

brand&style
GUIDE



Our Mission

The Opportunity Network ignites the drive, curiosity, and agency of underrepresented students on their paths to and through college and into thriving careers, powered by our commitment to access and community.

Our Vision

The Opportunity Network envisions a nation connected through vibrant communities and networks actively in pursuit of social justice and educational equity – a nation where all young people can freely create their own path to enduring success that honors their passions, ambitions, and full identities.

Our Work

The Opportunity Network (OppNet) connects students from historically and systematically underrepresented communities to college access and success, internships, career opportunities, and personal and professional networks.

Our founding OppNet Fellows program, an intensive six-year experience for students beginning the summer after 10th grade, cultivates students' passions and skills to persist through college and launch the careers of their choice upon graduation.

Anchored in our proprietary Career Fluency® curriculum, which articulates the necessary skills and mindsets for college and career readiness, OppNet's Fellows program integrates individualized college guidance, robust networking opportunities for professional and personal growth, multi-industry career exposure, experiential learning for college success, and five summers of skill-building paid internships and enrichment programs.

92% of OppNet Fellows graduate from college within six years – over **90%** of whom will be the first in their families to do so – and **89%** secure meaningful employment or graduate school admission within six months of college graduation, far exceeding national trends.

Additionally, OppNet drives national impact through Career Fluency® Partnerships, our immersive capacity-building program for schools and youth-serving organizations across the country looking to accelerate college and career readiness for their young people. Through tailored integration of our Career Fluency® curriculum, OppNet's Partnerships team designs a unique strategy for each Partner organization to reach their desired goals and amplify student outcomes. To date, OppNet has worked with over 50 organizations and schools as they support thousands of young people across the country achieve college and career success.

Guide's Purpose

This guide is intended to unify all content produced by OppNet to ensure a cohesive organizational presence across our engagement with stakeholders.

By binding our content through certain core elements, OppNet's brand can remain a potent force in the college and career space. This guide identifies the necessary components to maintaining visual brand consistency throughout the various channels and platforms – from a Facebook post to an external-facing memorandum – where we message our work and impact.

Brand Personality

The Opportunity Network's brand persona is animated by the core belief that bolstering the futures of **all** young people is critical to the sustainability and betterment of the world around us. The three traits listed below should be understood as "Brand Points of View" to follow when creating any OppNet-branded content to ensure it is always in conversation with the spirit of this core belief:

- Inspired
 - Our messaging is inspired by the passion and creativity our students and community partners bring to The Opportunity Network as we all work to reimagine what's possible for the futures of young people.
- Ambitious
 - Our messaging is committed to meeting this bold reimagining with an equally bold ambition to bring it to bear in our larger day-to-day reality.
- Reflective

- Our messaging understands that our work operates in a rapidly-shifting social and professional landscape and as such, invites thoughtfulness and reflection on how our work can better respond to the needs of the students we serve.

All content should take its cue from these three “Brand Points of View” during the ideation and brainstorming stage. OppNet staff should always approach the content’s design and copy with the goal of inciting these sentiments in its intended audience.

Voice

Words matter.

The importance of thoughtfully deploying the language we use to communicate our work cannot be overstated. The Opportunity Network’s editorial perspective for all branded content is to remain asset-based and systems-focused. When referring to our Fellows and alumni and their experiences in and outside of our programming, we want to make explicit the role societal and political structures play in how and why they engage with OppNet.

Additionally, when referring to our Fellows and alumni, it is as important that they are always framed as active drivers of their own success and development. One way to ensure this happens is through “People-First Construction.” As an example, there are times when describing aspects of our student population helps to illustrate the level of intervention and impact our programming model provides. Relatedly, there are times when calling out the socio-economic contexts of our students serve to underscore the “opportunity gap” we commit to combating. This is when “People-First Construction,” an asset-based, person-first, and systems-focused editorial prospective matters. Instead of “low-income students,” we would deploy “students from underrepresented and low-income communities.” This revision places the humanity of our students first, honors their communities, and situates the status of low-income within the structural lens of underrepresentation. This type of writing allows us to center our students while communicating our work effectively.

Mechanics

In terms of branded copy, The Opportunity Network adheres to style and formatting outlined by the [Associated Press Stylebook](#) except where noted below.

- Comma Usage
 - The Opportunity Network uses the serial or Oxford comma when writing lists comprised of three or more items. A comma should always be placed before whatever coordinating conjunction is being used.

- Numerals
 - Given how frequent numbers are used to describe our work, The Opportunity Network deviates from certain numeral formatting rules set by the Associated Press.
 - The percentage sign (%) can be used when reporting out a statistic or data point.
 - Spell out numbers zero to nine, unless the content's format calls for the numeric version e.g., an infographic one-pager. The numeric form should be used for all numbers over nine unless it is beginning a sentence.
 - Above protocols apply for ordinal numbers (First, 13th, etc.), as well.

- Abbreviations
 - OppNet is the only accepted abbreviation of The Opportunity Network and should only be used after it has been introduced e.g., "The Opportunity Network (OppNet) is committed to..."

