

# Maris García

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## ABOUT

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Innovation and strategy leader with twenty years of experience solving diverse challenges and improving people's lives through a human-centered, behavioral design approach. I partner with executives and senior leaders in mission-driven organizations to advance offerings and improve outcomes. Skills include:

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|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| + user research                    | + project scoping and planning   |
| + analysis and synthesis           | + engagement management          |
| + strategy development             | + team leadership                |
| + storytelling                     | + coaching and mentoring         |
| + conceiving and prototyping       | + human-centered design training |
| + piloting and implementation      | + presenting and public speaking |
| + workshop design and facilitation |                                  |

## EDUCATION

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### Washington University in St. Louis

Bachelor of Arts, Architecture  
with minor in Psychology

## CERTIFICATES

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### Executive Program for Emerging Leaders (EPEL)

University of Chicago  
Booth School of Business

### Behavioral Economics Bootcamp Irrational Labs

## BOARD & VOLUNTEER SERVICE

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### Illinois Science & Technology Coalition (ISTC)

2024 – PRESENT

Mentor high school students on  
AP capstone research projects

### Humble Design

2021 – PRESENT

Volunteer with designers to  
furnish homes for individuals and  
families exiting homelessness

### Jewish Council on Urban Affairs

2020 – 2022

Served on the Board of Directors  
supporting fundraising and  
campaign efforts for public safety,  
immigration reform and housing  
for the homeless

## EXPERIENCE

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### Independent Consultant Strategic Advisor | 2021 – PRESENT

Guide organizations from start-ups to world-class firms in improving offerings, experiences and outcomes. Clients include: Accelerate U, Institute for Healthcare Delivery Design (IHDD), Studio Gang, Impact Housing and YMCA of the USA.

- Transformed design approach of a socially responsible housing company through user research, identifying core resident values and delivering actionable recommendations
- Led creation of first DEI strategy for international architecture practice, implemented before completion, by collaborating with senior executives.
- Redefined essential skills for workforce program and introduced experiential learning strategy to improve job acquisition outcomes

### FOUNT Global & TI People Head of Human-Centered Design | 2023

FOUNT, a SaaS company specializing in identifying and mitigating workplace friction, was founded as a spinout of TI People, an international employee experience consultancy.

- Equipped Fortune 500 companies with quantitative data by designing research processes that rapidly synthesized qualitative insights for customized employee surveys
- Improved customer engagement by refining framework and language for describing multiple levels of work

- Clarified pitch decks and thought leadership by creating compelling stories and visualizations for executive audiences

**University of Chicago, Diversity + Inclusion Studio** Director | 2018 – 2021

The D+I Studio, a component of the Diversity and Inclusive Initiative, increased representation, equity and belonging through human-centered design processes across campus.

- Drove inclusive programs by coaching directors through projects addressing needs of students, staff and faculty.
- Built internal capabilities through training colleagues and campus partners in human-centered design
- Equipped units to develop customized Diversity and Inclusion Plans through toolkits and facilitated planning sessions

**Greater Good Studio** Research Lead & Engagement Manager | 2014 – 2017

Greater Good Studio is a human-centered design firm partnering with social impact organizations to create equitable solutions to complex social challenges.

- Translated patient insights into service concepts for Hennepin County Medical Center to lower ED visits
- Defined behavior change model enabling OneGoal to become more student-centered in college completion efforts
- Created strategy for Hope Manor Village: 36 affordable, veteran-preference apartments in Chicago's Englewood neighborhood.

**SAIC, School of the Art Institute of Chicago** Instructor | 2013 – 2015

Developed Design Research Methods curriculum for graduate students in the Designed Objects program.

**Gravitytank** Lead Strategist & Engagement Manager | 2005 – 2013

Gravitytank was a pioneering innovation consultancy blending qualitative research, strategy, and design to help organizations create new products, services and experiences.

- Launched social innovation vertical by building partnerships with Gates Foundation and Kellogg Foundation
- Strengthened talent pipeline by co-developing fellowship program and mentoring emerging professionals
- Increased customer engagement for Fortune 500 companies by guiding teams to redefine offerings and experiences

**Anji Mountain**

2019 – 2023

Served on the Board of Advisors providing product line feedback and strategic recommendations to the CEO and leadership team

**Global Village,  
Habitat for Humanity**

2008 – 2013

Organized and led trips, fundraised and built homes in Alaska, Guatemala, El Salvador, Thailand and Nepal

**Engaging Philanthropy Inspiring Creatives (EPIC)**

2010 – 2011

Served on the board, recruiting, reviewing and recommending nonprofit candidates for design service grants