



# Nima Zargham

Research in Human-Computer Interaction  
University of Bremen



May 6th, 1992



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Driving License B

## About

I'm a human-computer interaction (HCI) researcher with a focus on voice user interfaces (VUIs). I am particularly interested in natural user interfaces, AI assistants, mixed reality applications, and game user research.

My research background contains topics such as conversational agents, virtual reality, multimodal interaction, privacy and security, gamification, and human-robot interaction.

## Education

### Bachelor of Science in IT

University of Debrecen, Debrecen (Hungary)  
September 2010 - June 2014

### Master of Science in Digital Media

University of Bremen, Bremen (Germany)  
October 2014 - March 2018

### PhD in Human-Computer Interaction

University of Bremen, Bremen (Germany)  
April 2019 - June 2024

## Languages

Farsi/Persian



English



German



## Links



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[dl.acm.org/profile/99659475107](https://dl.acm.org/profile/99659475107)

## Work Experience

### 2D Animator

NimZ Studio  
January 2010 - Now

### Teaching Assistant

Mathematics and Physics  
September 2011 - June 2014

### Web Developer & UI/UX Designer

Airbus Endowed Chair for Integrative Simulation and Engineering of Material and Processes  
December 2016 - May 2018

### Web Developer

University of Bremen (CARO Project)  
January 2017 - January 2018

### Software Developer & UI/UX Designer

RMTSoft Bremen  
May 2018 - April 2019

### Research Associate & Teaching Assistant

Digital Media Lab, University of Bremen  
April 2019 - Now

## Research Exchanges

### University College London

UCL Interaction Centre (UCLIC)  
January-March 2023

### University of Waterloo

The Games Institute  
May-September 2023

# Research Projects

## ● Communicative AI (ComAI)

The “Communicative AI” Research Unit, funded by the DFG and the FWF, investigates how societal communication changes when communicative AI becomes part of it. An interdisciplinary team of researchers from the fields of media and communication studies, informatics, sociology, and law are involved. The research focuses on pioneer communities, the development of interfaces, the legal handling and governance of communicative AI, its role in journalism, public (online) discourse, everyday personal life through technological companions, health sector, and learning and teaching.

<https://comai.space>

2025 - ongoing

## ● SmartOT - Smart Lighting in Operating Theaters

The “SmartOT” research project explored the development of new, intelligent components for the operating theatre aimed at reducing the workload of surgical personnel and making the work processes in the operating room more ergonomic and efficient, ultimately increasing patient safety. The main focus was on smart lighting and smart control.

<https://www.smart-ot.de>

2019 - 2022

## ● VIVATOP - Versatile Immersive Virtual and Augmented Tangible OP

The “VIVATOP” project, funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, explored new approaches to supply surgeons with important information before and during surgeries to increase the chances of a successful outcome. Using mixed-reality and 3D printing, applications were designed to support the planning and execution of surgeries effectively, as well as training and education scenarios.

<https://vivatop.de>

2019 - 2022

## ● First.Stage

The goal of the EU project first.stage was to research, design, develop, evaluate, and showcase natural user interfaces that improve previsualisation in film, animation, and the performing arts by speaking the language of the artist rather than that of a technician to provide efficient workflows and offer the high degree of control required by practitioners.