- Formatting
 - The following are frequently used words and their on-brand formatting:
 - Nonprofit
 - Never hyphenated
 - Fellows
 - Always capitalized, both when referring to students in our Fellows program and the program itself.
 - Partnerships
 - Always capitalized when referring to OppNet's capacity-building program.
 - Six-year
 - Always hyphenated when used as a modifier before the object or noun.

- Career Fluency®
 - Always used with a superscript registered trademark icon.
- Style and Mechanics Note
 - En dash vs. Em dash
 - The en dash (-) is used for hyphenating words, numerals where appropriate, line breaks by syllable, and signaling other types of formatting. Conversely, the em dash (—) is used to draw emphasis on a thought, offset a longer series of items with multiple commas, and in other cases to improve readability. Please aim to use each punctuation mark appropriately in branded OppNet copy.
 - Systematic vs. Systemic
 - OppNet recognizes the legacy of racism and oppression in this country to be of a planned, and arguably, intentional nature. As such, systematic is a more accurate descriptor when referring to that history and its present manifestations.

Photo Use

OppNet's Dropbox functions as our organizational DAM (digital asset management) system. All photography needs will be most often met by exploring the Pictures and Videos folders accessible at C:\Dropbox (OppNet)\OppNet PR-Marketing. There is also a more carefully archived set of photos, aligned to various topics, accessible [here](#).

As we grow our archiving practice regarding both stock and event-specific photography, it is important that any external-facing, widely-disseminated content requiring images of Fellows or alumni is done in consultation with the director of communications. This is to ensure a conversation can take place where all can feel certain whatever images are ultimately selected honor the integrity of our students and their identities. This conversation also provides an opportunity to ensure the image selected protects OppNet's brand against misinterpretation or implicit competition e.g., a picture with an SEO banner in the background.

Logo Use

All external-facing content branded by OppNet should include a version of our logo in line with the design, purpose, and dimensions of that particular content. The following guidelines should be used when determining which of our accepted three logos should be selected. The Dropbox link to access each logo version can be found below each version.

For most cases, our horizontal logo should be used. This logo should always run parallel with surrounding text, as is the case here and on the cover of this Guide. This logo should always sit at 180° to the bottom of the page – never rotate the logo to any other angle. When altering the logo for best fit, do so with discretion being sure not to obfuscate any logo element.



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For cases when page elements require a more square-like dimension, our vertical logo should be used. Again, this logo should still run parallel with surrounding text and sit at 180° to the bottom of the page. When altering the logo for best fit, do so with discretion being sure not to obfuscate any logo element.



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Cases when OppNet's social logo are required will usually be managed by the director of communications. This logo will accompany posts on any of our social media channels where a more explicit OppNet brand presence is needed or there is increased potential for that post to be disseminated widely and by other organizations.



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House Style

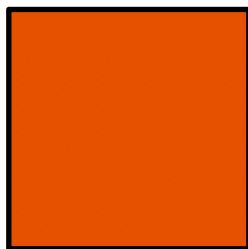
- Font

Our organizational font for all external-facing text is Heebo, which can be [downloaded here](#). This font style, a humanist sans-serif typeface, was selected as OppNet’s brand font because of its balance between readability, sharpness, and realistic letter strokes, a signal toward the ambition and practicality of OppNet’s work. Regarding text color, body text should always be done in white or black, depending on the document’s background color. More creative liberty can be taken with the text color of headers, titles, and subtitles. However, whatever is decided should be in keeping with OppNet’s color story, taken from the palettes below.

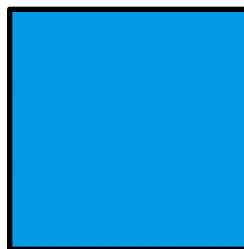
- Color Palette

The colors that make up OppNet’s “color story” are pulled directly from its organizational logo. These three colors comprise OppNet’s Main Palette. These three colors, along with their HEX codes, are found below. As our Main Palette, the majority of all design choices for branded content should incorporate these colors. To add visual variety to content, the opacity of these three colors can be adjusted. Additionally, OppNet’s secondary palette, also below, may be used for further visual variety, though sparingly since we want the primary “look and feel” of all content to be lockstep with our logo.

