





Arts Midwest supports, informs, and celebrates Midwestern creativity—building community and opportunity across our region and beyond.

Welcome to the Brand Guidelines for Arts Midwest. This document will help you understand how Arts Midwest shows up in the world, so that you can articulate our unique personality through design and language.

In the following pages, you'll find the foundational elements—both visual and verbal—of Arts Midwest's brand identity. You'll also find guidance on how to put each component into action, alongside examples that illustrate how the brand comes together. To ensure that our communications are clear and consistent, use these guidelines to shape the way you present Arts Midwest in written, spoken, and visual formats.

VISUAL ELEMENTS





Our brand builds trust in our communities by demonstrating consistency, evoking the feelings we want our audiences to experience, and communicating our values to everyone who interacts with us.

Using words and visuals, our brand helps people immediately understand Arts Midwest's reason for being: we're here to build unprecedented opportunity in the Midwest by advancing creativity. And we do it with empathy, verve, and boundless optimism.



MISSION

To build unprecedented opportunity across the Midwest by advancing creativity.

VISION

Midwestern creativity powers thriving, entrepreneurial, and welcoming communities.

PHOTO BY HANNAH JO ANDERSON, COURTESY OF AMERICAN PLAYERS THEATRE

VALUES

EQUITY

We commit to actionable, measurable, and reportable ways to respect, honor, and embrace all of humanity.

INTEGRITY

We approach our partners and each other with a spirit of cooperation, trust, humility, and accountability.

LEARNING

We value learning, growing, and risk-taking. We commit to having brave conversations with our partners and each other.

FOCUS AREAS

SUPPORT

We invest in efforts that use creativity to connect people, ideas, and solutions.

INFORM

We share data and ideas to support Midwestern communities in being more visible, sustainable, and interconnected.

CELEBRATE

We honor the people, places, and creative organizations that compose the Midwest.

CULTURE

ADAPT, THRIVE, MODEL

We use best practices, bold ideas, and our values to strengthen our service to the Midwest.



There are a number of instances when you will need a bio for Arts Midwest. These could include press releases, social media. websites or print material. Here and on the following page, you will find three options for Arts Midwest's bio; you can choose the most appropriate length for the allotted space. They can also be adapted for specific situations or audiences if needed. If you have any questions about how to use the bios, please contact:

communications@ artsmidwest.org

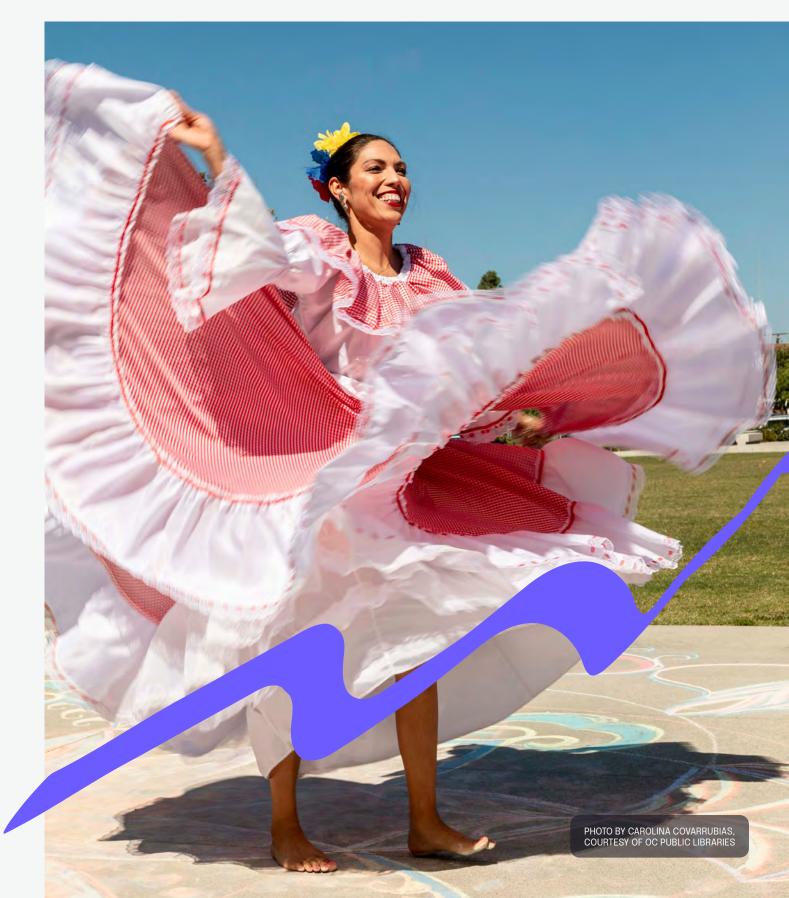
MICRO BIO

Arts Midwest supports, informs, and celebrates Midwestern creativity—building community and opportunity across our region and beyond.

