

# Elsa Canto W.

Product Designer & Design Systems Consultant

## My profile

Hello! I'm Elsa, a **Senior Product Designer and Design Systems Lead** with more than 20 years of experience creating intuitive, scalable, and user-centered digital experiences for enterprise organizations, startups, and complex digital products.

One of my greatest strengths comes from my background as a Computer Programmer from 1998 to 2007, which gives me a deep understanding of systems thinking, frontend architecture, technology, and how digital products are designed, developed, and scaled. Throughout my career, I have collaborated with cross-functional teams in agile environments, leading UX and UI initiatives through user research, information architecture, prototyping, design strategy, and scalable interface systems. My experience includes building Design Systems from the ground up, defining governance models, facilitating adoption across teams, and helping organizations create more consistent and efficient digital ecosystems.

In recent years, my work has evolved toward Design Systems leadership, enterprise UX strategy, and AI-assisted product design workflows. I'm passionate about exploring how AI tools such as Claude, Codex, Figma AI, Copilot, and AI-driven prototyping workflows can transform the way teams design, document, and scale digital products. My focus is on building AI-ready Design Systems and helping organizations bridge the gap between human-centered design and the future of intelligent product development.

I'm a highly creative and systems-oriented professional who thrives in collaborative environments where innovation, strategic thinking, and forward-looking ideas are valued.

**Location preference:** Remote (Canada or U.S.). Open to relocation to Canada.

## Core Expertise

- Enterprise Design Systems
- AI-Assisted Product Design Workflows
- Product Design & UX Strategy
- DesignOps & Governance
- Design Tokens & Scalable UI Architecture
- Cross-functional Leadership
- User Research & Information Architecture
- Figma Libraries & Storybook Systems
- AI Prototyping (Claude, Figma Make, Lovable, Codex)
- Agile Product Development
- Frontend Collaboration
- Workshops, Training & Facilitation
- UX for Enterprise Platforms
- Accessibility & Usability.

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## My experience

### IDB: Inter-American Development Bank (Washington, DC, USA)
### Design System Lead Consultant | Aug 2024 – Present

• Leading the creation and evolution of an enterprise Design System for operational digital products, including a scalable UI Kit in Figma aligned with Material Design 3 principles.

• Designing AI-assisted workflows and AI Starter Kits integrated with the Design System using tools such as Claude, Figma Make, and Microsoft Copilot to support faster prototyping, documentation, and team collaboration.

• Defining governance models, contribution processes, and DesignOps practices to ensure scalability, consistency, and cross-team alignment across multiple products.

• Collaborating closely with designers, developers, architects, and stakeholders to establish workflows, design guidelines, and component adoption strategies.

• Conducting UI and visual audits to identify inconsistencies, improve usability, and strengthen alignment across enterprise products.

• Facilitating onboarding sessions, workshops, and support initiatives to encourage Design System adoption and improve team efficiency.

• Partnering with frontend developers on the implementation of the Design System, reviewing repositories, supporting user stories in Jira, and helping bridge design and engineering workflows.

• Contributing to UX research and UI design initiatives for a Salesforce-based Donor Portal, including user flows, interface design, and maintenance of a Salesforce Lightning Design System component library in Figma.

• Working with technologies and frameworks such as Angular, Material Design 3, Storybook, and Salesforce Lightning Design System (SLDS).

### ASSA Insurance Company
### Design System Lead & Senior Product Designer | 2020 – April 2024

**Design System Leadership**

• Led the Design System strategy and modernization initiative for the organization, helping establish scalable foundations, governance practices, and cross-team consistency across digital products.

• Defined and developed Design System foundations, component libraries, documentation standards, and internal workflows to improve collaboration between design and development teams.

• Facilitated DesignOps processes and contribution models to support scalability, adoption, and long-term system evolution.

• Guided and mentored design squads in the creation, maintenance, and implementation of reusable components and UI patterns in Figma.

• Collaborated closely with frontend developers to support Design System implementation, review repositories, and align design and engineering workflows.

• Defined Design System OKRs, adoption strategies, internal presentations, and workshops to drive organizational alignment and increase product consistency.

• Managed Design Systems for both web applications and native mobile applications.

• Worked with technologies and frameworks such as Material Design, Material UI, React, and scalable component-based systems.

**Product Design & UX Strategy:**

• Led UX and UI initiatives for enterprise digital products, including user research, interviews, surveys, usability testing, A/B testing, benchmarking, prototyping, and design strategy activities.

• Developed personas, user journeys, service blueprints, and information architecture frameworks to improve product usability and customer experience.

• Designed high-fidelity interfaces and complex user flows for web and mobile applications.

• Created micro-interactions, illustrations, and motion assets using After Effects and LottieFiles to enhance user engagement and product experience.

• Defined UX metrics and collaborated with Product Owners to analyze user behavior through tools such as Mixpanel and analytics reporting.

• Mentored junior designers and supported the growth of UX and UI design practices within the organization.

