

Hannah Chung

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Experience

AUTHOR-ILLUSTRATOR 2021 – PRESENT

- Write and illustrate children's books. (The Most Perfect Persimmon - '24 Astra Young Readers, Bread Days - '25 Astra Young Readers)

ADJUNCT FACULTY, RISD; PROVIDENCE, RI 2021 – PRESENT

- Teach undergraduate and graduate studio courses, and advise grad-level thesis projects in the Industrial Design department.

CONSULTANT & ADVISOR 2020 – PRESENT

- Advise businesses and organizations on design, strategy, and storytelling. Provide strategic guidance to early-stage startup founders.

CO-FOUNDER, SPROUTEL; PROVIDENCE, RI 2011 – 2023

Sproutel is an award-winning research and development studio that creates products that improve patients' lives.

- Set the company's mission and vision, and established a design culture focused on empowering patients. Designed 3 award-winning products used in 400+ hospitals and 125,000+ homes: Jerry the Bear, My Special Aflac Duck, and Purrble. Secured seed capital, grew the company to a \$3-5M annual revenue business, and hired the core team.

BOARD MEMBER (2011 – 2021)

- Oversaw operations and business strategy, advised on organizational culture and people development, reviewed financials, and voted on key strategic initiatives.

HEAD OF DESIGN (2019 - 2020) & CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER (2011 - 2019)

- Developed and led all aspects of research and product design, from conceptualization to finished products. Created and brought 3 brands and 5 products to market, earning major awards like Time's Best Inventions (2018, 2021), CES Best of Innovation (2018), and SXSW Innovation Award (2019).
- Identified new business opportunities and product partnerships through market research and trend analysis, and developed prototypes and product roadmaps.
- Managed multiple projects in various stages, reviewing budgets, setting schedules, and conducting design reviews and quality control.

CO-FOUNDER, DESIGN FOR AMERICA; EVANSTON, IL 2009 – PRESENT

Design for America (DFA) is a National Design Award-winning network of innovators using design thinking skills for social impact.

- Set vision and mission of the organization, supported HQ team in scaling from one to 40 university studios nationwide, involving 1,000+ students, mentors, and local partners annually. Advised on best practices around organizational culture and people development. Created and launched the alumni network.

ENGINEERING INTERN, RADIUS PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT; CHICAGO, IL SUMMER 2011

- Conducted engineering reviews and prototype testing, analyzed results, and presented improvement suggestions.

DIGITAL INNOVATION INTERN, FORD MOTOR COMPANY; DEARBORN, MI SUMMER 2010

- Reviewed and conducted stress tests for various CAD files for automobile parts. Organized and coded CAD database.

Boards / Advisory Councils**BOARD MEMBER, COMMUNITY MUSICWORKS; PROVIDENCE, RI 2020 – PRESENT**

- Advised on best practices in organizational culture. Developed strategies and best practices to center CMW's organizational culture on equity and racial justice.

SECRETARY & CHAIR OF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE 2021 – 2022

- Set the governance strategy, supported project members, scoped timelines, revised by-laws, and developed decision-making practices for belonging and transparency. Led board assessments, recruited 7 new board members, and contributed to the executive director evaluation.

MEMBER OF RACIAL EQUITY COMMITTEE 2020–2021

- Developed strategies and best practices to center CMW's organizational culture on equity and racial justice.

FOUNDING BOARD MEMBER, THE AVENUE CONCEPT; PROVIDENCE, RI 2016 – 2019

- Advised on best practices for organizational culture, people development, and impact measurement. Led strategic workshops, facilitated board retreats, and developed strategic plan.

Education

Northwestern University; Evanston, IL

B.S. in Mechanical Engineering, Segal Design Certificate 2012

Patents

USD967895S1 Social emotional learning toy

WO2019135780A1 User interface for an animatronic toy

USD846040S1 Toy duck

US10748450B1 System, apparatus, and method for creating an interactive augmented reality experience to simulate medical procedures for pediatric disease education

US10783799B1 System, apparatus, and method for educating and reducing stress for patients with illness or trauma using an interactive location-aware toy and a distributed sensor network

USD714884S1 Educational doll for children with chronic illness

US10360810B1 Educational doll for children with chronic illness

Publication

Hannah Chung. Bread Days. Astra Young Readers. 2025 (ISBN: 9781662621017)

Hannah Chung. The Most Perfect Persimmon. Astra Young Readers. 2024 (ISBN: 9781662620843)

Hannah Chung, Elizabeth Gerber. Emotional-storyboarding: A Participatory Method for Emotional Designing for Children. Conference on Design & Emotions. 2010

Featured Publications

2021 Evaluating Psychosocial Support Provided by an Augmented Reality Device for Children with Type 1 Diabetes. D Ullman, E Phillips, S Aladia, P Haas, H Fowler, I Iqbal, K Mi, I Riches, M Omori, B Malle. Human Factors and Ergonomics Society.

