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# "We always try to challenge ourselves."

Carina de López & Philipp Reiter, eye square

How does the full-service market research institute eye square drive innovation, how does it work with human experience research, and what visions connect the people behind eye square? Carina de López and Philipp Reiter both decided to join eye square over 15 years ago and are now an integral part of the company culture. They were interviewed at the eye square "Kunsthalle" at the Spree in Berlin and share with our readers a personal view at the successful company.

As a full-service market research institute, eye square's team has been taking care of the entire research process since 1999, from client requests for all types of studies to the final presentation of results. The team works in three different areas: Brand and Media Research, User Experience Research and Shopper Experience Research.
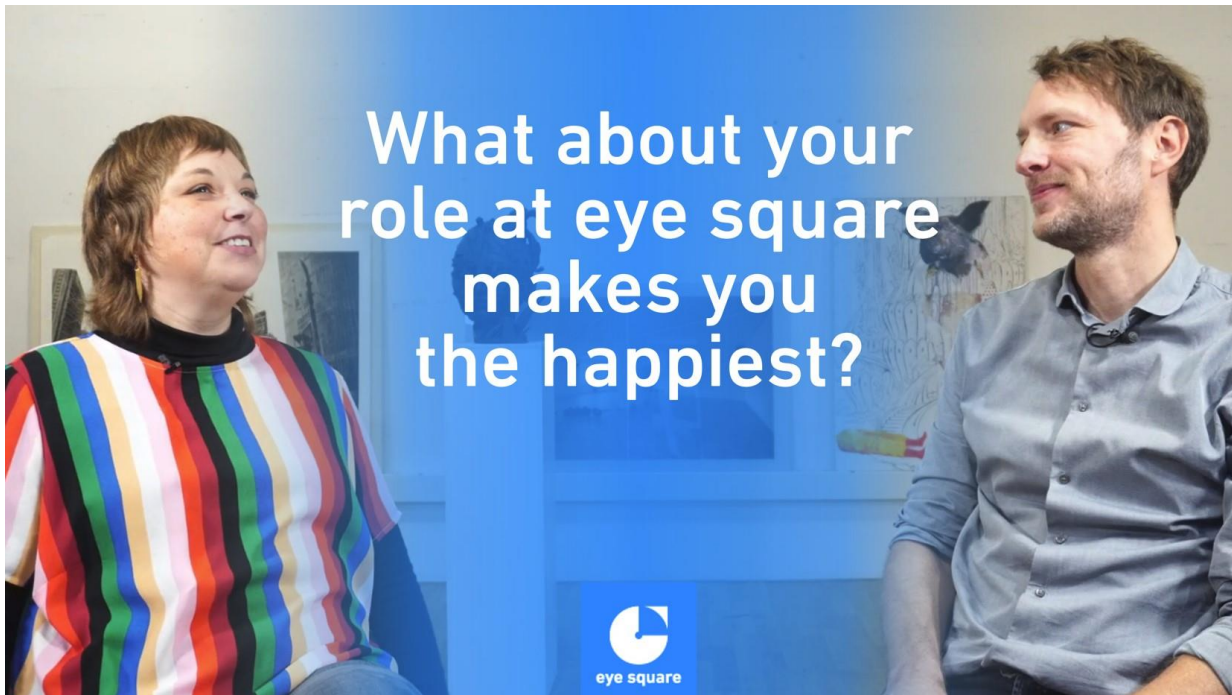
The focus is on implicit research: eye square not only listens to users and consumers, but also researches what they see and feel. Looking at their emotions and perceptions is a valuable look at unconscious processes. Besides big brands, other researchers or creative agencies also benefit from eye square's services. The cross-team market research tools that eye square develops are used by the team itself and shared with corporate partners and clients

## Carina, Philipp, please introduce yourselves to the readers and tell us what you do at eye square!

Carina de López: I'm Carina and I've been working at eye square for 15 years. I am Vice President User Experience and Partner. I also lead the UX team. We have 10 colleagues in the team with different backgrounds in psychology and sociology. In my position, I mainly take care of administrative work and making sure that our clients who request our services get a good deal. I advise on our methods, take care of sales. I lead the studies in the team and make sure that everything works well, and of course I take care of all team members.