<https://first-stage.eu>

2019

# Published Papers

- **What could go wrong? raising mobile privacy and security awareness through a decision-making game**  
Nima Zargham, Mehrdad Bahrini, Georg Volkmar, Dirk Wenig, Karsten Sohr, Rainer Malaka  
Extended Abstracts of the Annual Symposium on Computer-Human Interaction in Play Companion Extended Abstracts  
Published in 2019
- **Good vs. Evil: Investigating the Effect of Game Premise in a Smart Home Security Educational Game**  
Mehrdad Bahrini, Nima Zargham, Johannes Pfau, Stella Lemke, Karsten Sohr, Rainer Malaka  
Extended Abstracts of the 2020 Annual Symposium on Computer-Human Interaction in Play  
Published in 2020
- **Smells Like Team Spirit: Investigating the Player Experience with Multiple Interlocutors in a VR Game**  
Nima Zargham, Michael Bonfert, Georg Volkmar, Robert Porzel, Rainer Malaka  
Extended Abstracts of the 2020 Annual Symposium on Computer-Human Interaction in Play  
Published in 2020
- **An Evaluation of Visual Embodiment for Voice Assistants on Smart Displays**  
Michael Bonfert, Nima Zargham, Florian Saade, Robert Porzel, Rainer Malaka  
CUI 2021-3rd Conference on Conversational User Interfaces  
Published in 2021
- **Multi-Agent Voice Assistants: An Investigation of User Experience**  
Nima Zargham, Michael Bonfert, Robert Porzel, Tanja Döring, Rainer Malaka  
20th International Conference on Mobile and Ubiquitous Multimedia  
Published in 2021
- **Using Natural User Interfaces for Previsualization**  
Rainer Malaka, Tanja Döring, Thomas Fröhlich, Thomas Muender, Georg Volkmar, Dirk Wenig, Nima Zargham  
EAI Endorsed Transactions on Creative Technologies  
Published in 2021
- **May I Interrupt? Diverging Opinions on Proactive Smart Speakers**  
Leon Reicherts, Nima Zargham, Michael Bonfert, Yvonne Rogers, Rainer Malaka  
CUI 2021-3rd Conference on Conversational User Interfaces  
Published in 2021
- **“I Want It That Way”: Exploring Users’ Customization and Personalization Preferences for Home Assistants**  
Nima Zargham, Dmitry Alexandrovsky, Jan Erich, Nina Wenig, Rainer Malaka  
CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems Extended Abstracts  
Published in 2022
- **Understanding Circumstances for Desirable Proactive Behaviour of Voice Assistants: The Proactivity Dilemma**  
Nima Zargham, Leon Reicherts, Michael Bonfert, Sarah Theres Völkel, Johannes Schöning, Rainer Malaka, Yvonne Rogers  
Proceedings of the 4th Conference on Conversational User Interfaces  
Published in 2022
- **Enhancing Game-Based Learning Through Infographics in the Context of Smart Home Security**  
Mehrdad Bahrini, Nima Zargham, Johannes Pfau, Stella Lemke, Karsten Sohr, Rainer Malaka  
International Conference on Entertainment Computing  
Published in 2022
- **It’s Long and Complicated! Enhancing One-Pager Privacy Policies in Smart Home Applications**  
Mehrdad Bahrini, Nima Zargham, Alexander Wolff, Dennis-Kenji Kipker, Karsten Sohr, Rainer Malaka  
Nordic Human-Computer Interaction Conference  
Published in 2022
- **“I Didn’t Catch That, But I’ll Try My Best”: Anticipatory Error Handling in a Voice Controlled Game**  
Nima Zargham, Johannes Pfau, Tobias Schnackenberg, Rainer Malaka  
CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems  
Published in 2022

# Published Papers

- **"Let's Face It": Investigating User Preferences for Virtual Humanoid Home Assistants**  
Nima Zargham, Dmitry Alexandrovsky, Thomas Mildner, Robert Porzel, Rainer Malaka  
International Conference on Human-Agent Interaction  
Published in 2023
- **"Funny How?" A Serious Look at Humor in Conversational Agents**  
Nima Zargham, Leon Reicherts, Vito Avanesi, Ava Elizabeth Scott, Yvonne Rogers, Rainer Malaka  
Proceedings of the 5th International Conference on Conversational User Interfaces  
Published in 2023
- **Tickling Proactivity: Exploring the Use of Humor in Proactive Voice Assistants**  
Nima Zargham, Leon Reicherts, Vito Avanesi, Yvonne Rogers, Rainer Malaka  
International Conference on Mobile and Ubiquitous Multimedia  
Published in 2023
- **SeIVReflect: A Guided VR Experience Fostering Reflection on Personal Challenges**  
Nadine Wagener, Leon Reicherts, Nima Zargham, Natalia Bartłomiejczyk, Ava Elizabeth Scott, Katherine Wang, Marië Bentvelzen, Evropi Stefanidi, Thomas Mildner, Yvonne Rogers, Jasmin Niess  
CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems  
Published in 2023
- **Let's Talk Games: An Expert Exploration of Speech Interaction with NPCs**  
Nima Zargham, Maximilian A Friebs, Leandro Tonini, Dmitry Alexandrovsky, Emma Grace Ruthven, Lennart E Nacke, Rainer Malaka  
International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction  
Published in 2024
- **"I Know What You Mean": Context-Aware Recognition to Enhance Speech-Based Games**  
Nima Zargham, Mohamed Lamine Fetni, Laura Spillner, Thomas Muender, Rainer Malaka  
CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems  
Published in 2024
- **Level Up or Game Over: Exploring How Dark Patterns Shape Mobile Games**  
Sam Niknejad, Thomas Mildner, Nima Zargham, Susanne Putze, Rainer Malaka  
International Conference on Mobile and Ubiquitous Multimedia  
Published in 2024
- **Gaming with Etiquette: Exploring Courtesy as a Game Mechanic in Speech-Based Games**  
Nima Zargham, Leon Tristan Dratzidis, Dmitry Alexandrovsky, Maximilian A Friebs, Rainer Malaka  
International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction  
Published in 2024
- **HASI: A Model for Human-Agent Speech Interaction**  
Nima Zargham, Vito Avanesi, Thomas Mildner, Kamyar Javanmardi, Robert Porzel, Rainer Malaka  
ACM Conference on Conversational User Interfaces  
Published in 2024
- **MetaMorph – A Metamodelling Approach For Robot Morphology**  
Rachel Ringe, Robin Nolte, Nima Zargham, Robert Porzel, Rainer Malaka  
ACM/IEEE International Conference on Human-Robot Interaction  
Published in 2025
- **Utilizing Gesture and Speech to Control Surgical Lighting Systems**  
Nima Zargham, Anke Reinschluessel, Andre Mühlenbrock, Thomas Muender, Timur Cetin, Verena Nicole Uslar, Dirk Weyhe, Rainer Malaka, Tanja Döring  
Journal of Medical Internet Research (JMIR) - Human Factors  
Published in 2025