2021 Giving flight to an authentic purpose: How Aflac transformed its mascot into an icon for childhood cancer patients. C Cone, K Kristin. Journal of Brand Strategy.

2018 Sproutel: How Design Roadmapping Helped Improved Children's Health and Guide a Growing Company. S Beckman, E Kim, A Agogino. Harvard Business Review.

2014 Design for America: Organizing for Civic Innovation. E Gerber. ACM Interactions, ACM Press.

2013 Formative Feedback in Digital Lofts: Learning Environments for Real World Innovation. M Easterday, D Lewis, E Gerber. Artificial Intelligence in Education.

Award Jury

2020 Project Invent Demo Day

2018 Hack for Global Good

2016 James Dyson Award

Guest Lecture

Brown University, School of Engineering

Brown University, Swearer Center

Ewha Womans University

Hult International Business School

New York University, Tendon School of Engineering

Northwestern University, McCormick School of Engineering

Northwestern University, School of Communication

Northwestern University, Segal Design Institute

Rice University, Liu Idea Lab for Innovation & Entrepreneurship

Rhode Island School of Design, Industrial Design

Tufts University, School of Engineering

University of Michigan, School of Information

University of Rhode Island, Innovation and Entrepreneurship

University of Washington, Human Centered Design & Engineering

Vanderbilt University, School of Engineering

Guest Critic

Brown University, Swearer Center
 Hult International Business School
 Rhode Island School of Design, Industrial Design
 Massachusetts Institute of Technology, D-Lab

Awards & Recognitions

2021 Time Magazine's Best Invention // Purrble, Sproutel
 2021 Scholastic Art Mentorship Program
 2019 Cannes Silver Lion - Corporate Image, Communications and Reputation Management // My Special Aflac Duck, Sproutel
 2019 Cannes Silver Lion - Use of Technology // My Special Aflac Duck, Sproutel
 2019 SXSW Interactive Innovation Award // My Special Aflac Duck, Sproutel
 2019 SXSW Interactive Innovation Award - People's Choice // My Special Aflac Duck, Sproutel
 2018 Cooper Hewitt National Design Award // Design for America
 2018 Platinum SABRE Award - Best in Show // My Special Aflac Duck, Sproutel
 2018 Time Magazine's Best Invention // My Special Aflac Duck, Sproutel
 2018 CES Innovation Award - Best of Innovation // My Special Aflac Duck, Sproutel
 2018 CES Tech for a Better World Award // My Special Aflac Duck, Sproutel
 2018 CES Best in Show, Engadget // My Special Aflac Duck, Sproutel
 2018 The Tech Tribune 10 Best Tech Startups in RI // Sproutel
 2018 Connected World - Women of M2M Winner
 2016 Diabetes Innovation Challenge - People's Choice Award, T1D Exchange // Jerry the Bear, Sproutel
 2015 NIH Small Business Innovation Research Program // Sproutel
 2015 DESIGNxRI Design Catalyst Award // Sproutel
 2015 White House Demo Day: 32 Companies Representing Diversity in Tech // Sproutel
 2014 White House MakerFaire: Honored Maker
 2014 Women 2.0 Female Founders to Watch: Technology For The People
 2014 Core 77 Design Awards: Professional Runner up: Best Education Initiative // Design for America
 2014 MGH & Samsung Hackathon - Samsung Award
 2013 Women@the Frontier Female Game Changer
 2013 Fortune's Most Powerful Women Summit - Perfect Pitch Winner
 2013 Ashoka U-Cordes Innovation Award // Design for America
 2013 GOOD Magazine Best of Design// Jerry the Bear, Sproutel
 2013 Hasbro Hackathon - First Place
 2013 Providence Monthly 10 To Watch
 2013 Go Local Prov 13 To Watch in RI
 2012 Better World by Design Hall of Fame
 2012 Core 77 Notable Professional Award for Design for Social Impact // Design for America
 2012 Inc. Magazine "15 Women to Watch in Tech"
 2011 Boston Consulting Group Case Competition 1st Place
 2011 Don Norman Breed Fund Grant Recipient, Northwestern University
 2009 Social Designer Competition Winner
 2009 DiabetesMine Design Challenge - Most Creative Award // Jerry the Bear