SHORT BIO

Arts Midwest amplifies the power of our region's creativity. We support, inform, and celebrate arts organizations and creative communities in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin, the Native Nations that share this geography, and beyond. From the neighborhood block party to the national stage, we use our platform to champion the authentic stories of our people. As one of six nonprofit United States Regional Arts Organizations, we work to strengthen local arts and culture efforts in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts, state agencies, private funders, and many others. We build connections that make our beloved places bolder, more welcoming, and seen for the beacons of brilliance that they are.

We're here to build unprecedented opportunity in the Midwest by advancing creativity. To support the artists and organizations that define and redefine this place. To share ideas that make Midwesterners more visible and connected. To raise up the stories that challenge assumptions. And to build flourishing communities that are powered by opportunity, authenticity, and a deep sense of belonging. That's our Midwest: a place of limitless cool, wide-ranging quirk, expansive inclusivity, and extraordinary possibility.







LONG BIO

In the Midwest, we defy convention—and easy definition. We shine in the gleam of our urban landscapes; we're rooted in the multiplicities of our soil. We're proudly "of a place," and that place holds space for all of us. That's because Midwestern creativity is limitless. It's impossible to pin down. It's dynamic. It brings crowds to their feet. It provokes jaw-dropping wonder. It builds movements. And it has the potential to inspire and unite humanity.

Arts Midwest amplifies the power of our region's creativity. We support, inform, and celebrate arts organizations and creative communities in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin, the Native Nations that share this geography, and beyond. From the neighborhood block party to the national stage, we use our platform to champion the authentic stories of our people. As one of six nonprofit United States Regional Arts Organizations, we work to strengthen local arts and culture efforts in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts, state agencies, private funders, and many others. We nourish the creative roots of the Midwest, confident that our region will continue to sow the seeds that inspire the world.

Arts Midwest's work is shaped by our guiding values: equity, integrity, and learning. We believe that creativity lives in everyone. Therefore, we do everything we can to help people show up fully, speak their truth, and grow together. We embrace the full spectrum of humanity. We approach each other with trust and humility. We have brave conversations and learn from new perspectives. Living these values helps us build connections that make our beloved places bolder, more welcoming, and seen for the beacons of brilliance that they are.

We're here to build unprecedented opportunity in the Midwest by advancing creativity. To support the artists and organizations that define and redefine this place. To share ideas that make Midwesterners more visible and connected. To raise up the stories that challenge assumptions. And to build flourishing communities that are powered by opportunity, authenticity, and a deep sense of belonging. That's our Midwest: a place of limitless cool, wide-ranging quirk, expansive inclusivity, and extraordinary possibility.







Talking About Arts Midwest

Your Micro, Short, and Long Bios give you language for talking about Arts Midwest in more formal or written formats. The following Talking Points are meant to help explain what we do in more casual communications-like a spoken conversation, for example. These words are chosen carefully, and they're meant to be combined with your own personal perspectives and stories as you share Arts Midwest and its work with others.

WHY?

- We believe that creativity is a critical part of community prosperity.
- We believe that everyone is creative, and that art lives in everyday experiences.
- We believe that the Midwest is a special place. The creativity that grows here has the power to inspire and unite people.

WHAT?

Our work amplifies Midwest creativity in three main ways:

- 1. We support efforts that connect people, ideas, and solutions through creativity. That includes our grantmaking initiatives and our community programming.
- 2. We keep Midwestern communities informed, sharing data and ideas that help them become more visible, sustainable, and interconnected. This includes initiatives like the Ideas Hub, and our research and equity work.
- 3. We celebrate the authentic stories and endless creative output of this region. We're a megaphone for the arts here, and that shows up in our story commissioning and partnerships with media outlets across the Midwest.

