



BRAND GUIDELINES





ABOUT THESE GUIDELINES

These are the brand guidelines of the Institute for Research Software. They explain what we stand for and how to express that consistently, visually and in writing, across every piece of communication.

Please use this toolkit whenever you are commissioning, designing, writing or approving anything published under the Institute's name.

THE BRAND

KEY MESSAGE

The Institute for Research Software strengthens research by advancing essential software and empowering the people behind it.

WHO WE ARE

We are the leading national authority on research software, working at the centre of an international movement to make it more effective and sustainable.

VISION

Every research team has equitable access to effective research software practices.

MISSION

To be the leading national facility for cultivating better, more sustainable research software to enable world-class research.

THE LOGO



PRIMARY LOGO

The primary logo is the main visual representation of our brand and should be used whenever possible. It combines the hexagonal RS mark with the full wordmark, "Institute for Research Software."

The dark navy and institute red version of each logo is the principal one. Dark navy and white versions should be used to contrast against different background colours.

ICON LOGO

The icon logo includes only the hexagonal mark. It is not a substitute for the primary logo and should be used only as a favicon or social media profile picture.



DO

Keep clear space around the logo at least equal to the height of the wordmark text



DO

Use approved colour variations



DO

Use the approved colour variations against contrasting background colours



DON'T

Change the colour of the logo



DON'T

Tilt the logo



DON'T

Apply effects



DON'T

Alter the typeface



DON'T

Alter proportions



DON'T

Alter the hierarchy

THE PALETTE

Institute Red RGB 210, 35, 42 CMYK 0, 83.33, 80, 17.65 HEX #D2232A The signature colour. To be used only as a highlight.	Dark Navy RGB 38, 45, 61 CMYK 37.7, 26.23, 0, 76.08 HEX #262D3D The main colour. To be used in all other instances.	Slate Blue RGB 53, 90, 123 CMYK 56.91, 26.83, 0, 51.76 HEX #355A7B A secondary colour. To be used as a complementary colour to dark navy.	Stone Grey RGB 195, 190, 182 CMYK 0, 2.56, 6.67, 23.53 HEX #C3BEB6 A secondary colour. To be used as complementary colour to dark navy.	Paper White RGB 240, 238, 233 CMYK 0, 0.83, 2.92, 5.88 HEX #F0EEE9 A warm background colour.	Black RGB 0, 0, 0 CMYK 60, 40, 40, 100 HEX #000000 Black and white. To be used for text and background.
					White RGB 255, 255, 255 CMYK 0, 0, 0, 0 HEX #FFFFFF



