

LEE HUGHES

Product Design Director · Creative & Experience Lead

British & European Citizenship · UK / SEA / Europe

Professional Summary

Design Director and Creative Lead with two decades of experience delivering complex, research-led digital transformation for global enterprises across finance, telecoms, healthcare, and luxury sectors. I work at the intersection of strategic design leadership, human-centred systems thinking, and AI-integrated workflows. Directing cross-functional teams through the full arc of large-scale product and service design, from discovery and organisational alignment through to delivery and adoption.

My track record includes leading the design of a £1.5 billion GBP digital ecosystem for Nest, rebuilding a pension platform serving tens of thousands of members for Legal & General, and establishing design systems adopted as the internal standard across BT Global's product estate. I am currently focused on helping organisations integrate AI into design operations in ways that accelerate output without sacrificing strategic depth.

Core Competencies

Enterprise Design Strategy · AI-Augmented Design Operations · Design Systems at Scale · Human-Centred Research & Synthesis · Service Design & Information Architecture · Regulated Industry UX (Finance, Healthcare, Telecoms) · C-Suite Stakeholder Influence · Cross-functional Team Leadership · Mentoring & Team Progression · Accessibility & Inclusive Design (WCAG) · Design-to-Development Handoff

Technical Skills

Design: Figma, Sketch, Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, XD)

AI: Lovable, Replit, Midjourney, ChatGPT / Claude, Adobe Firefly

Collaboration: Miro, Mural, Monday, Asana, Keynote, PowerPoint

Methodologies: Design Thinking, Mobile-First, Agile, AI-Integrated Sprints

Professional Experience

Craft Creative (Global Clients) | Creative & Experience Lead | Nov 2023 – Present

Leading end-to-end design engagements for confidential enterprise clients — acting as senior design director and strategic partner from discovery through to delivery across financial services and technology sectors.

Advising leadership teams on AI-first design operations, implementing prototyping workflows using Lovable and Replit that enable stakeholders to evaluate working prototypes rather than static designs, accelerating executive decision-making and reducing concept-to-prototype timelines significantly.

Professional Experience *(continued)*

TCS Interactive (London) | Design Director | Jan 2020 – Oct 2023

Design Director embedded across a global enterprise portfolio including Nest, BT, EE, Legal & General, and the Financial Ombudsman Service. Responsible for creative direction, team leadership, and C-suite stakeholder management.

Nest: Repositioned design as a product strategy function, establishing the architecture and principles governing a £1.5 billion GBP ecosystem from discovery through launch.

BT Global: Built the design system from the ground up. Audit-first, accessibility embedded at component level, documentation written for designers and developers alike. Adopted globally as BT's working reference for digital design.

Legal & General: Rebuilt the pension contribution platform for tens of thousands of members. Reframing FCA compliance as a design tool, achieving first-time full accessibility compliance, and reducing contribution processing from hours to minutes. Adopted as the internal design benchmark for the wider division.

Financial Ombudsman Service: Remapped the entire information architecture around user mental models rather than institutional process, redesigned the complaints journey and caseworker tooling, and surfaced process-level organisational recommendations beyond the design brief itself.

EY-Seren (Athens) | Senior Product Designer / Lead CX | Feb 2019 – Aug 2019 (Contract)

Contract engagement leading customer experience design for PRAXIA Bank, a FinTech startup entering the UK and European digital banking markets.

McCann Health (London) | Product Design Lead | Aug 2018 – Sept 2018 (Contract)

Product and creative design for GlaxoSmithKline, Roche, Accord, and Merck across regulated pharmaceutical digital products.

Engine Group (London) | Lead Product Designer | May 2018 – Aug 2018 (Contract)

Designed intuitive interfaces for Eon, resulting in a 25% increase in user engagement across mobile and web platforms.

Splendid Unlimited (London) | Lead Product Designer | Aug 2017 – Apr 2018

Led product design for Barclays, HSBC, and Royal Holloway, managing usability, scalability, and user satisfaction across high-traffic platforms. Introduced evidence-based critique culture across the product team, shifting design reviews from subjective opinion toward goal-oriented decision-making.

DigitasLBI (London) | UX Director | Jun 2016 – Dec 2016 (Contract)

Led UX direction for AstraZeneca. Designing a cardiac patient support application from clinical research and stakeholder workshops through to prototype and design system handover.

Status Digital (London) | Creative & UX Director | Feb 2016 – Jun 2016 (Contract)

ISOBAR (Hong Kong) | Senior UI/UX Consultant | Mar 2014 – Apr 2015

Imagination Asia (Hong Kong) | Senior UI/UX Consultant | Mar 2012 – Jan 2014

Key Brands

Nest · BT · EE · L&G · AstraZeneca · HSBC · Barclays · GSK · Financial Ombudsman · JLR · Ford · GE · Van Cleef & Arpels · Roche · Canon

Education

Graphic Design Foundation – Northumbria University