Vice President, MetaMetrics Inc.

Customer Experience and User Research Consultant

Stacy Surla helps teams design and deliver products and services that work across digital and traditional channels. She integrates design thinking, Lean UX, and user-experience methods to put people at the heart of each effort. Her expertise includes data collection and analysis, workshop facilitation, and team building.

Project Experience

**UX Strategist and Researcher, NIH SPARC, 2019-present.** Partnering with Gazelle CX, Ms. Surla is providing customer experience and user-centered design services to support scientists in sharing research and accessing data on bioelectric medicine.

**UX Strategist and Researcher, CMS, HHS, 2018-2019.** Ms. Surla conducted field research and helped Agile teams integrate user-centered design into Agile processes. This supported systems to transform how the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services manages acquisitions lifecycles, and approves state Medicaid funding.

**Team Lead, CX Center of Excellence, USDA, GSA, 2018.** Ms. Surla led the project team that stood up the pilot Customer Experience Center of Excellence (CX CoE) for the White House Office of American Innovation. She led extensive user research with farmers and loan officers in the field, and facilitated data analysis and roadmapping with participatory design. Key CX methods and structures were demonstrated through Journey Mapping, training for CX Champions, user research, and a CX Playbook.

Specialties and Skillsets

Customer Experience

Design Thinking

Digital Strategy

Information Architecture

Journey Mapping

Lean UX

User Research

Workshop Facilitation

**Teaching**

**Adjunct Professor**

University of Maryland iSchool

**Clearance**

DoD Top Secret Clearance

**Industry Leadership**

Journal of IA, *Editorial Board*

IA Institute, *Director*

**Education**

The American University

M.A., Literature

B.A., Interdisciplinary

**Evaluation Specialist, C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, 2018.** Ms. Surla developed the scope of work and carried out analyses in support of technical recommendations towards the development of a flexible, web-based tool that city climate change administrators in different contexts across the world can use to estimate and track the greenhouse gas effects of policies and actions.

Lean UX/Agile Process Designer, 2015-2018. Ms. Surla led the development of a process for rapid design and launch of products, systems, and services. She created a training curriculum for building innovative teams. Using Lean UX, design thinking, and Agile methods, Ms. Surla engaged project staff and clients for more than a dozen projects, including NCI, CDC, EPA, DOJ, DoD, and HHS.

Customer Journey Mapping Specialist, Baltimore Gas and Electric, 2017. Ms. Surla co-developed and co-led customer journey mapping workshop sessions with stakeholders, in which hypotheses concerning consumer painpoints and potential improvements were reviewed, validated, adjusted, and integrated into action plans for each individual program.

**Workshop Facilitator and UX Strategist, ACL, HHS, 2016-2017.** To ensure the Administration for Community Living reporting and data management systems worked well for state agencies and service providers, Ms. Surla facilitated a series of client and team design workshops using a Lean UX framework, and assisted groups to define personas, minimum viable products, and user scenarios.

**UX Team Lead, Smokefree.gov, NCI, 2014-2017.** Ms. Surla supported the design, evaluation, and deployment of products to help people quit smoking via a multi-channel behavior change initiative. She directed a Lean UX evaluation of technical options to increase user engagement and social support. She led a 10 person team to evaluate technical options for connecting Smokefree's disconnected digital channels into a cohesive user experience that enables publication of content and features across platforms. Her work addressed usability problems, enhanced the user experience, and improved navigation, SmokefreeTXT sign up, content strategy, and cross channel experience.

**User Experience Lead, Surgeon General’s Report on e-Cigarettes, CDC, 2016.** The Office of the Surgeon General required a cross-channel, digital and traditional media campaign around the release of its report concerning e-Cigarettes and youth. Ms. Surla directed UX team members to develop an innovative, interactive website. She directed user research, content strategy, structuring content for syndication, designing for mobile, and ensuring accessibility and usability.

**User Experience Strategist, OVC/TTAC, DOJ, 2016.** Ms. Surla co-led a Customer Journey Mapping and Lean UX engagement to develop an in-depth and customer-focused understanding of the Training and Technical Assistance Center (TTAC) website and other online and offline services in order to deliver a roadmap for enhancements and innovation.

**Customer Experience Specialist, AFI, HHS, 2016.** Ms. Surla used Customer Journey Mapping methods, including market research, persona development, user interviews, focus groups, and workshopping, to support Assets for Independence (AFI) in better understanding their customers to increase the number of social service agencies sucessfully applying for grants. The client was able to walk in their customers’ shoes, better understand social service agency needs and frustrations, and ultimately co-design ideas with customers to make the program work better for everyone.

**UX Manager, Veterans Portal, VA and DoD, 2009–2014.** Ms. Surla defined and built the user experience dimensions of this high-profile citizen-facing transactional portal project. Working in an Agile development environment, Ms. Surla provided strategic recommendations to the client and managed a 14-person team, overseeing user research, information architecture, visual design, content, and front end development. This effort laid the groundwork for the VA's veteran-centric approach to the development of the Veterans.gov website.

**Senior Information Architect, The Nature Conservancy, 2008.** Ms. Surla redesigned The Nature Conservancy’s public website, which involved conducting user research, designing information architecture, and coordinating visual design. She delivered interface design, taxonomy development, and migration planning for the content management system.