HOW?

- We're enthusiastic champions for Midwestern creativity.
- We're a platform for sharing authentic stories, new ideas, and groundbreaking creative work.
- We're one of six nonprofit United States Regional Arts Organizations, which means that we work to strengthen local arts and culture efforts in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts, state agencies, private funders, and many others.
- We're always guided by our core values: equity, integrity, and learning.

WHERE?

 We support arts organizations and creative communities in nine Midwestern states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin, and the Native Nations that share this geography. We make sure that this region's creative power is amplified throughout the rest of the country, too.





Guiding Principles

Arts Midwest's brand is rooted in four guiding principles that shape our communications approach. When you're speaking or writing on behalf of Arts Midwest in any capacity, keep these foundational ideas in mind.

Celebrating Community





Arts Midwest aspires to be the trusted source for arts and creativity in the region. To that end, our work isn't about us—it's about providing a platform for our communities and what they're creating. That's why we consistently shine the spotlight on those around us.

Authentic Stories



Our storytelling is inspired by community experiences, and informed by context. We're hopeful and want to inspire joy-but we're honest, too. We tap into authentic feelings and energy that accurately reflect our region. Because we've got soul, and we value being real.

Midwest Proud



We're rooted in the people and places we serve. We value the sacredness of where we come from. We've got vastness of land that humbles us, as well as a sense of humor, grit, and perseverance derived from a lifetime of enduring the elements. We are Chicago, Sioux Falls, and everything in between—and we're

proud to represent all of it.

Bring Out the Good



Arts Midwest believes that creativity has the power to inspire and unite humanity. Bringing people together is tough when times are divisive, but we can always act in a way that aligns with our mission. This means that we hold space for conversation and lead by example.



Writing Dos and Don'ts

As we communicate, we want to ensure that we capture the elements that we emphasized in our Guiding Principles—like trust, authenticity, community focus, and Midwest pride. The following tips help us make sure that our writing reflects those qualities.

DO:

- Put our audience first by focusing on what they need to know and understand.
- Use accessible language. Our goal is straightforward and inspiring communication, so we lean towards words that everyday people use, not an overabundance of \$10 adjectives.
- Support what you say. Build credibility and trust by incorporating authentic stories, helpful facts, and relevant statistics.
- Embrace the principle of "less is more." Stamp out redundancies and focus on what's most important.

 When you avoid crowding everything into a piece of writing, you actually end up communicating more.

DON'T:

• Be overly formal or proper. Speak in an inclusive, real-world way. We never want to come across as too rigid or corporate.





Writing Style Samples

The language in our Bios and Talking Points, as well as the ideas in our Guiding Principles and the direction in our Writing Dos and Don'ts, are meant to inform all of our communications. Here are some examples of how our verbal branding could come to life.

Our Micro Bio is meant to act as a written elevator pitch to explain what we do in a flash. We can also use it in formats that require small character counts, like an Instagram bio:

Arts Midwest supports, informs, and celebrates Midwestern creativity—building community and opportunity across our region and beyond.

You can use words and phrases from our Short or Long Bio to inform how you talk about our community members on social media or elsewhere:

Lacrima is here to challenge assumptions about smalltown sensibilities. See (and hear) how this breakout quartet combines righteous rage and "Midwest nice" into a sound that's uniquely theirs.

of our programs:

Programs like our Ideas Hub share data and insights that keep Midwestern creative efforts visible, sustainable, and interconnected.







OUR BRAND

OUR LOGO

VISUAL ELEMENTS

A small ripple on the left, a growing shift in the middle, a seismic movement on the right: we're witnessing the cumulative effect of Midwest creativity, and the results are off the charts. Arts Midwest's logo is, first and foremost, a graphic distillation of our tagline—"Amplifying Midwestern Creativity."

This shape nods to other visual associations, too: a banner in the wind, a stylized bolt of lightning, a confident brushstroke, a seemingly flat shape imbued with energy. Embedded in this dynamism, we can also see an M and a W. In other words, this logo is unmistakably ours.



OUR LOGO

Primary Logo

Ta-da! Here's the Arts Midwest Primary Logo (Logo_AM_Primary). As the name suggests, our primary logo should be used most often. It's the first option you should consider for all branded materials.