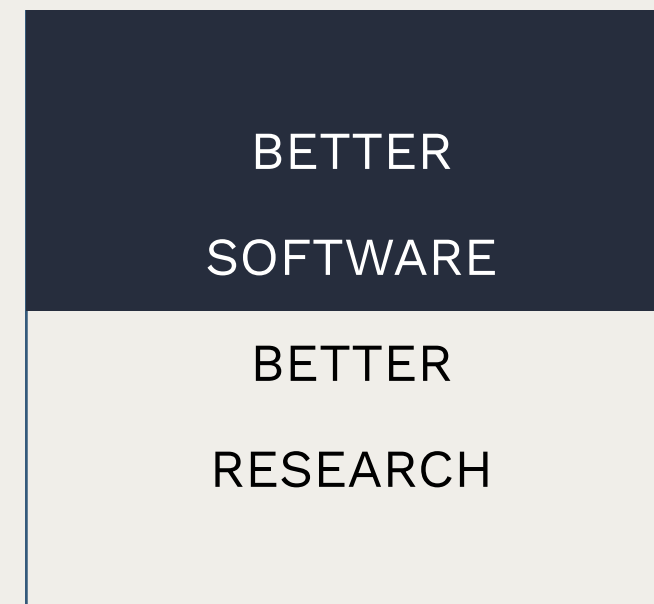
DO
Use colours from the
palette



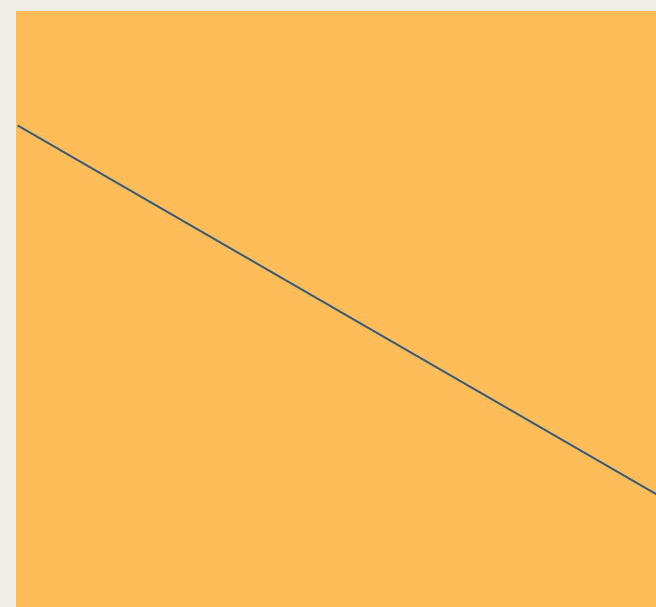
DO
Mix colours from the
palette



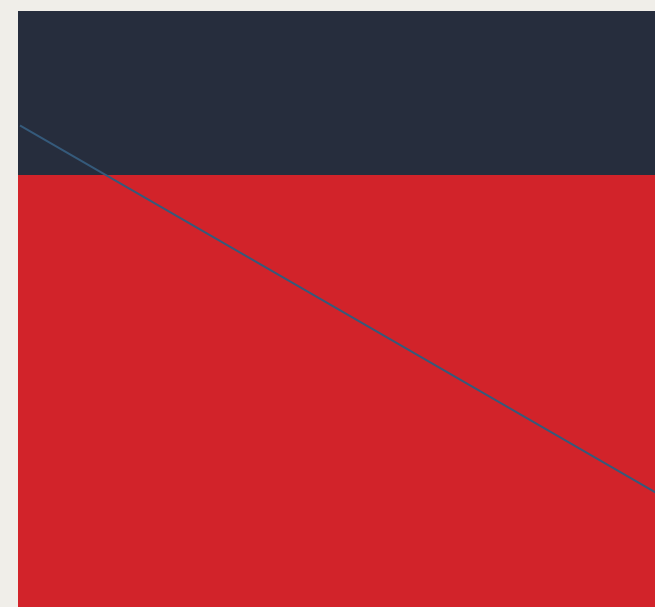
DO
Use contrasting colours for
text and background



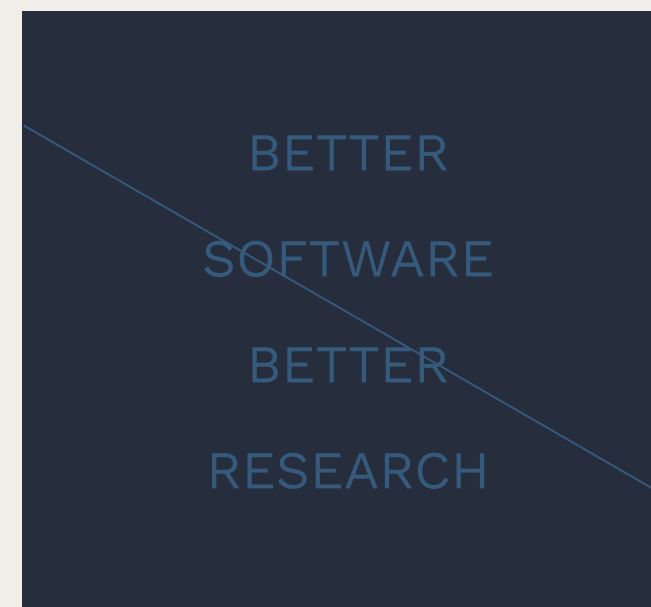
DO
Use the dark navy and
paper white for the
background



DON'T
Use any other colours



DON'T
Deviate from the specified
proportions



DON'T
Assign similar colours to
both text and background



DON'T
Use institute red and black
for the background

SECONDARY LOGOS



The secondary logo structure is a way to identify projects, programmes, and activities run by the Institute.

