTO and engineers.
- Non-technical users could not read GPU and model-behaviour metrics, so I designed an AI agent that analyses them (including hallucination rate) and explains what to fix and why, ranked critical to low. Three months later I added a Fix button: the agent applies the fix, explains the change, and the user approves it before it deploys. Both shipped to beta users: 64% engaged with the explanations, and in the Fix version 83% went on from explanation to Fix.
- Delivered tested working code, not mockups: designed in Figma, built each feature in a branch with Claude Code, smoke-tested and fixed bugs with an engineer, released to beta, and validated through analytics and interviews before handing it to engineering.
- Worked with the CTO to cut the default metrics view down to the few metrics users relied on, and moved the rest behind search.
- Built the design system in Figma with coded React (Material UI) components, and set up an automated review in GitHub Actions that checks every UI change against the system's rules, including AA contrast. It merges compliant changes, sends others back to the author with the reason, and escalates new patterns to me.

**Graduate Research Assistant, Iowa State University** | Ames, IA, USA | Jan 2024 - May 2025

- HIA Lab: built a VR driving simulator for a 50-person autonomous-car study, and a VR system for training humanoid robots.
- Led a five-person team partnering with John Deere's UX team to redesign layout setup and the help system on existing tractor in-cab displays. Interviewed their UX lead and 5 farmers and ran a task analysis: setup went from 14 steps to 8, and NASA-TLX testing showed mental demand down 41% and effort down 49%.
- For Workiva, interviewed 6 analysts and designed an AI panel docked beside the spreadsheet that pinpoints each anomaly and ranks its likely causes, so analysts can check the AI against their data. The prototype projected a 45% cut in review time.

**Product Designer (Contract), Alfaleus Technology** | Hyderabad, India | Aug 2022 - Jun 2023

- As designer and developer, improved an existing VR Humphrey visual-field test for glaucoma. Interviewed doctors at AIIMS New Delhi and Pondicherry Government Hospital: patients' gaze drifted unnoticed during the 10-15 minute test, so most needed 2-3 attempts. Added eye tracking that pauses the test when gaze leaves the centre and resumes after a 2-second fixation, cutting it to one attempt and about 40 to 20 minutes per patient.
- Designed and built a VR app for low-vision patients: adjustable contrast, zoom, concave/convex lens simulation, and colour profiles.

**Product Designer, XR Labs** | Chennai, India | Jun 2019 - Aug 2022

- Clients: Philips (MRI simulator), Capgemini (digital twins), Intel. For Intel, designed the Virtual Demo Zone and prototyped it in code, on a 12-person team of PMs, 3D artists and developers: a 3D browser city where 40+ startups demo products in digital twins of real sites. After launch at Intel Innovate 2022, startups reported 2x sales inquiries, and demo conversion rose 20% to 50%.

## Side Projects

**Co-founder, Velotic** | Bangalore, India | Feb 2026 - May 2026

- Led product design and built the client apps for a coaching platform replacing spreadsheets: a React portal for coaches, SwiftUI and Compose apps for clients, and an AI coach that speaks in each coach's own voice. Private beta: 5 coaches, 2,150 clients.

**Co-founder, Café Cal** | India | Mar 2026 - Present

- An AI calorie tracker on iOS and Android that logs a meal from one photo. After a launch with almost no downloads or revenue, we redesigned onboarding and the paywall; with marketing, that took it to about 35,000 downloads.
- Led motion design and the SwiftUI build. Designed the motion around three jobs: continuity (the captured photo flies into its meal card instead of a hard cut), honest waiting (real progress stages, shown in full once) and restraint (celebrations only for chosen goals). Shipped on iOS and Android from one token file, and audited both apps for Reduce Motion support.

## Education

**M.S. in Human-Computer Interaction, Iowa State University** | Aug 2023 - May 2025 | GPA 3.78 / 4.0
**B.Tech in Mechanical Engineering, SRM Institute of Science and Technology** | Jul 2015 - May 2019

## Skills

**Design:** Figma, design systems, interaction design, information architecture, user flows, wireframes, prototyping, WCAG AA
**Research & product:** user interviews, usability testing, task analysis, NASA-TLX, PRDs, roadmapping, enterprise and data-heavy B2B
**AI:** AI agents, conversational interfaces (WhatsApp Business API), Gemini, OpenAI and Claude APIs, function calling, structured outputs, multimodal pipelines, Claude Code, Cursor, Bolt
**Code:** React, TypeScript, SwiftUI, Jetpack Compose, D3, Recharts, Firebase, Material UI, GitHub Actions, Unity, Unreal Engine