Our Primary Logo is intentionally presented in black or white. Our unique color palette provides plenty of punch, especially when combined with our high-impact photography; our logo is meant to interact freely with those colorful elements, which means that it has to hold its own visually! Black and white options provide consistency for our brand, so people always know what to look for no matter the backdrop; it's also good for legibility.

Logo_AM_Primary





Secondary Logos

Our secondary logos are designed to be used in certain instances in place of the Primary Logo.

Our Horizontal Logo (Logo_AM_Horizontal) should be used when the vertical height of an area makes our Primary Logo harder to read. For example, we use the Horizontal Logo on our website navigation bar.

The Stacked Logo (Logo_AM_Stacked) is a useful option when our logo is featured beside other logos that have a taller height. It's also a great choice when you particularly want the accent mark to stand out.

Logo_AM_ Horizontal



Logo_AM_Stacked





Logo Lock-Ups

When using the Arts Midwest logo with another logo, use the orientation that supports an equal visual representation between the two. When locking up the Arts Midwest logo with the National Endowment for the Arts logo, for example, use the Primary Logo (Logo_AM_Primary), since it's the best match for size and shape. Ensure that you apply the appropriate clear space (you can read more about clear space on page 19 of this document), and include a hairline in the middle to create distinction between the two logos.

Lock-up with NEA Logo



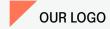




LOGO







Logo Colors

The Arts Midwest logo is available in black or white.

Black



If you're placing the logo on a light brand color in Arts Midwestbranded materials, use the Black logo. White

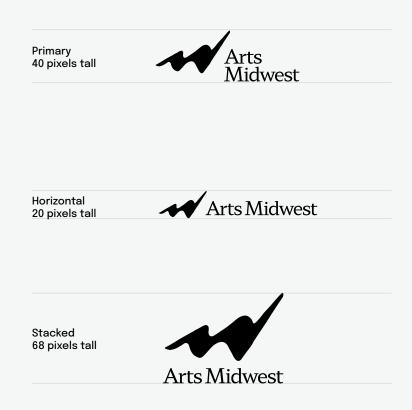


If you're placing the logo on a dark brand color in Arts Midwest-branded materials, always use the White logo.









Clear Space

We use clear space to maintain unobstructed breathing room around the logo so that it stands out and is always clearly legible. The minimum amount of clear space our logo requires is the same as the height of the "M" in "Arts Midwest." When using the logo with other graphic elements, keep at least this much space clear around all sides of the it.

Minimum Size

To ensure that the logo is always legible, it should never appear smaller than the minimum size. See above for a chart of the minimum size requirements for each version of the Arts Midwest logo. For digital applications, the primary logo should be at least 40 pixels tall (from the tip of the accent graphic to the base of the letters in Midwest). For print applications, the primary logo should be at least 0.4 inches tall.



Do not rotate



Do not stretch the logo vertically or horizontally.



Do not change the font in the logo.



Do not change the colors of the logo.



Do not place the logo on a busy area

Logo Incorrect Use

Always preserve the integrity of our logo and make sure that it's easy to distinguish from other graphic elements. Avoid the mistakes listed above. For examples of proper logo usage, refer to the Sample Applications section.





OUR BRAND

Surrounding the logo itself, our brand's visual system brings in key elements of the people and places that Arts Midwest supports. The graphic devices for photography and type are bold, playful, and always trending upward—creating a consistent emotional language that complements the authentic stories of the images themselves. Our brand colors, drawn from Midwestern flora, provide a vibrant palette that highlights our community's creativity.



VISUAL ELEMENTS Colors



VISUAL ELEMENTS Colors

Color Palette

Arts Midwest's unique primary color palette is made up of three sets of vibrant colors, inspired by Midwestern wildflowers as they begin to blossom in the springtime. That sense of anticipation for the beauty and flourishing ahead is directly connected to the creative process: new ideas come to life like the seeds that turn into fields of color. Our palette conveys a sense of energy, excitement, and potential. Alongside our set of brighter colors, deep navy blues provide useful contrast.

Color Usage

For digital applications, use the RGB or HEX color codes. For print applications, use Pantone or CMYK color codes. When creating print materials, professional printing with Pantone values will give you the best color intensity. If you need to print with CMYK values, expect that our colors may not look as vibrant on the page as they do on a screen.