Philipp Reiter: I am Phillip. I am part of the management team at eye square and have been with eye square almost from the beginning. I am a psychologist, and my work focus is the role of COO, which means organization. I am lucky to work with all teams, especially the marketing team, but also many other teams and management. My responsibilities are data protection, information security and also organization. I make sure that all teams have a good working day, we have the right tools and can improve eye square

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VvC6IMpJcg&t=1s

## What makes eye square unique from your point of view?

Philipp Reiter: Focusing on people and the human experience has always been our credo. In addition, we focus on research and psychology, because many of us are psychologists. In research, the challenge has always been that people are difficult to understand and also difficult to interview. As with all qualitative interviews and studies, we always face the task of observing the person, but also asking questions and deciding which method is best. And that's what we mean by Human Experience. For this we have the best implicit and explicit methods.

Carina de López: And I also find the team spirit unique. Although we have grown a lot in the last few years, there is still this friendliness that we have in the team. Everyone helps everyone.

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## From your personal perspective, what is eye square's vision?

Philipp Reiter: Our strategic vision is to be innovative in research. That is the central point. We always try to challenge ourselves, bring in new methods, develop new ideas and also have a strong connection to science. We have different science and technology areas where every colleague can develop and bring in their own motivations.
We have Tribes – special interest groups that you can join to do cross-team innovation processes. In my case, it's the System 0 tribe. In this Tribe, for example, we focus very much on human cognition at very early stages and try to understand how our attention works, what attention is qualitatively significant, and how to innovate.

Carina de López: Since I work in the UX team, our team vision is to get as close as possible to the user or even be there when people use digital products. In this observation, we try to understand what they are looking for, to understand their mental model. The vision is to make this understanding tangible for our customers. Our customers really want to understand their users, to hear the voice of their consumers and users.

## Innovation plays a major role at eye square. Where are the sources of inspiration for the company?

Philipp Reiter: There are very different sources of inspiration. We see that different teams and researchers influence and inspire each other. The master's thesis or the topic of a colleague's doctoral thesis can be such an influence. We try to encourage our colleagues to share their expertise, for example in internal company "brownbag" meetings. We often invite other scientists, researchers, or master's students to the scientific meetings to talk about their research. Recently, we hosted the Master Award of the DWG (Deutsche Werbewissenschaftliche Gesellschaft) here at eye square and were able to learn a lot from the students.

Carina de López: Another source of inspiration is art. Michael Schießl, the CEO of the company, is a passionate art collector, so we are surrounded by various works of art in the offices of our company. We also have regular opportunities

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to meet the artists. It is very inspiring to listen to an artist like Dennis Rudolph. He is a video artist and works with VR and AR. For me, it's a joy to work in an environment with art objects every day. In fact, art also inspires many of us to visualize the result reports for our clients even better and more aesthetically!

Philipp Reiter: Part of our marketing team are professional designers, so the production of our reports is on a very high level in terms of aesthetics and information design. For me, art is inspiring in different ways: especially three-dimensionality or virtual reality. People can get in touch with the metaverse and experience art in another dimension, which opens up new horizons for them. And of course, I also enjoy meeting the artists in person.
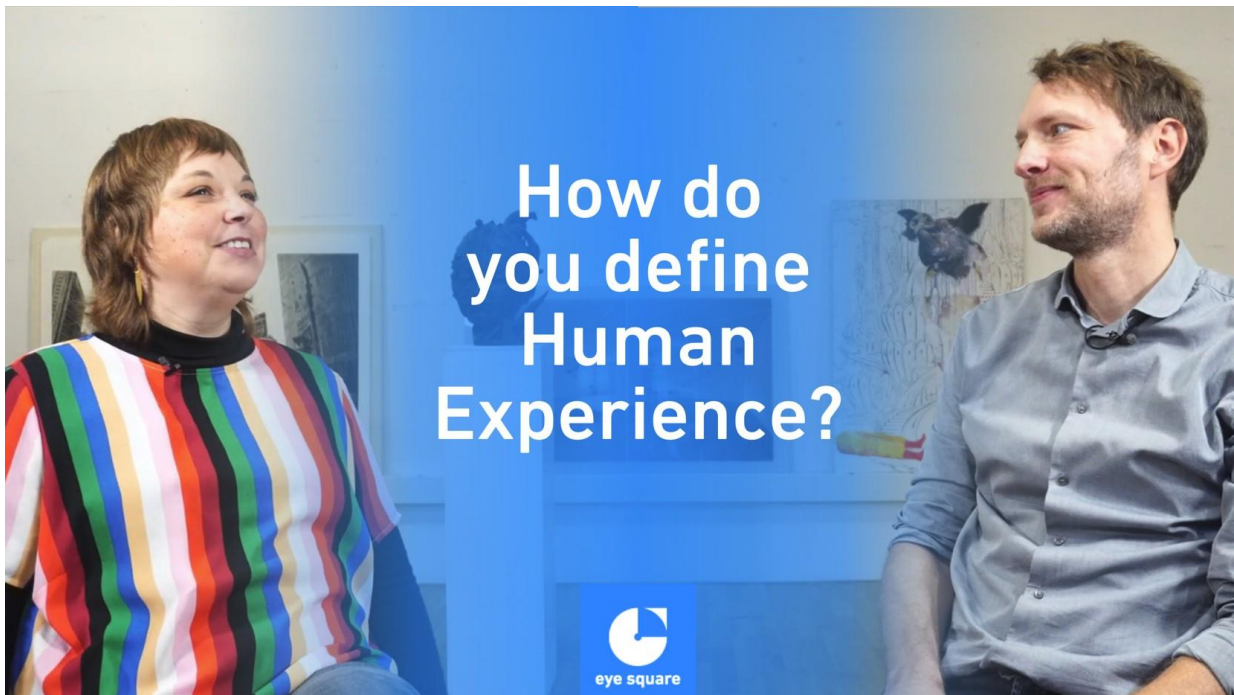


