

JASMINE BALLARD

Human-Centered Strategist & Facilitator

I lead organizations through human-centered strategy, facilitation, and change—helping people make sense of complexity and turn ambiguity into aligned, actionable direction. Over the past 10+ years, that has meant architecting conversational AI experiences, designing narrative systems, facilitating cross-functional collaboration, embedding design thinking into enterprise delivery, and diagnosing the operational gaps that keep strategic organizations from performing at their best.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- **AI Enablement & Human Factors**
- **Conversational AI & Prompt Engineering**
- **Design Thinking Facilitation**
- **Change Management & Narrative Systems**
- **Executive Stakeholder Facilitation**
- **Strategic Program Leadership**
- **Founder-Led Product & Program Building**

SELECTED WORK — EACH CASE STUDY THAT FOLLOWS SHOWS THE FULL PROCESS: PROBLEM, RESEARCH, FACILITATION, SYNTHESIS, AND OUTCOME



Design Jam: From Safety Crisis to Company-Wide Methodology

Senior Design Strategist (Embedded) · 2022 – 2023

Design Thinking Facilitation

Methodology Design

Train-the-Trainer

THE PROBLEM

Bayer Crop Science relied on a paper-based signage process to communicate field safety information to sprayers, growers, and customers. The process was slow and inconsistent — and the disconnect had fatal consequences: farmworkers were dying due to errors and delays in how safety information reached the field.

WHY A NEW WAY OF WORKING

Nothing was “broken” — the team worked the traditional way: research in one silo, strategy in another, design waiting on inputs, developers receiving a handoff at the end. But with lives at stake, a relay race wasn't good enough. I proposed bringing every role — and the users themselves — into one room, working the problem together in real time. My product-designer partner and I turned that idea into a repeatable method: the Design Jam.

MY SPECIFIC ROLE

- Originated the core concept: collapse the silos and bring portfolio owners, engineers, designers, researchers, and end users into one working session.
- Co-designed the method and template with my product-designer partner, then co-taught it across the organization.



OUTCOME

Team efficiency improved by an estimated 30% as siloed handoffs collapsed into shared working sessions. Field-related incidents dropped significantly within months of the tool's deployment — and Design Jam outlived the project, scaling into other Crop Science teams and Bayer's Pharmaceutical division as a taught, adopted methodology.



Inside the Design Jam: How It Actually Worked

The method, the room, and how it scaled

THE METHOD, STEP BY STEP

- Every session opened by anchoring to a stated goal and the OKR it mapped to — decided at the close of the previous session, so momentum never reset.
- Researcher, product designer, developer, portfolio owner, and strategist (me) all in the same session — research insights delivered live, from the researcher's mouth, not a report.
- The designer prototyped on screen in real time as insights landed; the full room — including developers — tested clickable prototypes together before anything was built.
- Anyone could question anyone: developers asked researchers about user needs directly, the way only strategists could in the old silo model.
- A reusable template let any strategist–designer pair run the format — the key to scaling it beyond us.

THE ROOM THAT MATTERED MOST

For the field-safety tool, growers, farmers, sprayers, and vendors each spoke to their role — with everyone present. Developers, who normally sit at the end of a handoff chain with no emotional connection to the problem, heard directly about the deaths happening in the field. That's the part I'm proudest of: the people building the tool understood exactly why it mattered.

SCALING IT

- Built a toolkit plus a step-by-step guide explaining exactly how to run a Design Jam.
- Trained Bayer strategists and product designers to co-run sessions as pairs.
- Co-taught the method with my partner and presented it company-wide — adoption spread across Crop Science and into the Pharmaceutical division.

A unified environment instead of a relay race — and a product owner freed to focus on high-priority decisions because the whole team was aligned from day one.



Aligning Grid Leadership on a Multi-Year Strategic Direction

Design Thinking Strategist (Co-Lead Facilitator) · 2021 – 2022

Executive Facilitation

Strategic Planning

Org Design

THE PROBLEM

Duke Energy's iGrid team centralizes reliable data for distribution planning and load forecasting across Duke's jurisdictions. Leadership and team leads needed alignment on where the program was headed, a prioritized roadmap, and the org structure to deliver it — while navigating staffing gaps and an undefined work-intake process.

RESEARCH & SCOPING — BEFORE ANY WORKSHOP

- Scoped the engagement directly with iGrid leadership: understood their goals and what they needed the workshops to resolve before designing a single activity.
- Interviewed the portfolio manager to surface OKRs and focus areas; reviewed the materials leadership provided on goals and current state.
- Co-designed the full agenda with my facilitation partner, structuring every activity to answer the specific questions leadership brought to our practice.

MY SPECIFIC ROLE

Co-lead facilitator across a two-part series (one virtual, one in-person). I co-designed the agenda and personally led the Ecosystem Mapping and Use Case Prioritization activities.