It combines the hexagonal RS mark, the wordmark Institute for Research Software on one line, and the name of the activity underneath.

Secondary logos should only be created for named, ongoing programmes and activities and not for individual pieces of content, one-off events, or general Institute communications.

New secondary logos should be requested through the communications team, who will produce them to maintain consistency across the set.

THE MOTTO WORDMARK

**BETTER SOFTWARE
BETTER RESEARCH**

**BETTER SOFTWARE
BETTER RESEARCH**

**BETTER
SOFTWARE
BETTER
RESEARCH**

**BETTER
SOFTWARE
BETTER
RESEARCH**

The motto wordmark is available in three layouts, so it can adapt to different space constraints across print, web, and presentation materials.

The extended one is a wider-set version for generous horizontal space, such as banners, website headers, or full-width signage.

The right-justified one should be used wherever the motto sits alongside other right-aligned content or wherever the surrounding layout reads right to left.

The left-justified should be used when the motto anchors the left-hand side of a layout.

TYPOGRAPHY

GEOLOGICA

Aa

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

0123456789

!@£\$%^&*()

Geologica is the font used for all titles and headings across documents, presentations and the website.

Heading text should be dark navy on light backgrounds and paper white or white on dark backgrounds.

WORK SANS

Aa

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

0123456789

!@£\$%^&*()

Work Sans is the font used for all body copy, across documents, presentations and the website.

Body text should be black or dark navy on light backgrounds and white on dark backgrounds.

IMAGE AND PHOTOGRAPHY



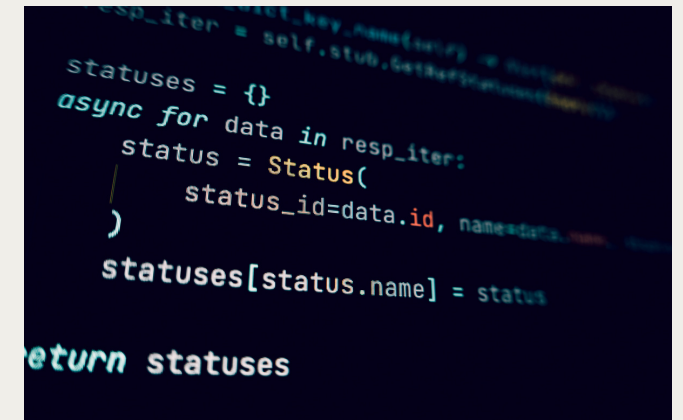
DO
Use real people in real research and working contexts



DO
Use candid, in-the-moment shots over posed photographs



DO
Use branded illustrations and graphs



DO
Use images of screens, code and data used within a working scene



DON'T
Use generic technology stock imagery (binary code, disembodied hands, etc.)



DON'T
Use corporate, staged boardroom or handshake photography



DON'T
Use illustrations that do not suit the branding



DON'T
Use heavy filters or effects that clash with the brand palette

ICONOGRAPHY

STYLE

Simple, geometric and linear, echoing the hexagonal construction of the logo mark.

COLOUR

Generally a single colour: Dark Navy or White, depending on background. Institute Red can be used sparingly to highlight one important icon.





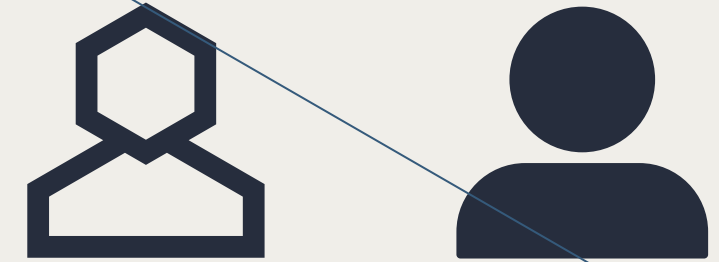
DO

Use icons to support navigation or summarise a concept and not as a decoration



DO

Keep a consistent grid and proportions across a set so icons feel like one family



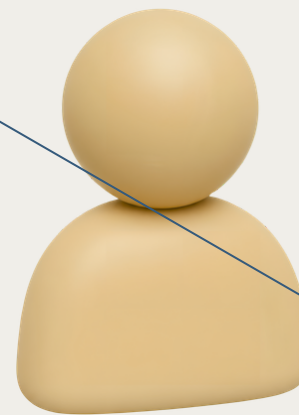
DON'T

Mix icons from different libraries or styles



DON'T

Use Emoji as a substitute for brand iconography



DON'T

Use 3D, gradient or heavily detailed illustrative icons



DON'T

Use overly literal or clip-art-style icons

VOICE AND TONE

PERSONALITY

The Institute holds a position of national responsibility: we write professionally but our tone is friendly and informal enough to feel approachable.