Speaking

2025 Scholastic Art Mentorship Panel
 2024 School Library Journal Picture Book Palooza
 2024 Girls Leadership Collaborative
 2023 IDSA Entrepreneurship Deep Dive
 2022 RISD IDSA Makeathon, Rhode Island School of Design
 2021 NYU MakerSpace, New York University
 2020 Lillie's Ladies Who LaUNCH series, Rice University
 2020 Keynote Speaker, Project Invent Demo Day
 2020 Creative Reaction Lab
 2019 Hack for Global Good
 2019 TEDxProvidence "What Children with Cancer Taught Me About Coping with Cancer"
 2019 Spark Design Conference, DESIGNxRI
 2019 Moves Millennial Forum
 2018 Rhode Island Virtual Reality (RIVR)
 2018 HCRI Speaker Series, Brown University
 2018 Clambake Speaker Series, DESIGNxRI
 2017 Industrial Designers Society of America (IDSA) Northeast District Design Conference
 2016 Chambers Family Entrepreneurial Lectureship, Vanderbilt University
 2016 General Assembly Boston
 2016 Better World by Design
 2015 Convocation Speaker, NYU Tandon School of Engineering
 2015 General Assembly Boston "Diversity in Design"
 2015 Creative Mornings Boston "Hannah Chung on Empathy"
 2015 TEDxSomerville "Play Meets Health with a Help of a Robotic Teddy Bear Friend"
 2015 SXSW "She Rules: A Female Leadership Panel"
 2015 Advancing Women's Excellence "The Power of Confidence"
 2015 MedStart, Tufts University
 2015 Better Health by Design, DESIGNxRI & Rhode Island School of Design
 2014 Zermatt Summit
 2014 Big Ideas Fest "Playful Learning: Bringing Empathy to Healthcare"
 2014 Women in Leadership Panel, Wunderman Thompson
 2014 EPAM Continuum
 2014 Pixar
 2014 The Well Conference
 2013 Fortune's Most Powerful Women Summit
 2013 Rhode Island Senate Economic Summit
 2013 Better World by Design
 2013 KASCON
 2013 Segal Seminar Series, Northwestern University
 2012 SEEED
 2012 TEDxHanRiver
 2012 Health 2.0 Chicago
 2012 RISD Mindshare, Rhode Island School of Design
 2012 Info Ecosystems for Well-being Conference, Institute For The Future
 2012 Women@TheFrontier, Singularity University & NASA

Selected Press Coverage

- 2025 ["Celebrating Korean Cuisine Through Picture Books"](#), The Korea Times
- 2024 ["Hannah Chung Makes the Most Perfect Picture Book Debut"](#), Story Monsters Ink, Issue 10
- 2024 ["Publishers' Preview: Debut Authors: Five Questions for Hannah Chung"](#), The Horn Book Inc.
- 2024 ["Learning What Design Really Means"](#), Northwestern McCormick School of Engineering
- 2022 ["The Futures Archive S1E12: The Pet"](#), Design Observer
- 2021 ["A Fuzzy Fix: How 'Social Toys' Can Help Kids Battle Illness and Anxiety"](#), US News // Purrrble, Sproutel
- 2020 ["How One Company is Helping Kids Cope During the Coronavirus"](#), Forbes // Purrrble, Sproutel
- 2020 ["Pandemic Tantrums? Enter the Robot Playmate for Kids"](#), The Wall Street Journal // Purrrble, Sproutel
- 2019 ["Teddy Bear to Help Children Manage Their Type 1 Diabetes"](#), KBTX // Jerry the Bear, Sproutel
- 2019 ["Children battling with Cancer Can't Always Express Their Feelings. Now a Robotic Duck is Doing it For Them."](#), The Washington Post // My Special Aflac Duck, Sproutel
- 2019 ["My Special AFLAC Duck: A Gold Standard for CSR Programs"](#), Forbes // My Special Aflac Duck, Sproutel
- 2018 ["Sproutel Brings Medical-Electronics Methods, Practices to Rocky Hill"](#), Providence Business News // Sproutel
- 2018 ["Episode 13-03 Animatronics for Social Good"](#), TechNation Radio Podcast // Sproutel
- 2018 ["Fur-covered Robots Are the New Therapy Animal"](#), CNET // Sproutel
- 2018 ["'My Special Aflac Duck' is a Robot to Help Kids with Cancer"](#), CNET // My Special Aflac Duck, Sproutel
- 2018 ["What A Duck Can Teach Us at CES 2018"](#), Healthpopuli // My Special Aflac Duck, Sproutel
- 2018 ["This Robot Therapy Duck Comforts Kids with Cancer"](#), Engadget // My Special Aflac Duck, Sproutel
- 2018 ["Kids with Cancer Have New Hope Thanks to the Aflac Duck \(Yes, That Duck\)"](#), Inc. // My Special Aflac Duck, Sproutel
- 2018 ["Aflac's Toy Robot for Kids Facing Cancer is The Smartest Toy of All"](#), Verge // My Special Aflac Duck, Sproutel
- 2018 ["How Two Northwestern Grads Are Making Childhood Illness Easier to 'Bear'"](#), BTN // Sproutel
- 2017 ["The NEW Jerry the Bear"](#), Six Until Me // Jerry the Bear, Sproutel
- 2017 ["This Startup's Interactive Bear Teaches Diabetic Kids How to Cope with Illness"](#), Rhode Island Inno // Sproutel
- 2016 ["Start-up Stepping Stones - Business Advice for Today's Women in Tech"](#), Women 2.0
- 2016 ["Why Kids Are Key to Healthcare"](#), LinkedInPulse
- 2016 ["Micro, Meso, Macro: Exploring the Scale and Presence of Design through Physical Objects and Social Systems"](#), Core 77
- 2015 ["High-tech Teddy Bear Teaches Kids about Health"](#), The Boston Globe // Jerry the Bear, Sproutel

