

# Hannah Chung

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## Experience

### AUTHOR-ILLUSTRATOR 2023 – PRESENT

- Write and illustrate children's books.
- Published two picture books with Astra Young Readers.
- Represented by Rebecca Sherman at Writers House.

### ADJUNCT FACULTY, RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL OF DESIGN // PROVIDENCE, RI 2021 – PRESENT

- Teach undergraduate and graduate studio courses in the Industrial Design Department.
- Advise graduate-level thesis projects in Industrial Design.

### 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 R&D studio that creates products that improve patients' lives.

- Set the company's mission and vision, and established a patient-centered design culture.
- 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, led and scaled the company, and built 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 the national 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 – 2023**

- Advised on best practices in organizational culture with a focus on equity and racial justice.
- 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.

**SECRETARY & CHAIR OF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE 2021 – 2022****MEMBER OF RACIAL EQUITY COMMITTEE 2020 – 2021****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, 2012

**Patents****UTILITY PATENTS**

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

US10360810B1 Educational doll for children with chronic illness

**DESIGN PATENTS**

USD967895S1 Social emotional learning toy

USD846040S1 Toy duck

USD714884S1 Educational doll for children with chronic illness

## Publications

Hannah Chung. Bread Days. Astra Young Readers. 2025 (ISBN: 9781662621017)  
*Reviewed in Kirkus Reviews, Publishers Weekly, and Booklist.*

Hannah Chung. The Most Perfect Persimmon. Astra Young Readers. 2024 (ISBN: 9781662620843)  
*Reviewed in Kirkus Reviews and Publishers Weekly.*

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 Improve 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 Juries

- 2020 Project Invent Demo Day
- 2018 Hack for Global Good
- 2016 James Dyson Award

## Guest Lectures

- Brown University, School of Engineering
- Brown University, Swearer Center
- Ewha Womans University
- Hult International Business School
- New York University, Tandon 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, School of Engineering  
 Brown University, Swearer Center  
 Hult International Business School  
 Rhode Island School of Design, Foundation Studies  
 Rhode Island School of Design, Industrial Design  
 Massachusetts Institute of Technology, D-Lab

## Selected Awards & Recognitions

2025 Bookshop.org Best Kids Book  
 2021 Time Magazine's Best Invention // Purrble, Sproutel  
 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 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

## Selected Grants

- 2015 NIH Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program // Sproutel
- 2015 DESIGNxRI Design Catalyst Award // Sproutel

## 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 // Purrble, Sproutel  
 2020 ["How One Company is Helping Kids Cope During the Coronavirus"](#), Forbes // Purrble, Sproutel  
 2020 ["Pandemic Tantrums? Enter the Robot Playmate for Kids"](#), The Wall Street Journal // Purrble, 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