

## Joris Laenen

I am an experienced product designer who thrives on projects that need to start from scratch, within a technically, administratively, or politically complex context. I enjoy diving deep into challenging topics and always strive to distill processes and ideas down to their essence, focusing on what truly impacts the end user. My technical knowledge allows me to accurately assess how designs can be made user-friendly and realistic.

## Relevant work experience

### Freelance digital product designer and analyst

[🏢 Sparktools](#)[🕒 08-2019 to present](#)

As a freelancer, I assist companies with:

- User and market research
- Research and alignment for technical possibilities and requirements
- Design and development of websites and web applications
- Creating sitemaps, user flows, wireframes, and UI designs

I prefer complex applications/high-impact platforms, where careful consideration is needed to create a user-friendly application.

### Interim senior UX designer and product owner

[🏢 Tax and Customs Administration](#)[🕒 03-2024 to present](#)

For the Tax and Customs Administration, I contributed to the development of complex applications/high-impact platforms. Here are two highlights:

#### Schadeherstel toeslagen (MijnHerstel)

Schadeherstel toeslagen (the Dutch childcare allowance affair) is a highly complex application, where a legally intricate damage framework must be translated into an application that is easy for victims of this affair to navigate, and where files must be accurately supplemented, processed, and reported back. Over a two-year process, with falling cabinets, changing policies, and new state secretaries, I helped build a digital way to realize damage recovery for the allowance scandal. My tasks included:

- **Defining requirements:** Initially, the entire digital damage recovery process had to be conceptualized. I took on a piece of service design, particularly by leading stakeholder workshops with parents, coordinating with other technical teams, and establishing legal frameworks with lawyers. I used this to create user journeys and customer flows. Later in the project, these steps were revisited as new requirements emerged from politics.
- **Translating requirements into UX solutions:** In an end-to-end product design process, I designed the complete first version of the digital solution in Figma (prototyping & design systems). Using UX research and usability testing, I validated the solution with parents and stakeholders. Iterative design was essential as new insights continuously emerged. As the project progressed, I also guided a team of four UX designers in designing a new version of MijnHerstel, where I laid the foundation for all designs and conceptualized the complex logic.

- **Stakeholder management:** In this process, I had to coordinate extensively with other development teams for data exchange and aligning requirements. Additionally, I needed to coordinate with lawyers, the Ministry of Finance, communication specialists, and external consultancy parties. Within this broad web of stakeholder management and multidisciplinary teams, I had to ensure a consistent user experience while achieving this in the short term within Scrum teams. Agile working was a requirement.
- **Implementation of the solution:** My role was to define what needed to be built within user stories and to test that everything was delivered according to specifications. Additionally, I determined the priorities from a UX perspective.

## Access to Fiscal Dossier

The Dutch Tax and Customs Administration has been tasked with making all relevant data available to citizens that are used in internal dossiers. This is not only a massive data challenge but also a UX challenge: which data is understandable, how should data be presented, and which data belongs together to create a coherent narrative? Here, Human Centered Design was essential. My main activities included:

- **Service sprint (design thinking):** Using design thinking, we aimed to answer how to create an interface that is understandable but also suitable for data that is not yet known, and can be easily expanded over time. With Figma prototypes, I conducted guerrilla research on the street.
- **Design and validation:** Developed two prototypes and built technical demos, validated through usability testing.
- **End-to-end product design:** Interpreting, categorizing, and translating data into logical user journeys and customer flows, from concept to final design via Human Centered Design, validated in semi-structured interviews.

## Senior UX designer

Alliander

10-2025 to 01-2026

During a short-term project, I designed a tool for Alliander that helps bulk consumers of electricity to solve grid congestion using AI. It was important to maintain a balance between providing a structured and logical experience while not limiting the creative solutions that AI could propose. I executed the entire process from defining the customer flow to delivering high-end designs. I did this as follows:

- **Defining the flow:** Understanding which smart energy solutions were possible and how AI could assist. I created user journeys and customer flows and aligned these with stakeholders, defining the front-end requirements and UI deliverables.
- **Low-fi to high-fi UX design:** From concept validation to high-end Figma prototypes that walked through a scenario. Validated with multiple customer types from Alliander via a validation script, supplemented with usability testing. The results also served as input to improve the AI steps.
- **Guiding front-end:** Per sprint within the Scrum team, I monitored which designs were realistic for the deadline and which needed to be pushed to Q1. Iterative design was done in collaboration with the front-end developer. Agile working was essential to avoid unnecessary work during development due to later changes.

## Interim senior digital product designer & business analyst

 Shell Recharge Solutions

 06-2023 to 12-2023

The customer support tool needed to be completely redesigned to comply with BCR and GDPR regulations within a period of 6 months. In an Agile environment, I completely redesigned and expanded the customer support platform for remotely assisting customers and repairing charging stations for electric cars. My tasks included:

- **Research, design, and validation:** Through design thinking, I conducted UX research with customer support staff, listening in on calls and observing how they used the applications. By leading stakeholder workshops, I validated two aspects: the product wishes in relation to other internal tools (validated with technical teams) and what the end user wants (validated through co-creation with user groups, where we reviewed the current application together and brainstormed improvements). I validated the improved design through UX research and usability testing and completed and documented it in Figma (prototyping & design systems).
- **Technical deepening:** The customer support tool was heavily reliant on APIs from other teams. I tested these APIs and looked at whether existing connections could be replaced for more insight. By coordinating with other teams, I ensured that the development of necessary APIs was scheduled so that customer support staff could assist customers effectively.

## UX designer & researcher

 Less or More B.V.

 09-2021 to 04-2023

Less or More is a UX Agency in Eindhoven. Here, I primarily designed complex applications for multiple stakeholders with different backgrounds and executed the entire end-to-end product design process, from UX research to detailed design including design system. My tasks included:

- Conducting research into stakeholder needs using UX research and service design methods.
- Leading service sprints and stakeholder workshops, prioritizing co-creation and design thinking.
- Translating requirements into UX solutions through sitemaps, user journeys, and customer flows.
- User-centered design (UCD) according to WCAG 2.1, focused on inclusive design. Iterative design was essential, with validation for accessibility for various types of users.
- Agile working within Scrum teams.

## Founder & digital designer

 Letje

 11-2016 to 03-2019

Together with two others, I ran a digital branding company. Here, I helped businesses by building websites and designing corporate identities.

## Obtained diplomas

### MSc Design Leadership & Entrepreneurship

 TU Eindhoven

 09-2019 to 07-2021

#### Graduation project: Twivvy (in collaboration with Next Learning Valley)

For my graduation project, I designed a learning platform for IT employees within SMEs, based on the principle of workplace learning: people learn best within their own work context, not through isolated training. By structuring goal setting, reflecting with supervisors, and organizing work so that learning objectives can be achieved, the platform encourages conscious growth and career development. Employees can also find and utilize each other's skills.

I went through the entire end-to-end product design process in Figma, supplemented with a working React Native prototype. The concept was validated through interviews with software developers and a week-long user study with end users. Next Learning Valley guided the project as an external partner.

### BSc Industrial Design

 TU Eindhoven

 09-2019 to 07-2021