Green C-32 M-0 Y-100 K-0 Pantone 2297	R-187 G-224 B-0 Hex #bbe000	Light Green C-16 M-0 Y-86 K-0 Pantone 379	R-225 G-255 B- Hex #e1ff4a	-74
Purple C-70 M-67 Y-0 K-0 Pantone 2366	R-108 G-92 B-255 Hex #6c5cff	Light Purple C-40 M-32 Y-0 K-0 Pantone 2113	R-148 G-164 B-255 Hex #94a4ff	
Coral C-0 M-68 Y-67 K-0 Pantone 170	R-255 G-117 B-85 Hex #ff7555	Light Coral C-0 M-40 Y-33 K-0 Pantone 169	R-255 G-172 B-153 Hex #ffac99	
Dark Sky	C-82 M-76 Y-56 K-72 Pantone 4146 R-24 G-24 B-37 Hex #181825	Gray C-0 M-0 Y-0 K-5 R-244 G-247 B-245 HEX# f4f7f5	White	C-0 M-0 Y-0 K-0 R-255 G-255 B-255 HEX# ffffff
Light Sky	C-80 M-75 Y-46 K-43 Pantone 5275 R-52 G-52 B-73 Hex #343449		Black	C-0 M-0 Y-0 K-100 R-0 G-0 B-0 HEX# 000000

Typography

Fonts

The typefaces (fonts) at the core of our identity are Epilogue and Newsreader. Epilogue is an approachable, confident sans serif font family that features a variety of weights; its blend of rounded forms and unique angularity distinguish it from common and overused sans-style typefaces (like Helvetica). Newsreader provides a good contrast: its design is rooted in craft, and its serif adds some artsy flair. Together, they provide a nice balance to the overall brand. To ensure consistency across branded materials, we strongly recommend using these brand fonts. However, for rare instances when Epilogue and Newsreader are unavailable, the following widely available system fonts can be used as alternatives for internal documents: Arial and Times New Roman.

Epilogue

Regular

ABCDEFGHIJKL
MNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmn
opqrstuvwxyz
0123456789

/ Extra Light/ Light/ Regular/ Medium/ Semi Bold

To download Epilogue directly from Google Fonts, click here.

Newsreader

Light

ABCDEFGHIJKL
MNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmn
opqrstuvwxyz
0123456789

/ Light
/ Medium
/ Bold
/ Italic

To download Newsreader directly from Google Fonts, click here.



Typography

Web Use

For website use, follow the font guidance to the right. The H1 title is the most important section. H2 and H3 are used to organize sub-sections. You should only use all caps when you need another layer of hierarchy—for instance, to differentiate two levels of navigation on the website.

Technical Specifications

The entire font families for Epilogue and Newsreader are available for download from Google Fonts.

Tips to ensure that brand fonts are being used correctly:

Step 1: Close applications where you will be using the fonts, such as Microsoft Office or Adobe Illustrator.

Step 2: Download the select Google Fonts.

Step 3: Install fonts on your computer.

Step 4: Create/open a document and make sure the fonts are displaying correctly.

Always export PowerPoint presentations in PDF format to ensure that fonts are displayed correctly. H1 / Headlines

Midwestern creativity is limitless.

Epilogue Regular Sentence Case

Sub-Headlines

About Us

H3 / In-Text Headlines Mission

Body Copy

We're here to build unprecedented opportunity in the Midwest by advancing creativity. To support the artists and organizations that define and redefine this place. To share ideas that make Midwesterners more visible and connected. To raise up the stories that challenge assumptions. And to build flourishing communities that are powered by opportunity, authenticity, and a deep sense of belonging. That's our Midwest: a place of limitless cool, wide-ranging quirk, expansive inclusivity, and extraordinary possibility.