# Workshops (Organizer)

## ● **Human-Robot Conversational Interaction (HRCI)**

Donald McMillan, Razan Jaber, Benjamin R Cowan, Joel E Fischer, Bahar Irfan, Ronald Cumbal, Nima Zargham, Minha Lee  
Companion of the 2023 ACM/IEEE International Conference on Human-Robot Interaction  
Published and Organized in 2023

## ● **From C-3PO to HAL: Opening The Discourse About The Dark Side of Multi-Modal Social Agents**

Vino Avanesi, Johanna Rockstroh, Thomas Mildner, Nima Zargham, Leon Reicherts, Maximilian A Friehs, Dimosthenis Kontogiorgos, Nina Wenig, Rainer Malaka  
Proceedings of the 5th International Conference on Conversational User Interfaces  
Published and Organized in 2023

## ● **CUI@ CHI 2024: Building Trust in CUIs-From Design to Deployment**

Smit Desai, Christina Wei, Jaisie Sin, Mateusz Dubiel, Nima Zargham, Shashank Ahire, Martin Porcheron, Anastasia Kuzminykh, Minha Lee, Heloisa Candello, Joel Fischer, Cosmin Munteanu, Benjamin R Cowan  
CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems Extended Abstracts  
Published and Organized in 2024

## ● **Voicecraft: Designing Task-specific Voice Assistant Personas**

Mateusz Dubiel, Smit Desai, Nima Zargham, Anuschka Schmitt  
ACM Conference on Conversational User Interfaces  
Published and Organized in 2024

## ● **Designing AI Personalities: Enhancing Human-Agent Interaction Through Thoughtful Persona Design**

Nima Zargham, Mateusz Dubiel, Smit Desai, Thomas Mildner, Hanz-Joachim Belz  
ACM Conference on Conversational User Interfaces  
Published and Organized in 2024

## ● **BEHAVE AI: BEst Practices and Guidelines for Human-Centric Design and EvAluation of ProactiVE AI Agents**

Matthias Kraus, Sebastian Zepf, Rebecca Westhäußer, Isabel Feustel, Nima Zargham, Ilhan Aslan, Justin Edwards, Sven Mayer, Dimosthenis Kontogiorgos, Nicolas Wagner, Elisabeth André  
ACM Conference on Intelligent User Interfaces  
Published and Organized in 2025

## Workshops (Papers)

- **Finding Uncommon Ground: A Human-Centered Model for Extrospective Explanations**  
Laura Spillner, Nima Zargham, Mihai Pomarlan, Robert Porzel, Rainer Malaka  
The 32nd International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence (IJCAI 2023)  
Published in 2023
- **Speaking Up Against Toxicity: Opportunities and Challenges of Utilizing Courtesy as a Game Mechanic**  
Nima Zargham, Dmitry Alexandrovsky, Maximilian A Friehs, Sven Zebel, Kathrin Gerling, Rainer Malaka  
CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems Extended Abstracts  
Published in 2023
- **Using Procedural Rhetoric To Identify Iniquitous Design As CUI-Specific Dark Patterns**  
Vino Avanesi, Thomas Mildner, Nima Zargham, Nina Wenig, Andreas Hepp, Rainer Malaka  
CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems Extended Abstracts  
Published in 2023

## Awards and Scholarships

- **Honorable Mention**  
CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems  
2024
- **DAAD Exchange Fund**  
IFI programme of the German Academic Exchange Service  
Grant 57515303  
2023
- **MMM Exchange Fund**  
Minds, Media, Machines Academic Exchange Fund  
2023
- **MMM Conference Fund**  
Minds, Media, Machines Academic Conference Attendance Fund  
2023