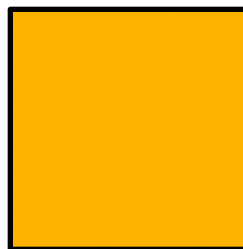
Main Palette



#E65100
RGB: 230, 81, 0



#039BE5
RGB: 3, 155, 229

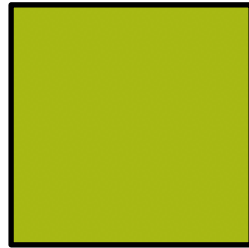


#FFB300
RGB: 255, 179, 0

Secondary Palette



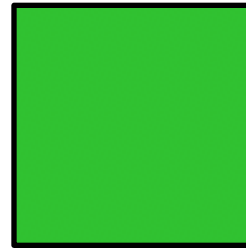
#49A2A4
RGB: 73, 162, 164



#A7B813
RGB: 167, 184, 19



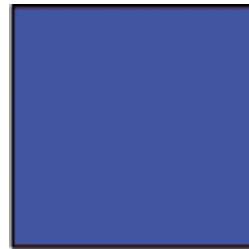
#667B82
RGB: 102, 123, 130



#30C231
RGB: 48, 194, 49



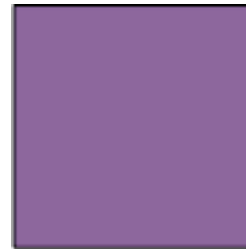
#C23048
RGB: 194, 48, 72



#4052A0
RGB: 64, 82, 160



#8166D1
RGB: 129, 102, 209



#8C639D
RGB: 140, 99, 157

Note: Content created for special events and purposes e.g., OppNet’s annual gala, a potential white paper series, or even this brand and style guide, may deviate from parameters set forth here to better meet those unique communications’ goals.

Glossary and Usage Notes

The following should be used as a reference when determining how best to incorporate frequently used terms throughout branded content to describe OppNet’s work. This is a living list that will be edited to reflect new understandings and definitional alignment as OppNet experiences them.

- Alumni Council
 - Noun
 - Definition: a collective of OppNet alumni focused on building robust institutional and community supports for other OppNet graduates
- Associate Board
 - Noun
 - Definition: OppNet’s formal body of young professional leaders across industries working to advance OppNet’s fundraising, volunteer and programming priorities
- Board of Directors
 - Noun
 - Definition: OppNet’s fiduciary body for institutional financial and strategic matters
- Career Fluency®
 - Noun
 - Definition: the skills, practices, and mindsets required for long-term success to and through college and career
- Career Fluency® Curriculum
 - Noun
 - Definition: OppNet’s proprietary college and career curriculum, mapped to four college and career readiness indicators: college access, transition, and success; professional skills and practices; career exposure; and networks and social capital – aimed at preparing students for college and career success

- Fellow
 - Noun
 - Definition: a student actively engaging in the Fellows program
 - Usage Notes: “Student” and “Fellow” are at times used interchangeably in conversation, but in external writing, outside of descriptions of our recruitment work or brand commitment to student-voice, “Fellow” should be our default noun for identifying students in our flagship program.
- Fellows Program
 - Noun
 - Definition: OppNet’s intensive six-to-eight-year experience for students beginning in the summer after their sophomore year aimed at honing their passions and skills to graduate college and launch careers of their choice
- Impact
 - Noun
 - Definition: a measurably significant effect
 - Usage Notes: Similar to the use of “partner,” writing in nonprofits can tend to overuse “impact” and in effect, diminish the gravity of the word. Try to remain mindful of which aspects of our results are actually impactful, and which are the enabling conditions to generate the impact.
- Impact
 - Verb
 - Definition: to generate a significant effect or exert significant influence
 - Usage Notes: Many style books frown at the use of “impact” as a verb since it, in that form, can reduce the significance the word as a noun is meant to signal – OppNet by and large agrees.
- Partner
 - Noun
 - Definition: an organization, nonprofit, community-based organization, or school system formally engaged with OppNet’s Partnerships program
 - Usage Notes: When using “Partner” in this sense, both capitalizing “P” and including the type of Partner is strongly encouraged e.g., “This past year, we on-boarded 12 new Partner nonprofits.”

- Partner
 - Verb
 - Definition: to engage with other organizations, groups, and people to advance OppNet’s work and mission
 - Usage Notes: When writing branded content and determining verb choice, remain mindful of potential redundancy as this term is easily overused, especially given the name of our Partnerships program.
- Partnerships Program
 - Noun
 - Definition: OppNet’s national capacity-building program centered on its best-in-class Career Fluency® curriculum to amplify college and career outcomes for partner organizations and institutions
- Stakeholder
 - Noun
 - Definition: a person with explicit investment in our mission and holds a “share” in our work e.g., parents of Fellows, Fellows, etc.
 - Usage Notes: Because “stakeholder” is aimed at signaling a deeper connection to our work, practice discretion when identifying persons and groups as stakeholders.
- The Opportunity Network
 - Noun
 - Definition: the NYC-based nonprofit working to support students reach their college and career goals
 - Usage Notes: The Opportunity Network functions as a proper noun and as such, all words comprising the noun should always be capitalized whenever it is used.
- OppNet alum
 - Noun
 - Definition: a student who has graduated college and fulfilled all associated requirements of OppNet’s Fellows program
 - Usage Notes: For the sake of consistency and gender inclusivity, OppNet uses “alum” in place of alumnae or alumnus, both gendered and singular nouns referring to graduates of a program.

- OppNet alumni
 - Noun
 - Definition: a group of two or more students who have graduated college and fulfilled all associated requirements of OppNet's Fellows program.

Helpful Links

- [External Content Creation Workflow](#)
- [Letterhead](#)
- [Photos for External Use Dropbox Folder](#)
- [PowerPoint Template](#)
- [Staff Email Signature Template](#)
- [OppNet Thought Leadership Tracker](#)
- [Staff Insights Editorial Workflow](#)