Epilogue Light

Epilogue Semi Bold

Newsreader Light

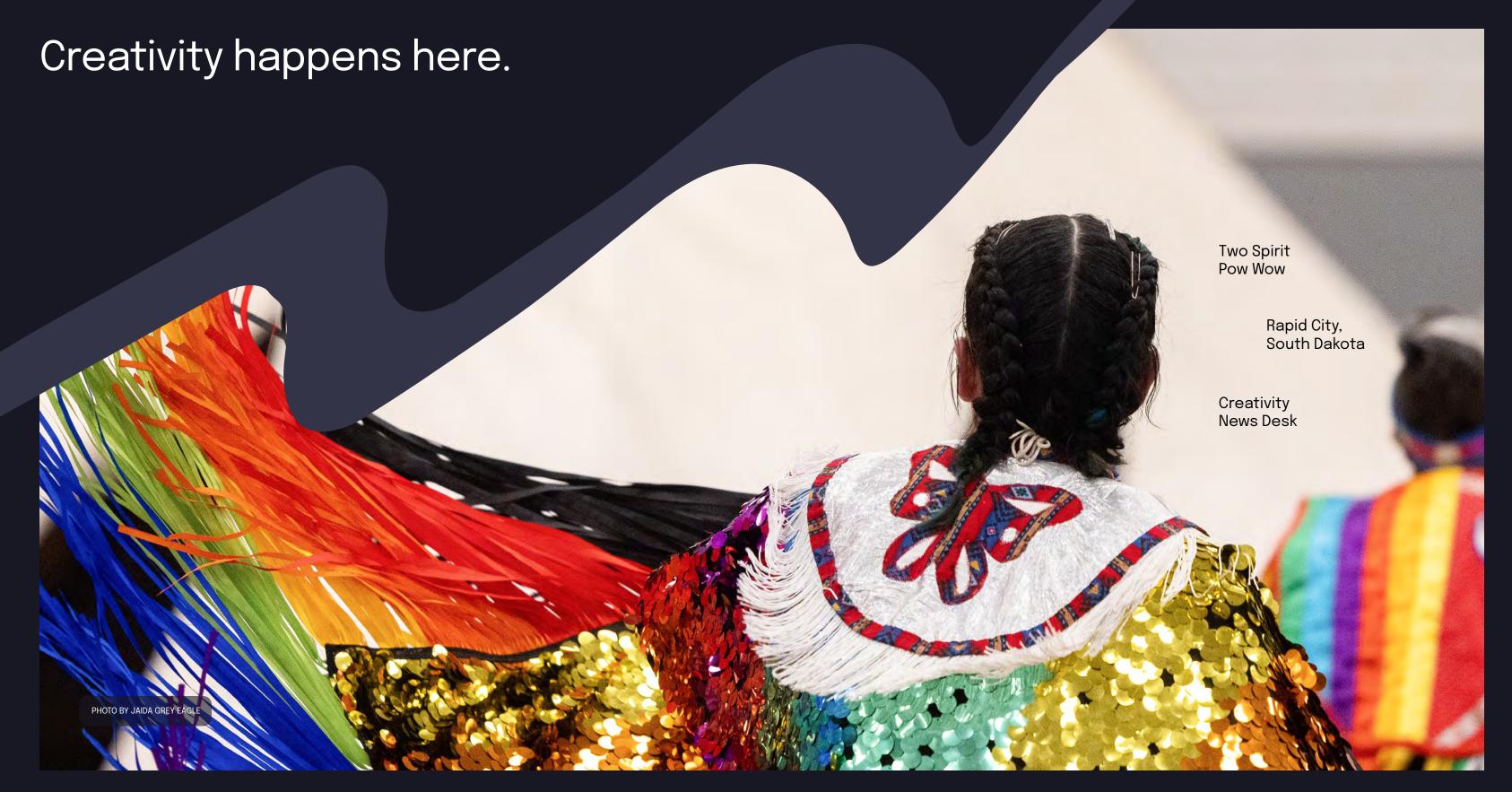
Buttons / Call-to-Action About Arts Midwest

Taxonomy

Epilogue Light

All Caps Font **NAVIGATION ITEMS**

Arts Midwest



The Arts Midwest Accent (Accent_AM) is inspired by our logo. It gives an overall image composition extra movement, dimension, and expression. If you're looking for a graphic to use in compositions, use a version of The Accent—not the symbol from the logo.

The Accent is best used across full images, in backgrounds, and between two related photographs. It can help different visuals tell a wider story. There are two versions of the accent graphic. In each, the line has a different weight and form: one is thicker and bolder, the other, wider and thinner. Having both options available gives our communications materials a dynamic, wideranging feel. There's no overall prescription for choosing one over the other—play around a bit and figure out what feels right for your specific project! You should feel free to experiment with both. See the following page for examples.