- 2015 ["For Diabetic Kids, A Game-Changer in the Form of A Stuffed Bear"](#), NBC News // Jerry the Bear, Sproutel
- 2015 ["Sproutel Founders Talk Pitching Their Startup To President Obama"](#), Chicago Inno // Sproutel
- 2015 ["A Special Teddy Bear Helps Teach Diabetic Children About Their Illness"](#), Not Impossible Now // Jerry the Bear, Sproutel
- 2015 ["Tech Innovations that could Improve Lives in 2015"](#), The Guardian // Jerry the Bear, Sproutel
- 2014 ["Wonder Women"](#), United Hemisphere
- 2014 ["Jerry the Bear Goes to Washington"](#), Makezine // Jerry the Bear, Sproutel
- 2014 ["This Crowd-Funding Campaign would Give Every Diabetic Child a High-tech Teddy Bear"](#), The Washington Post // Jerry the Bear, Sproutel
- 2014 ["100 Pieces of Technology that Made the World a Better Place in 2014"](#), The Independent // Jerry the Bear, Sproutel
- 2014 ["Kids Are Falling in Love With This Special Teddy Bear. There's A Good Reason Why."](#) Upworthy // Jerry the Bear, Sproutel
- 2014 ["5 Female-Founded Startups to Keep an Eye on This Year"](#), Women 2.0
- 2014 ["Five Questions with: Hannah Chung and Aaron Horowitz"](#), Providence Business News // Sproutel
- 2014 ["Birdy the Kid and Jerry the Bear"](#), Six Until Me // Jerry the Bear, Sproutel
- 2013 ["What Do You Get When You Add A Disease To A Kids' Toy? Genius."](#), Upworthy // Jerry the Bear, Sproutel
- 2013 ["If What You Want to Do Doesn't Exist, Create It"](#), Glamour
- 2013 ["Jerry the Bear Helps Kids Understand Diabetes and Self-care"](#), MedCity News // Jerry the Bear, Sproutel
- 2013 ["At 23, She's Encouraging Other Women to Follow Her Path to Entrepreneurship"](#), Providence Journal
- 2012 ["Will Raising Money Be Child's Play for a Toy Start-up?"](#), Inc. Magazine // Sproutel
- 2012 ["Wise Words with Aaron Horowitz and Hannah Chung"](#), SpringWise // Sproutel
- 2012 ["Child's Play: A Teddy Bear to Help Diabetic Kids Master Their Care"](#), GOOD // Jerry the Bear, Sproutel
- 2012 ["Dr. Roboto? Interactive Teddy Bear Helps Kids Manage Diabetes"](#), Mashable // Jerry the Bear, Sproutel
- 2012 ["An Entrepreneur's Story"](#), MIT Technology Review
- 2012 ["5 Startups Using Tech To Do Good"](#), Mashable // Sproutel
- 2011 ["Design for America: Co-Creating with Tomorrow's Designers"](#), Core 77 // Design for America
- 2011 ["Design, Creativity on Display at CUSP Conference"](#), Chicago Tribune // Jerry the Bear, Design for America
- 2011 ["The United States of Design"](#), Fast Company // Design for America