

Julien Clifford

SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Houston, Texas / julien.clifford@protonmail.com / linkedin.com/in/julienclifford

Fifteen years in production software, with engineers reporting to me at Chess.com, Invisible Technologies, and Amplify Life Insurance. Spent two years at Invisible delivering to OpenAI, Microsoft, Google, and Amazon, and built the QA function there. Moved into product at Chess.com, owning a roadmap and its release planning. Before that, energy and industrial software at Landdox, Quorum, and BSD Consulting.

EXPERIENCE

Atelier Actara

June 2026 to present

Founder and Principal Engineer / Remote

A platform that runs fashion shows: casting, lineup, venues, guest lists, and check-in.

- Designed and built the whole system as its only engineer: Elixir and Phoenix on the back end, React and TypeScript on the front, Postgres, and the cloud infrastructure it runs on.
- Built the multi-tenant permission model that lets agencies, brands, and venues work the same show without seeing each other's data.
- Made AI-assisted development the documented standard: written engineering conventions, agent skill definitions, and automated verification gates that run before a change ships.
- Set the pricing, wrote the financial plan, and designed the brand and the design system the product ships with.

Chess.com

June 2025 to April 2026

Technical Product Manager / Remote

- Managed three engineers and owned the new-user experience roadmap, sequencing work across product and engineering and holding the release plan for it.
- Led the onboarding and Connect work streams, shipping changes to **millions of players**.
- Wrote the specs engineers built from, refining loose product requirements into scoped, estimated work.
- Added the onboarding and activation metrics the team uses to judge funnel changes.

Invisible Technologies

March 2023 to February 2025

Principal Engineer and Partner / Remote

An AI services company delivering to OpenAI, Microsoft, Google, and Amazon.

- Managed **two engineering teams in parallel**, four engineers reporting to me, owning delivery, hiring, and performance for both.
- Built the QA function from nothing: testing standards, documentation, and an automated suite that took coverage from **zero to 85 percent**.
- Ran technical hiring, sourcing externally and promoting engineers from inside the company, and managed an engineer through a **performance improvement plan**.
- Wrote core product code and led the architecture and performance work.

Applied Generics

June 2022 to present

Founder / Remote, alongside the roles above

An independent practice building APIs and full applications for clients, and where Atelier Actara started.

Amplify Life Insurance

September 2021 to June 2022

Staff Engineer / Remote

A life insurer that was standing up its first engineering team and software stack.

- Managed three engineers, and ran sprint planning, scoping, and retrospectives for the team.
- Replaced the legacy stack with a company-wide API server and Postgres database in Elixir, with continuous integration and tests from the first commit.
- Defined the code review policy the engineering team used, and reviewed both front end and back end.
- Built the React and Redux front ends against the new API.

Vic.ai

June 2021 to September 2021

Senior Elixir Engineer / Remote

- Shipped core Elixir for an early-stage startup and introduced retrospectives, documentation, and project planning. Built a CSV importer that handled arbitrary client file formats.

Quorum Software

October 2020 to May 2021

Senior Software Engineer / Houston, Texas

Enterprise software for the energy industry.

- Integrated the Landdiox product into a much larger enterprise legacy codebase.

Landdiox

June 2015 to October 2020

Full Stack Engineer, second engineer hired / Houston, Texas

Land management software for oil and gas, acquired by Quorum Software in 2020.

- Planned and led the major features: mapping, bulk data import, and a system that generated payment checks.
- Interviewed and hired engineers, and joined sales calls to answer technical questions.
- Worked across the full stack and the infrastructure: Elixir, Node, Angular, React, AWS, and Terraform.

EARLIER

BSD Consulting / Full Stack Engineer

2014 to 2015

Sole engineer on a web platform for pipeline data, server and client, from prototype through delivery.

Conrad Blucher Institute / Undergraduate Research Assistant

2010 to 2014

Built mobile mapping applications for land surveying, funded in part by NOAA, including survey-grade GPS and RTK field collection.

Esri and Shell Oil Company / Technical Marketing and Geomatics internships

2012 and 2013

Wrote geoprocessing scripts supporting disaster response at Esri, and Python automation for spatial data pipelines and raster generation from raw sonar at Shell, plus seven days at sea on a hydrographic survey.

TECHNICAL

BACKEND Elixir and Phoenix, OTP, Absinthe GraphQL, Ecto, Node, PHP

FRONTEND React, Redux, React Router, Angular, TypeScript, MUI, Tailwind

DATA PostgreSQL, SQL

PLATFORM AWS, Google Cloud, Terraform, Docker, Fly.io, CI and CD pipelines

ARCHITECTURE Multi-tenant systems, enterprise system design, API design

DELIVERY Scrum and sprint planning, release planning, code review standards, test automation (ExUnit, Playwright, Vitest), technical hiring

AI ENABLEMENT AI-assisted development standards, written engineering conventions, agent skill definitions, automated verification gates

EDUCATION

Texas A&M University, Corpus Christi

2009 to 2014

Bachelor of Science, Geographic Information Science and Geomatics