OUR VOICE IN PRACTICE

- Use “we” to speak as the Institute; address the reader as “you” where appropriate
- Prefer active voice and short, direct sentences over passive, dense academic phrasing
- Avoid jargon; briefly explain technical terms where needed
- Avoid hyperbole (“revolutionary,” “game-changing”)
- Lead with the outcome (what changed, before how it happened)
- Prefer precise numbers over vague claims of scale (exact participant counts, grant codes, funding, figures)
- Content is treated seriously: everything published is reviewed and edited to a quality standard

EDITORIAL STYLE

LANGUAGE AND SPELLING

- UK English throughout

NAMES AND TERMS

- Programme and initiative names are capitalised as proper nouns (e.g. Fellowship Programme, Research Software Maintenance Fund, Collaborations Workshop, Green DiSC)
- “Research Software Engineer” in full on first use, “RSE” thereafter

HEADINGS AND CAPITALISATION

- Sentence case for headings and subheadings, not Title Case or ALL CAPS
- Capitalise “Institute” when referring to the Institute for Research Software specifically
- Capitalise “Research Software Engineer” / “RSE”

HOW TO REFER TO US

OUR NAME

- When you refer to us for the first time use “Institute for Research Software”
- If audiences need to be reminded of the previous name use “Institute for Research Software, previously the Software Sustainability Institute (SSI)”
- When you refer to us afterwards use “the Institute”
- When you refer to our history use “The Institute for Research Software, previously the Software Sustainability Institute (SSI), was established in 2010”
- When you need a shortened form in a space-constrained format use “Inst. for Research Software”
- Do not use IfRS, IFRS, IRS or another acronym
- When you need to describe us briefly use “The UK's leading centre of expertise for research software”

HOW TO ACKNOWLEDGE OUR WORK

- Where the Institute has contributed funding, expertise, training, convening or other support, please acknowledge the Institute for Research Software by name. For example: “Supported by the Institute for Research Software” / “Developed in collaboration with the Institute for Research Software”
- Where recognising our previous identity will help your audience, you may use “Institute for Research Software, previously the Software Sustainability Institute (SSI)”
- For formal citations of reports, software or other outputs, please use the citation provided with the individual output.

~100 WORDS DESCRIPTION

The Institute for Research Software strengthens research by advancing essential software and empowering the people behind it.

Established in 2010 as the Software Sustainability Institute, we are the UK’s leading centre of expertise for research software. We produce evidence, shape policy, improve software practice, develop skills and careers, build communities and support investment in research software. We connect the people who create and maintain software with institutions and funders that decide how it is recognised and supported. We believe research software should be open, well-maintained and properly recognised, and that the people behind it should receive the support and recognition their work deserves.

~200 WORDS DESCRIPTION

The Institute for Research Software strengthens research by advancing essential software and empowering the people behind it.

Established in 2010 as the Software Sustainability Institute, we are the UK's leading centre of expertise for research software. For more than 15 years, we have helped make research software more visible, better understood and more effectively supported.

Modern research depends on software to collect and analyse data, run simulations, manage evidence and enable discovery. Yet this software does not always receive the recognition, investment or care it needs. When it is poorly maintained or documented, research becomes harder to trust, reproduce and build upon.

We work across research, community, policy and practice. We produce evidence, shape policy, improve software practice, develop skills and careers, build communities and support investment in research software. We helped establish Research Software Engineering as a profession and continue to support its international community.

Our work connects the people who create and maintain software with universities, funders, government bodies, learned societies, national facilities and industry. We believe research software should be open, well-maintained and properly recognised, and that the people behind it should receive the support, recognition and career opportunities their work deserves.

Our purpose remains: Better Software, Better Research.