https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5g1k2_GD3Q0

## The last two and a half years have presented many companies with an organizational challenge. What does the New Normal look like for the eye square team?

Philipp Reiter: We place great emphasis on hybrid work models and want to support everyone in the team in deciding where and how they work best. And we are all different, of course: those who would like to work from home may

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need an adjustable table, a better chair or additional screens. In the office, we now have more hot desk options. That means you can choose which room and which table you want to sit at. There are actually more people in the office now in November than in the summer. I didn't expect that!

Carina de López: Yes, winter weather is usually a challenge for many. But coming into the office and having lunch with someone from the team is a great reason to leave the house at this time of year. However, many colleagues choose to work from home and are very happy. For example, they can walk their dog during their lunch break, adjust their work schedule, and be more flexible overall. We also have colleagues who can work from the Canary Islands for a few weeks or visit family in the U.S. for an extended period of time. They can be flexible with their working hours, and we adjust our team meetings. The most important thing for us is that people feel comfortable where they work.

## What career steps can a new employee discover at eye square?

Carina de López: eye square has different business areas on which we focus. You can start as a research consultant in our large research and consulting area, or you can choose the technology or science area and work there as a software developer or data scientist, for example.

In addition to the areas of activity, we have different levels. Working in the Entry level usually starts with onboarding and traineeship. You can move up to the Core level, where you would mainly be doing research and leading studies. In data analytics and software development, there are different levels, starting with Associate Consultant, Senior Consultant, Principal Consultant, etc. At the leadership level, you have the opportunity to work more in the area of business development and participate in where eye square will be in the future.

Philipp Reiter: Thanks to the levels and the different areas we have, we offer people different perspectives and also try to understand their interests. There should always be the opportunity to do what you do best and what you like best.

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Carina de López: Regular feedback rounds with employees are also important to us. This way, we have the goals in mind, and everyone can talk to their team at eye level about their vision and perspective for the next month and for the next half year.

**Carina De Lopez**
VP User Experience &
Partner at eye square

Carina de López has been part of the User Experience Team since 2007, Unit Lead since 2010 and Partner since 2018.

She holds a degree in sociology with a focus on methods and media sociology.

Her responsibilities are key accounting, sales, UX method development, customer consulting, and controlling of user experience studies in the team.

She is specialized in qualitative methods, emotion measurement, personas and development-accompanying user experience consulting.

Carina enriches the team with intercultural methodological competence and many years of consulting experience in user experience research.

**Philipp Reiter**
Partner & COO

at eye square

Philipp Reiter is COO and partner at eye square. In particular, he is a qualified psychologist and specialized in cognitive information processing and implicit research methods.

Philipp is particularly concerned with the optimal implementation of innovative neuroscientific measures from EEG to EDA in user, brand and buyer research. At eye level, Philipp mainly takes care of our international clients.

His consulting expertise is often found at conferences and regularly published in magazines. Structural equation modeling and machine learning are of particular interest to Philipp.

He is responsible for scientific collaboration with university partners such as Humboldt University or Leibniz University Hannover. Philipp teaches business psychology at the BiTS campus in Berlin.

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