

IETF

# Design Brief

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This brief outlines the design requirements and aspirations for the redevelopment of the IETF website.

## **Branding, Colour & Typography**

The IETF brand ideals are strong, representing participants that interact and collaborate with the organisation. The visual identity currently consists of the IETF logo. During the website design we will explore the use of colour, typeface, pattern and image to reinforce the collaborative nature of the IETF. Most importantly the design will be unobtrusive to the user. "How we capture the intent of the community is about the confidence of the text."

### *Logo*

The IETF logo will feature in a consistent place on all pages. To help reinforce the brand throughout the site, we will explore using elements from the logo (e.g. the rhombus shape) to further brand recognition, perhaps in a subtle pattern.

### *Colour*

The primary colour used on the existing IETF website is blue. Colour can play a role in distinguishing content types and helping to signify areas of interaction such as links, buttons and other calls to action. We will look to better incorporate colour throughout the website, using subtle shades and contrasts that are neutral and restrained; leaving room for blocks of colour that may signify key calls to action or important areas.

### *Typography*

Currently the IETF site uses Verdana and the user's default monospaced typeface. We will reference the RFC Editor work to establish updated fonts for the RFC publication series. This will include exploring the use of hosted web fonts to add more character and recognition. We will add a fallback font stack to make sure that the site will look its best even when the hosted fonts do not render. This will be a thoughtful and considered approach ensuring that these choices will be long lasting. Typography will play a major role in the redesign; line length, heading styles, texture and weight will be explored. Readability is key, and we will ensure that the content on the IETF site is well typeset and reads well.

### *Images and icons*

Images may be used in specific areas to reinforce community or IETF values. In the areas they are used they will not detract from the content on the page; they will make it better, for example <http://www.theguardian.com/uk>. Some pages, for instance the homepage, may use large header imagery to help demonstrate the IETF's work to new users, but this will not be a running theme on the site, the site will be typographically led.

Icons will be considered when they can add visual interest or debug some technical information but will not be used unless they are adding value for the user and their task.

### *Overarching aesthetic*

The new IETF website will be clean, clear and unobtrusive; less, but better – we will concentrate on the essential aspects. The design and architecture will guide the user around the space giving them the information they need and highlighting the content, not the visual aspect. The site will take a modern approach using great typography, subtle design choices, excellent architecture, white space and taking advantage of the whole browser to show the content at its best.

Simple devices to show content areas will be favoured over heavily designed elements. The site's aesthetic will draw inspiration from:

- <https://teamtreehouse.com/stories/ashok-bishnoi>
- <https://www.gov.uk/>

Deiter Rams wrote about ten principles for good design, his thoughts will be valuable in the design of the new IETF website; especially, 'good design is unobtrusive and good design is useful.' <https://www.vitsoe.com/gb/about/good-design>

## **Standards**

Some of the IETF's audience will access the site on a low bandwidth connection. To protect the user experience across all devices and bandwidths, the design will utilise CSS styling and pattern based areas, instead of large photography-led approaches.

To accommodate users who do not have Javascript enabled, the site will utilise CSS as much as possible. When Javascript is being used a thoughtful fallback will be put in place. We will limit the use of Javascript as much as possible.

## **Interaction**

The new IETF website should feel web native but not gratuitous, dynamic interactions will only be used to further interaction – not to make the site feel trendy. Some dynamic functionality may be explored but only if it adds real value to the site.

We will create a narrative order to page content through clear page hierarchy and smart layouts that encourage users to scroll down the page.

Carousels and accordion-style devices will only be used where they deliver coherent value, not as an editorial crutch.

The Datatracker has a big role to play in the work the IETF does and there is potential to use some of its content in the IETF website. For example this could be a simple tooltip that highlights the content in a particular RFC without the need for the user to leave the page they are reading. This and other ideas will be considered.

## Navigation

Navigation will be key to the site's success. We will explore the use of static navigation that follows the user down the page and ensures key links are always available. We will also explore focusing the primary navigation on new users and developing a secondary, potentially hidden navigation, for experienced users. This should not hinder the experienced user but will provide easy access to relevant information for the new user, potentially moving some new users to experienced users. D&AD use a similar approach on their website, <https://www.dandad.org/>.

We will explore ideas for sub page navigation, this could take the form of a right hand side navigation or secondary pages being shown under the primary nav. Another idea that will be explored will be the use of side panel navigation like, <http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/>.

## Responsive layout

The site will use a responsive layout to ensure it works well across the wide range of hardware in use across all audience types. To ensure that less capable browsers and older mobile devices get a good experience an established core will be created using a 'content first' design approach.

## Design concept

As part of the design process we will deliver an initial design concept in the form of an HTML prototype, comprising three fully worked up pages using sample content that demonstrate a cross-section through the website. The aim is to agree a design direction that can be extrapolated to further pages/features as the project continues.

Potential initial templates

- Index: <http://ietf.org/wg/chairs-page.html> or <http://www.ietf.org/meeting/93/index.html>
- Standard page, requiring contextual navigation: <http://ietf.org/newcomers.html>
- Blog / Listing: <http://www.ietf.org/blog/>

Once the initial concept has been agreed, further templates for design will be outlined in the scoping document.

## Feedback and iteration

Once a clear design concept is agreed, it provides a strong foundation from which to design other page types, including those with a different style.

This approach will require collaboration and involvement on behalf of the stakeholders at the IETF and especially the audience panels that were established to gather initial

input on the website revamp. The design should be a responsive and evolving part of the site development. Frequent contact, and a nominated, empowered person(s) to represent the IETF to provide feedback and make decisions in short time scales are important.

The advantage of this approach is that the design doesn't have to be set in stone at an early stage, meaning less risk, more flexibility and a better website.

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## Photography Brief

This photography will be used across the newly designed IETF website. Most of the site will be typographically led but certain parts will need images, mainly for new users so they get an idea of the organisation without having to dig too deeply. For instance the homepage could be a good place for imagery. The key call to action here would be to get new users to read more about the IETF and potentially sign up to a working group.

Photography use will also be explored on events listings, to give all users a flavour of what to expect at a meeting. We want this photography to showcase the diversity of the participants and the activity and buzz that happens at these events. The key calls to action will aim to drive more people to these meetings, so the photography should not look staged, or like stock photography, it should be natural.

Images should be mainly in landscape as that will suit the dimensions of most monitors, but some portrait images will be useful as well. Most images should be of people participating in the events.

Some dead space in some of the photography would be useful so we can put type over the images, ideally dead space on the left or middle of the image. These could be action shots with no real focus but giving a feeling of buzz or activity around the IETF, although ideally they will be of participants.

At the moment we are leaning towards blues and shades of grey for the main colour scheme in the site (but this could change) so images that will work with this colour scheme would be useful. As mentioned this could change so don't let it hinder other colours in the photography.