

# Rahaf Alharbi

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## EDUCATION

[University of Michigan, Ann Arbor](#), MI, USA Aug. 2020 - May 2025 (expected)

Ph.D. in [Information](#), specialized in Accessibility and Human-Computer Interaction

Affiliated with [Accessibility, HCI, Aging \(AHA!\)](#) and [Center for Ethics, Society, and Computing \(ESC\)](#)

Advisors: Dr. Robin Brewer and Dr. Sarita Schoenebeck

[University of California, San Diego](#), CA, USA

Sep. 2015 - Mar. 2020

B.S. in [Mechanical Engineering](#) (minor in Ethnic Studies), GPA: 3.67/4.00

Fully funded by the KAUST Gifted Students Scholarship

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

[University of Michigan, Ann Arbor](#), MI, USA

Aug. 2020 - Present

Graduate Research Assistant

- Led, designed, and conducted qualitative studies with over 70 people with disabilities to understand accessibility barriers, benefits, and trade-offs in various contexts such as AI assistance technologies and live streaming
- Collaborated with over 10 researchers across various institutions and departments (e.g., computer science and communication)
- Resulted in first-authored CSCW 2022 paper, and co-authored papers in CSCW 2022, First Monday, and CHI 2023, along with various workshop papers

[Meta](#), Menlo Park, CA, USA

May 2023 - Aug. 2023

UX Research Intern (Responsible AI Team)

Manager: Dr. Amy Piedalve, collaborators: Dr. Jessica Heal, Dr. Ella Gamze Strack, and Dr. Chloé Bakalar

- Collaborated with UX team members and Chief Ethicist to design and conduct a foundational research study
- Performed an extensive literature review on internal and external research articles
- Collected and analyzed in-depth qualitative data
- Delivered implications that critically shaped Meta's Responsible AI approach to various teams, including directors and managers
- Published two internal research papers

[Microsoft Research](#), Redmond, WA, USA

May 2022 - Aug. 2022

Research Intern (Ability Team)

Mentored by Dr. John Tang (at Microsoft Research) and Karl Henderson (at Experiences & Devices)

- Designed and conducted qualitative interviews with 21 professionals with disabilities to understand their experiences in hybrid meetings
- Uncovered the unique accessibility benefits, drawbacks, and Conflicts of hybrid meetings
- Generated design implications to improve the accessibility of hybrid meetings and videoconferencing systems
- Resulted in a first-authored CHI 2023 paper

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

[University of Michigan, Ann Arbor](#), MI, USA

Teaching Assistant for Introduction to Accessibility (Graduate Level)

Fall 2021

## PUBLICATIONS

### • Peer-Reviewed Journals and Conference Publications\*

- [P5] [Accessibility Barriers, Conflicts, and Repairs: Understanding the Experience of Professionals with Disabilities in Hybrid Meetings](#)

[Rahaf Alharbi](#), John Tang, Karl Henderson

Proceedings of the ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI), 2023

Acceptance Rate: 28.4%

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\*In the field of human-computer interaction, conference papers are rigorously peer-reviewed, archived, and considered to be prestigious.

- [P4] [Hacking, Switching, Combining: Understanding and Supporting DIY Assistive Technology Design by Blind People](#)  
Jaylin Herskovitz, Andi Xu, [Rahaf Alharbi](#), Anhong Guo  
Proceedings of the ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI), 2023  
Acceptance Rate: 28.4%
- [P3] [Denition drives design: Disability models and mechanisms of bias in AI technologies](#)  
Denis Newman-Griffis, Jessica Sage Rauchberg, [Rahaf Alharbi](#), Louise Hickman, Harry Hochheiser  
First Monday, 2023
- [P2] [Understanding Emerging Obfuscation Technologies in Visual Description Services for Blind and Low Vision People](#)  
[Rahaf Alharbi](#), Robin N. Brewer, Sarita Schoenebeck  
Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction (CSCW), 2022
- [P1] [Beyond Borders: Womens Perspectives on Harm and Justice after Online Harassment](#)  
Jane Im, Sarita Schoenebeck, Marilyn Iriarte, Gabriel Grill, Daricia Wilkinson, Amna Batool, [Rahaf Alharbi](#), Audrey N. Funwie, Tergel Gankhuu, Eric Gilbert, Mustafa Naseem  
Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction (CSCW), 2022