**Information Architect, MITRE, 2004–2007.** Ms. Surla provided enterprise-focused IA services for the corporate intranet. She defined navigation and integrated SharePoint sites with static websites, content management systems, and document repositories, and delivered information architecture and user research for knowledge sharing websites, digital libraries, and web applications.

**Information Architect, ONDCP, White House, 2001–2004.** Ms. Surla managed the public websites for the Office of National Drug Control Policy and Anti-Drug Media Campaign. She briefed the Director of ONDCP on cookies and other privacy issues in advance of his testimony before the House Appropriations Subcommittee.

**Community Coordinator, Y2K Community Conversations, White House, 1999-2000.** Ms. Surla combined government relations, media, and community organizing skills to produce over 40 Y2K public awareness events in the U.S., Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and Mexico. She worked with stakeholders at the highest levels of state and local government and private industry, and produced video programs and radio segments for broadcast and promotion.

**Associate Project Director, Cameroon Development Project, 1983–1985.** Ms. Surla conducted an applied anthropological research project on the effectiveness of communication in an integrated rural development project. She co-directed project design and execution, designed data collection instruments, directed a team of three research assistants in the collection of data, used ethnographic and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques, and developed computer tools that were used in the field to manage project data.

**Selected Workshops and Presentations**

[The Art and Science of Workshop Design](https://uxpa2020.org/sessions/the-art-and-science-of-workshop-design/)**, UXPA International, Baltimore, MD, 2021 (upcoming)**

[The Art and Science of Workshop Design](https://www.theiaconference.com/?session=the-art-and-science-of-workshop-design)**, IA Conference, Online, 2020**

[The Art and Science of Workshop Design](https://www.meetup.com/User-Experience-Professionals-Association-DC-Chapter/events/264953901/)**, DCUX Conference, 2019**

[World IA Day Keynote](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_BO4exjXeMg&feature=youtu.be&platform=hootsuite)**, WIAD, Washington, DC, 2019**

[**Integrating UX into Agile: A Workshop**](https://www.digitalsummit.mx/en/2018/workshops#S209)**, UX Digital Summit, Guadalajara, Mexico, 2018**

[**Ethics and IA: A Scenario Creation Tool for Ethical Design**](https://www.slideshare.net/stacysurla/ethics-and-ia-a-scenario-creation-tool-for-ethical-design?ref=https://uxdc.us/events/information-architecture)**, UXDC, Washington, DC, 2018**

[**Customer Experience Innovation in the Public Sector**](https://www.meetup.com/Digital-Exchange/events/253643912/)**, IBM Studios, Washington, DC, 2018**

[Ethics and Information Architecture](http://reframe-ia.org/index.html), Information Architecture Summit, Chicago, 2018

[Why Sprint Zero Sucks](https://www.slideshare.net/stacysurla/why-sprint-zero-sucks), UXDC Conference, Washington, DC, 2017

[Designing User Experiences in Healthcare](http://www.meetup.com/nova-ux/events/233392764/), Moderator, Nova UX, Fairfax, VA, 2016

[A Language of Critique for Information Architecture](http://2016.iasummit.org/schedule/1271/good-bad-and-ugly-a-language-of-critique-for-information-architecture), Information Architecture Summit, Atlanta, 2016

[Design Doing: Creating a Digital Practice](https://www.govloop.com/community/blog/design-creating-digital-practice/), Information Architecture Summit, Minneapolis, 2015

[A Day in the Life of an Information Architect, UXConnect Webinar Series](https://uxconnect.wordpress.com/past-talks/a-day-in-the-life-of-an-information-architect), Kent State University, 2013

Web Sites, Databases, Libraries, and Intranets: Recasting Evaluation in the Internet Paradigm, American Evaluation Association Conference, Atlanta, 1996

**Selected Publications**

Surla S, "Towards a Feminist Information Architecture", Reframe IA, ed. Andrea Resmini, Springer, 2021 (upcoming).

Pugatch J, Grenen E, Surla S, Schwarz M, Cole-Lewis H. [Information Architecture of Web-Based Interventions to Improve Health Outcomes: Systematic Review](http://www.jmir.org/2018/3/e97/), J Med Internet Res 20(3):e97, 2018.

Busch J., Pass J., Pope R., Surla S., and Welchman L. [What research and theory inspires IA/UX, and how can this change behavior and help make a political and humanitarian difference?](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/pra2.2017.14505401067) In S. Erdelez & N.K. Agarwal (Eds.), Proceedings of ASIS&T (pp. 543–544.) Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2017.

Surla S. “[The Lean Volte Approach](https://www.icf.com/-/media/fdfe69e8a53644f8ad9bc888048374e8.ashx).” ICF, September 2017

Surla S. “[Customer Experience: It’s User Experience in the BIgger Picture](https://www.icf.com/-/media/d6149555fac2484ab48ebea3867b57b9.ashx).” ICF, July 2016.

Surla S. “Usability Case Study: The MITRE Corporation.” Making Library Websites Usable: A LITA Guide, ed. Tom Lehman and Terry Nikkel: pp. 137-156. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc., 2008.

Koons A. and Surla S, Final Report for the Cameroon Development Communications Project. Washington, D.C.: The Breakthrough Foundation, May 1985.

Surla S. and Koons A., Baseline Survey on Farmer Contact with Agricultural Extension, and Socioeconomic Indicators. Bamenda: The Breakthrough Foundation, 1984.