

SASHA (TANASE) LUCA

Senior UX Researcher | Discovery, Research Ops & Developer Experience

Bucharest, Romania (EET / UTC+2) · Open to remote (EU/US-overlap) or hybrid Bucharest

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One principle has guided my work for eight years: **explorative research helps teams build the right thing; iterative research helps them build it right**. I lead UX research for complex, high-stakes products in fintech, DeFi, digital-identity wallets, and developer tooling, where a confused user doesn't just churn, they lose funds. I specialize in qualitative methodology, product discovery, PMF validation, and developer experience, and I build research ops (repositories, panels, processes) from zero. My full research reports are public at sasha.web3ux.org.

CORE SKILLS

Research: Product Discovery · Jobs-to-be-Done · PMF Validation · Usability Testing · Diary Studies · In-Depth Interviews · Surveys (SUS, SEQ, PMF) · User Segmentation · Behavioral Analysis · Insight Synthesis · Mixed Methods

Ops & leadership: Research Ops · Insight Repository Management · Participant Recruitment & Panel Building · Stakeholder Alignment · Roadmap Prioritization · AI-Assisted Research Workflows

Domains: Fintech · DeFi / Web3 · Developer Experience (DevEx) · Digital Identity (SSI)

EXPERIENCE

Web3UX - Founder & Independent UX Researcher

Apr 2022 – Present · full-time since Jul 2025

- Founded and solely operate Web3UX, a user-testing platform and participant panel connecting web3 product teams with web3-native research participants, built to solve the field's hardest research-ops problem: recruiting the right users.
- Designed and shipped a public research portfolio: six end-to-end case studies with full downloadable reports (sasha.web3ux.org).
- Published an AI-assisted UXR framework ("From Fear to Empowerment," 2026) and "The Silent Villain in Your Data" (2026); spoke at EthCC[8], Cannes (2025), and ETHPrague, Prague (2026).

Thesis* (web3 venture studio) - UX Research Lead → UX Research Manager

Apr 2021 – Jul 2025 · Led research and product design continuously across the studio's Bitcoin & Ethereum portfolio, moving with the studio from product to product.

Mezo - UX Research Manager & Product Strategy · 2024 – 2025

- Led PMF research (discovery, segmentation, value-proposition validation) that identified the user segment consistently responding to Mezo Borrow, invalidated several lower-fit segments, and concentrated product effort on the ~35–40% of users most likely to adopt and retain.
- Partnered with the Borrow and Onboarding PMs to turn findings into roadmap decisions; this elevated Mezo Borrow to flagship product, driving the majority of early engagement within two quarters.
- Built the company-wide insight repository (single source of truth for 15+ stakeholders across Product, Design, Engineering, Marketing), cutting duplicated research effort and speeding cross-team decisions. [Sanitized public copy](#)
- Aligned Product and Marketing on one target-user definition through JTBD interviews and PMF surveys, contributing to a ~20% uplift in qualified traffic and early-stage conversion for Mezo Borrow.

Threshold Network - UX Research & Design Lead · 2021 – 2024

- Led post-merger (Keep × NuCypher) discovery and alignment: workshops and interviews produced brand-personality guidelines, target user profiles, and validated product hypotheses, minimizing roadmap rework across newly merged teams.
- Researched the core audience (Bitcoin holders active in DeFi), validating risk-tolerance, yield, and trust assumptions; insights guided staking/bridging strategy and drove growth in Total Value Locked across those flows.
- Led end-to-end research and UX strategy for the marketing website (segmented IA, user flows, three rounds of usability testing), improving first-time task success ~30% and product engagement from website entry points ~22%.
- Led research for the Network Dashboard (onboarding, stake migration, node-operator flows); research-driven iterations improved onboarding completion ~20% and cut time-to-first-stake ~16%.

- Led discovery and two validated iterations for the tBTC bridge v2 in close collaboration with smart-contract engineers, improving successful bridge completion ~18%.
- Designed a hybrid diary-study + interview methodology to evaluate real-world node-operator setup and maintenance, reducing setup-related issues ~30% and measurably improving operator-reported clarity.

Keep Network - UX Research & Design Lead · 2021

- Discovery on node-operator behavior surfaced a new high-value B2B segment (Staking Providers); the resulting documentation, setup guides, and client-code communication drove a 15% increase in active node operators and cut setup drop-offs 30%.
- Led end-to-end research for Coverage Pools, the first feature of its kind in Ethereum DeFi (predating AAVE's equivalent). Interviews revealed demand for a lower-risk, passive-income option; the resulting feature ultimately locked 33% of total token supply. With a completely novel concept, I focused usability testing on learnability and recall: 87% of participants accurately recalled the full 3-step flow by end of testing.

*Also contributed research to **Acre** (Bitcoin liquid staking) and the **BitcoinFi Accelerator**.*

SelfKey / KYC-Chain - UX Researcher & Design Lead

Jul 2020 – Apr 2021

- Ran explorative and generative research (interviews, discovery workshops) that shaped the product team's feature roadmap across the SelfKey Identity Wallet, Staking, Marketplace, and KeyFi DeFi Aggregator.
- Redesigned onboarding and wallet recovery, adding Seed Phrase and Private Key login targeting blockchain-specific failure points.

ConsenSys / Alethio - Head of Design & User Research

Jul 2018 – May 2020

- Led design and user research for the Ethereum data-analytics platform, taking Alethio Block Explorer, API, Monitoring (x2 versions), and the Alethio Design System from concept to launch-ready.
- Established the research practice: explorative and generative interview programs plus stakeholder workshops that defined the problems worth solving for a large, multi-player ecosystem.

Earlier career

Senior Art Director, UX/UI - GMP+WEBSTYLER · 2016 – 2018 · digital products and campaigns across health, medical, and consumer sectors; 4× ADSTAR Gold (2017).

SELECTED TALKS

- **Designing for Trust in Web3: Lessons from the User Research Field** - EthCC[8], Cannes, 2025
- **ENHANCE UXR WITH AI: diverting from fear to empowerment** - ETHPrague, Prague, 2026
- **Elevating Developer Experience (DX) in Web3: a Framework** - EthCC[6], Paris, 2023 (with Daniel Luca)
- **The Future of Web3UX: a Paradigm Shift for Better Collaboration between Design and Development** - DevCon VI, Bogotá, 2022
- **Accessibility: Ethereum for LITERALLY Everyone!** - EthCC[4], Paris, 2021
- **That Never Even Crossed My Mind! How to Spot & Fix Your Cognitive Biases** - EthCC[3], Paris, 2020
- **User Research: How to Get Out of Our Bubbles by Talking to Users** - DevCon V, Osaka, 2019 (with Georgia Rakusen)

Some talks are published under Sasha Tanase, my pre-marriage name, which I continued using on stage.

EDUCATION

Master of Architecture (M.Arch) - Ion Mincu University of Architecture and Urbanism, Bucharest · 2005 – 2011