• Peer-Reviewed Workshop Papers and Extended Abstracts

- [W8] **Against Surveillance: The Future of Accessibility Research is Resistance**  
[Rahaf Alharbi](#)  
A11y Futures Workshop at ACM SIGACCESS Conference on Computers and Accessibility (ASSETS'23)
- [W7] **Bridging the Gap: Towards Advancing Privacy and Accessibility**  
[Rahaf Alharbi](#), Robin Brewer, Gesu India, Lotus Zhang, Leah Findlater, Yixin Zou, and Abigale Stangl  
ACM SIGACCESS Conference on Computers and Accessibility (ASSETS'23)  
[Workshop Co-Organizer](#)
- [W6] **Speculating Perfect Algorithmic Reparations for Disability**  
Robin Brewer, [Rahaf Alharbi](#), Sarita Schoenebeck  
Algorithmic Reparation Workshop, University of Michigan, 2022
- [W5] [Dreaming Disability Justice in HCI](#)  
Cella Sum, [Rahaf Alharbi](#), Cynthia Bennett, Rua Williams, Katta Spiel, Christina Harrington  
ACM CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems - Extended Abstract (EA CHI'22)  
[Workshop Co-Organizer](#)
- [W4] **Care, Disability, & Live Streaming**  
[Rahaf Alharbi](#), Audrey Labrie  
Presented in The Future of Care Work: Towards a Radical Politics of Care in CSCW Research and Practice. CSCW 2021 Workshop
- [W3] **On Obfuscation, Privacy & Visual Description: Rethinking Access Technology as Contested**  
[Rahaf Alharbi](#), Jasmine Duong, Robin Brewer, Sarita Schoenebeck.  
Presented in Artificially Intelligent Technology for the Margins: A Multidisciplinary Design Agenda CHI 2021 Workshop
- [W2] **Repairing Online Harms: Assessing Punitive and Reparative Justice Approaches**  
Sarita Schoenebeck, Jane Im, Amna Batool, Daricia Wilkinson, Audrey Funwie, [Rahaf Alharbi](#), Marilyn Iriarte, Gabriel Grill, Eric Gilbert, Mustafa Naseem  
First Annual Conference of The Platform Governance Research Network. March 2021
- [W1] [I Am Not an Engineer: Understanding How Clinicians Design & Alter Assistive Technology](#)  
[Rahaf Alharbi](#), Ada Ng, Rawan Alharbi, Josiah Hester  
ACM CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems - Extended Abstract (EA CHI'20)

## TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS

- [T5] **Co-Imagining Privacy Futures with Blind People: The Case of Visual Assistance Technologies**
  - Presented at Master's level course at Northeastern University, 2024
  - Presented at Master's level course at the University of Michigan, 2024

- [T4] **Accessibility Barriers, Conflicts, and Repairs: Understanding the Experience of Professionals with Disabilities in Hybrid Meetings**
  - Presented research and product-oriented talks to various groups at Microsoft
  - Presented at CHI 2023
- [T3] **Understanding Emerging Obfuscation Technologies in Visual Description Services for Blind and Low Vision People**
  - Presented at Fourth Annual U-M Center for Disability Health and Wellness Research Symposium, 2023
  - Presented at a Ph.D. level course on Algorithms and Society at the University of Michigan, 2022
  - Presented at the Michigan Interactive and Social Computing (MISC) research group, 2022
  - Presented at a Master's level course in the University of Michigan, 2021
  - Presented at CSCW 2022
- [T2] **Understanding the Motivations and Practices of Disabled Live Streamers**
  - Co-presented at UMSI Lighting Talks at the Intersections of Information, Diversity, Inclusion and Equity. Ann Arbor, Michigan, 2021
- [T1] **I Am Not an Engineer: Understanding How Clinicians Design & Alter Assistive Technology**
  - Presented at the ACM Special Interest Group on Accessible Computing (SIGACCESS), Riyadh, 2020

## SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP

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### • Organizing

**Making Research Communication Accessible Panel** 2023  
Served as co-panelist at Michigan Interactive and Social Computing (MISC) research group to share accessibility practices for designing presentations.