**TOKEN STUDIO**

**Founder • Senior UX/UI & Product Design Consultant | 2011 – Present (Part-time)**

Founded and led a boutique UX/UI and Product Design consultancy focused on digital products, enterprise web applications, and user-centered design solutions.

• Led projects involving UX strategy, information architecture, user research, prototyping, responsive UI design, and frontend collaboration for clients across multiple industries.

• Facilitated UX workshops and training sessions focused on usability, Design Thinking, and digital product strategy.

• Integrated emerging AI tools and workflows into content strategy, prototyping, and design exploration processes.

**EARLIER EXPERIENCE**

Earlier in my career, I worked in web development, frontend technologies, online banking platforms, infrastructure administration, and digital product implementation. This technical foundation continues to influence my systems thinking, collaboration with engineering teams, and approach to scalable product design.

**AVETTI** — Project Manager & UI Designer | 2011
**BOOTSTUDIO** — Production Manager, UX Designer & Associate | 2008 – 2010
**TOKEN STUDIO** — Project Manager & UI Designer | 2005 – 2007
**BANCO CONTINENTAL** — Lead Analyst & Webmaster | 2000 – 2005
**PANAMA VIRTUAL** — Project Engineer | 1999 – 2000
**SINFONET** First Internet Company /IPS in Panama — Project Engineer | 1998 – 1999

## Education

Sam Walton College of Business – University of Arkansas
Entrepreneurial Excellence Certificate | 2013

Quality Leadership University
Digital Marketing Certificate | 2019

Universidad Santa María La Antigua | 1998 - 2001
Degree in Computer Science / Programming

## Seminars, Courses

• **Advanced Design Systems** — Brad Frost / Smashing Magazine (Nov. 2024)
• **Activating Design Strategy** — IDEO (2023)
• **Design Systems Storytelling Masterclass** — Interaction Design Foundation (2023)
• **Figma MasterClass** — DesignersShip (2022)
• **Mixpanel Product Analytics Certification** — Product School (2022)
• **Design Thinking Training** — McKinsey Consultants (2020)
• **UI Design for Complex Applications and Websites** — Nielsen Norman Group, Washington DC (2013)
• **Human-Computer Interaction (HCI)** — Stanford University Online (2012)
• **UX Deliverables Workshop** — EightShapes, Washington DC (2008)
• Leadership Communication for Women in Leadership (2007)

**Tools & Platforms**

Figma, Storybook, Claude, ChatGPT, Codex, FigmaMake, Copilot, Lovable, Mixpanel, Hotjar, Maze, Jira, Adobe Creative Suite, LottieFiles. MySQL and Wordpress. Shopify, Woocommerce.

**Technical Background**

Frontend collaboration with Angular and React teams • General knowledge of HTML, CSS, JavaScript, frontend systems, and enterprise digital platforms

**Awards & Recognition**

• 1st Place — National Entrepreneur Award, Women Entrepreneur / AMPYME (2018)
• 1st Place — Venture Capital Competition / Capital Bank & Vital Voices (2018)
• 1st Place — Best Presentation, "Abissag Project" / Vital Voices (2013)
• Arroba de Oro Award — Banking & Finance Category, Credicorp Bank (2006)
• Arroba de Oro Award — Banking & Finance Category, Banco Continental (2003)
• Best Content Award — Midoctorweb.com / Sony, Latinol & La Prensa (2001)

**Professional Associations & Community Involvement**

• **Volunteer — Women in Tech Panama Chapter,** supporting STEM education and entrepreneurship initiatives for women in Panama
• **Member — CAPATEC** (Panamanian Chamber of Technology), Women Innovation Leaders Initiative

**Conferences & Publications**

• Published author of the book "Surviving Design Systems" (2026)
• Speaker — Technovation Girls Panama, Design Thinking presentation for students participating in the Technovation Girls competition (2025)
• Speaker — SENACYT (National Secretariat of Science, Technology and Innovation), Design Thinking presentation for robotics students (2022)
• Speaker — Panama Agile Congress, invited by LogicStudio to present on User Experience and usability practices (2019)
• Published author of the children's book series "Señoras Polleras" Vol. 1 (2016) and Vol. 2 (2017)
• Guest Speaker — International Book Fair, panel discussion on children's and youth literature (2016)
• Speaker — City of Knowledge Entrepreneurship Week at UDELAS University (2014)
• Facilitator — Web Usability Workshop for Cable & Wireless (2013)
• Speaker & Facilitator — Web Usability and User-Centered Design workshops for LogicStudio and City of Knowledge Business Accelerator (2012)
• Speaker — World Information Architecture Day (WIAD Panama), presentation on Card Sorting and user mental models (2012)

• Speaker — COMTEC Conference at Universidad Santa María La Antigua, presentation on usability in web applications (2010)
• Speaker — Universidad del Istmo and World Usability Day (2008)

**Languages**

• Spanish — Native
• English — Professional Proficiency
• French — DELF B1 Certification

**Additional Interests**

• Visual artist with experience in watercolor and mixed media techniques.
• Creative writing and published children's book author.
• Strong communication, collaboration, and problem-solving skills.
• Passionate about innovation, systems thinking, and user-centered design.