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OUTCOME

The workshops directly shaped iGrid's strategic direction: leadership carried the proposed org structure into implementation, and design thinking was formally folded into iGrid's ongoing delivery process afterward.

Inside the Workshops: Four Activities, One Direction

What each exercise did — and why

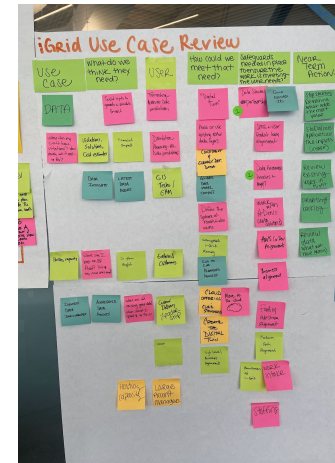
THE ACTIVITIES

- Ecosystem Mapping (I led) — mapped how iGrid works start to finish and how every player fits, so the team runs with minimal churn: everyone knows who owns what and who to go to when issues surface.
- Use Case Prioritization (I led) — surfaced real use cases across the portfolio and gave leadership a shared way to rank what to tackle first vs. defer as new work arrives.
- Org Design — mapped delivery work to required skills and named people, exposing capability gaps, proposing new roles, and drawing clear lines so there's no scope creep between roles.
- Idea Garden — a deliberate holding space for real issues that surfaced but sat out of scope — captured and queued for later prioritization instead of derailing the session or getting lost.

SYNTHESIS — FROM STICKY NOTES TO STRATEGY

After the sessions, we synthesized all workshop data into a structured output that answered the exact questions leadership originally brought to us — establishing the full ecosystem structure of iGrid and a prioritized use-case roadmap drawn from their own portfolio.

FROM THE WORKSHOP





Architecting the Voice: Conversational AI Before It Had a Name

Sr. Content Strategist, AI Enablement · 2020 – 2021

Conversational AI Design

Prompt Engineering

Voice UX

THE PROBLEM

Ally's phone and chat self-service needed to sound and respond like a helpful human, not a rigid script. This was 2020 — years before “prompt engineering” existed as an industry term, and before AI could generate response variations. Every phrasing had to come from human craft.

WHAT I STARTED WITH

- For the VUI: the existing call architecture — the full pathway map of what happens when a customer says yes, no, or presses one — plus real call transcripts.
- For the chatbot: a raw list of customer questions, largely financial, that the bot needed to handle naturally.
- Stakeholder input on both, and direct user testing before and after the revamp to find the easiest pathways through the experience.

MY SPECIFIC ROLE

The full VUI architecture revamp was mine, supported by one researcher who recruited test participants. I mapped the flows, wrote and tested the phrasings — and voiced the automated system myself as the live script reader.

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OUTCOME

The VUI and chatbot experiences were adopted immediately and remain in use at Ally today — the foundation seeded during this work has scaled well beyond the original build.



Human-Powered Prompt Engineering, Step by Step

How the voice and chatbot experiences were actually built

THE VUI PROCESS

- Mapped the complete call flows from the existing architecture, identifying where customers stalled or dropped.
- Drafted new conversational phrasings and tested them directly with users, partnering with a researcher who recruited participants.
- Re-architected the content experience end to end, then handed the validated new architecture to the call developer for implementation.
- Presented research and proposed changes at biweekly design reviews to UX content and strategy leadership for approval before anything shipped.

THE CHATBOT: 30–50 VARIATIONS PER QUESTION, BY HAND

- For each customer question, I wrote 30–50 distinct phrasings a real person might use — generated entirely by human craft, years before AI could assist.
- Accounted for regional speech patterns: how the same question sounds in the South vs. the Northeast vs. the Midwest vs. the West Coast.
- Studied the bot's failure logs — the moments it didn't understand a real customer — and wrote new variations to close those exact gaps.
- Incorporated cross-regional input from colleagues across the country to pressure-test phrasing coverage.

This was prompt engineering before the term existed: anticipating the many ways humans phrase the same intent, and training a conversational system to meet them — by hand.



Diagnosing the Gaps Behind a Mission-Critical Department

Lead Design Strategist (Contract) · Jan – May 2025

Stakeholder Research

Operational Diagnosis

Change Management

THE PROBLEM

Texas Children's came to us for a visual redesign of Information Systems. But my team — myself as lead design strategist, a creative director, and the product owner — defined the real problem as something bigger: IS was mission-critical to the hospital, yet persistent operational gaps and unclear ownership of change kept it from functioning as a true strategic enabler. The rebrand couldn't land until the dysfunction underneath it was named.

RESEARCH DESIGN

- Partnered with the head of Information Systems to identify the right leader from every division to interview — building a deliberate stakeholder map, not a convenience sample.
- Interviewed senior leaders across Pharmacy, Finance Technology, Quality, Nursing, Organizational Resilience, the CMIO, and the AVP of IS and IS Health Plan.