**Community Advisory Board at the Motor & Visual Development Lab** 2023-2024  
Served as a research and community advisor to the MVD lab at the School of Kinesiology (University of Michigan). My responsibilities included reviewing research projects, study design materials, and brainstorming projects that are inclusive of neurodivergent people.

**ASSETS Workshop on Privacy and Accessibility** 2023  
Co-organized with Robin Brewer, Gesu India, Lotus Zhang, Leah Findlater, Yixin Zhou, and Abigale Stangl.

**Neubacher Award Committee Member** 2023  
Reviewed nominees and selected winners for the James T. Neubacher Award which is presented to University of Michigan faculty, students, and staff who empower people with disabilities, advocate for disability rights, and increase accessibility in the university.

**Co-Authored Proposal to Increase UMSI Travel Funding** 2023  
Assisted Doctoral Executive Committee (DEC) at UMSI to research and author a proposal to address equity concerns and increase travel funding for Ph.D. students who attend and present in conferences. As a result our successful proposal, the current policy increased by a maximum of \$1300 from the original funding amount.

**ACM Designing Interactive Systems (DIS)** 2022 - 2023  
Assisted Accessibility Chairs (Robin Brewer and Cynthia Bennett) with numerous tasks such as co-authoring a [guide for creating accessible figures and tables](#), selecting accessibility services, and evaluating the in-person venue for access.

**Accessibility, HCI, Aging (AHA) Research Group at the University of Michigan** 2022 - 2023  
Co-moderator of biweekly group meetings with faculty and students across the School of Information and the Computer Science & Engineering department.

**CHI Workshop on Dreaming Disability Justice in HCI** 2022  
Co-organized with Cella Sum, Franchesca Spektor, Cynthia Bennett, Christina Harrington, and Katta Spiel. Our workshop aimed to introduce the CHI community to disability justice, and work towards creating an accountable and responsible research agenda.

**ACM Conference On Computer-Supported Cooperative Work And Social Computing (CSCW)** 2021  
Student Volunteer (Day Lead): assigned tasks to various student volunteers and created a document for writing alternative texts on images shared on CSCW Twitter.

**Personal Care Assistant Graduate Student Scholarship at the University of Michigan** 2021  
My responsibilities included advertising and reviewing scholarship applicants.

**Disability Studies & HCI Reading Group at the University of Michigan** 2020 - 2021  
Organizer.

Services for Students with Disability Office at the University of Michigan  
Advisory Board.

2020 - 2021

- Reviewing

ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI)

2020 - Present

2-3 reviews per year

Special Recognition for Outstanding Reviews in CHI 2022 & CHI 2024

ACM Conference on Computers and Accessibility (ASSETS)

2020 - Present

1-2 reviews per year

## AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

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Rackham Predoctoral Fellowship

2024-2025

*Most prestigious award offered by the University of Michigan, aimed to support dissertations that are "unusually creative, ambitious, and impactful"*

UMSI Travel Grant x 2 (granted twice)

2023

Rackham Graduate School Travel Grant x 2 (granted twice)

2023

DEI Travel Grant from ACM SIGACCESS

2022

Mini Grant from UM Initiative on Disability Studies (UMInDS)

2021

DEI Travel Grant from ACM SIGACCESS

2020

KAUST Gifted Student Scholarship (KGSP)

2015

## SKILLS

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**Methods:** Qualitative Analysis, Interviewing, Focus Groups, Co-design Workshops, Ethnography, Usability Testing, Quantitative Analysis, Survey

**Programming:** Python, MATLAB

**Languages:** English (fluent), Arabic (native)