MY SPECIFIC ROLE

I ran every interview and facilitated every workshop solo, as the engagement's lead strategist — then synthesized all of it into the diagnosis leadership validated.

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OUTCOME

A leadership-validated diagnosis of IS's operational gaps that became the strategic foundation for the department's complete rebrand — the visual identity, values, and brand standards Information Systems uses today.



Fireside Interviews, Two Days of Workshops, One Diagnosis

How the research became a leadership-validated gap analysis

THE INTERVIEWS

- Ran fireside-style group interviews — three to four leaders per session — asking a consistent core question set, tailored slightly to each group.
- Listened for organizational gaps around IS and IT as a whole: what worked, what didn't, and how it landed differently for a doctor on the hospital floor vs. someone behind a screen in IT.

THE WORKSHOPS — TWO DAYS

- Put doctors in the same room as IT support leadership — hearing each other's challenges directly, often for the first time, and aligning on what to prioritize together.
- Had participants name the themes themselves, so the diagnosis came straight from the horse's mouth — not imposed by a consultant afterward.
- Co-created one visual-direction activity with the Creative Director — color, shape, sub-brands vs. house of brands — so the rebrand grew directly out of the room, not a handoff.

SYNTHESIS

Working solo, I used AI as my synthesis partner — bucketing every insight from the interviews and workshops into themes: project intake and prioritization, role ownership, disconnected ticketing, inconsistent handoffs, missing documentation, absent KPIs and dashboards, and manual workarounds persisting across teams.

THE DELIVERABLE

A structured gap-analysis presentation mapping every theme to what leadership needed to act on — delivered to the organization and validated by the same leaders who surfaced the issues.

The Creative Director sat in on every workshop and co-facilitated the visual activity — so the rebrand wasn't briefed to him secondhand. He watched the organization define itself in real time.

Real workshop output — co-created with IS leadership in session

Proto-persona Profile's for TCH IS

A way to summarize the mindset, needs, and goals typically held by stakeholders

TCH IS serves a diverse audience, from executive leaders to frontline healthcare providers and IT specialists. Understanding these key stakeholders helps us shape a brand identity that authentically reflects IS's role within the hospital.

Personas help us:

- Focus on real people's need-over assumptions
- Deepen empathy for different user experiences
- Summarize key insights from research and engagement

The Strategic Hospital Leader
C-Suite, VPs, Departments Heads

I need IS to show efficiency, innovation, and security.

The Clinical End Users
Physicians, Nurses, Frontline Staff

IS should feel like a trusted partner in patient care, not a roadblock.

The IS Team Member
Internal Staff, IT Professionals, Technologists

IS needs a stronger identity that reflects our value, innovation, and expertise.

Three proto-personas — the Strategic Hospital Leader, the Clinical End User, and the IS Team Member — synthesized from the interviews, then validated live with participants before any ideation began.

CORE VALUES BRAINSTORM

Discovery & Inspiration

- Share Insights Wayshare from 15 panel and audience members
- Add check marks to the statements you agree with
- Add sticky notes to share your own ideas and characteristics

✕ Inconsistent visual elements across platforms
 ✕ Colors are well received but overall branding feels outdated
 ✕ Visual identity lacks cohesion & alignment with IS's mission
 ✕ Current branding is sometimes associated with negative experiences

What we learned — and the future-state brand characteristics the room defined together.

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Participants clustered and voted the values — trust, reliability, partnership, innovation — that became the brand's foundation.



FOUNDER-BUILT & CREATED

CASE 5

Cultural Home: Building the Living Archive in Partnership with AI

Founder & Product Lead · 2024 – Present

Product Strategy

AI-Assisted Development

Founder-Led Build

THE PROBLEM

Family memory today is scattered — across social media, ancestry sites, boxes of unlabeled photos, and stories never written down. Platforms like Google Drive capture and save, but they don't hold stories and narratives — memory as medicine for families.

VALIDATED IN THE FIELD, NOT ASSUMED

Two years of grassroots research through Melanotion: experiential events, publications, and on-the-ground surveying reaching ~1,800 families and community members on family memory and societal issues — plus social and newsletter feedback loops.

HOW I BUILT IT WITH AI

- Authored a full experience packet first — features, functionality, and architecture — rooted in Melanotion's themed-room events (living room, kitchen, backyard, library).
- Made the architecture decisions myself; partnered with AI on design and generation — using an AI app-builder plus ChatGPT to move from packet to working prototype.
- Playing every role hands-on: strategist, designer, developer — nothing delegated, with advisors on marketing and XR/spatial design.

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OUTCOME

A working prototype real families use today — in active testing with founding families, iterating on their feedback toward a launch-ready MVP. Testing has already sharpened the thesis: families don't just need digitization — they need their stories held.