Inspiration









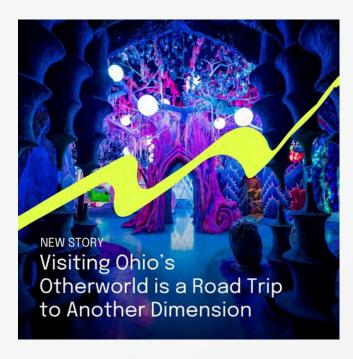
VISUAL ELEMENTS The Accent in Use

The Accent works best at large scales, in color, and interacting with imagery. Also can be used as a texture background graphic. For more informal uses such as swag items, you can use all three accents in a playful arrangement (see banner application).

Example 1Image masked in the upper shape with The Accent placed on top.



Example 2
Full bleed image or image placed on color background use The Accent to place over the image.





Example 3

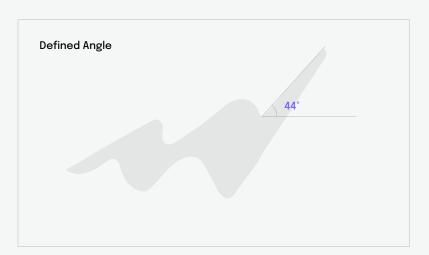
The Accent can be used on background colours.

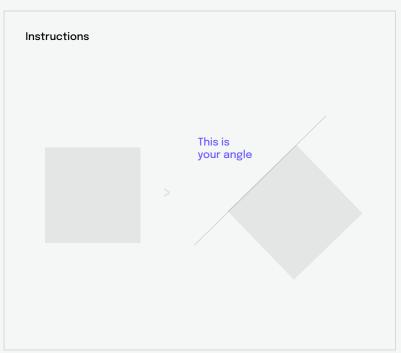




VISUAL ELEMENTS The Amp Angle

The Amp Angle (AmpAngle_AM) is another simple graphic device that complements the symbol from our logo. We use it in bold ways to mask images or divide colors. We can also use in subtle ways as a corner edge or hover state for a heading. See examples below.



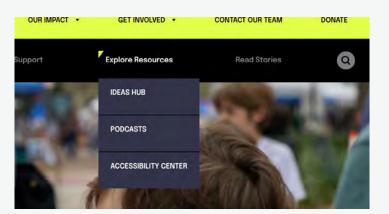


Example 1



Example 2





Example 3









VISUAL ELEMENTS Photography

Photography is an incredibly powerful tool for marketing, communication, and storytelling. It captures the authentic expression happening in the Midwest—the faces and places that make up our community. Our photos are a celebration of people and the art they create; we also use photography to demonstrate how audiences connect to art, and to each other, via expressions of enthusiasm and engagement. Arts Midwest's imagery invites viewers to discover and explore the depth and breadth of Midwestern creative brilliance. With very few exceptions, the photos that we use are original, sourced from our events, and/or shared by members of our community.

If stock photography is necessary, be very selective in the images you use. You'll need to abide by the following attributes that help stock images speak to viewers:

- *Appropriate:* location-based photos should showcase places within our service region.
- *Diverse:* photos of people should feature a wide variety of race, gender, age, and physical ability.
- Ambiguous: if you must use stock photography, avoid using images in which a model is the main subject. It's okay for a stock photo to include people in general—as part of a larger scene, for example. But whenever we're focusing on a person's identity in a photo, that person should be part of our Arts Midwest community. Showcasing our people is an important part of building trust and maintaining authenticity.



COURTESY OF BALLET CO.LABORATORY



















VISUAL ELEMENTS Caption Text

To add context to our high-impact photography, use the photo caption to call out three key elements of the moment whenever you can: <code>artist(s)</code> or <code>event</code>, <code>location</code>, and <code>art form</code>. Our dynamic font treatment (in other words, a special kind of caption text) is intended to create movement in the composition as we communicate important information. The text alignment should be playful; the words should feel grouped, but still free-form.

To use the dynamic font treatment to its fullest potential, create three text boxes that can frame the image in an interesting way—you can imagine it dancing around the image! The type should always be black or white. It should also be fully legible, so it's important to place it on an area on the image that isn't visually distracting.





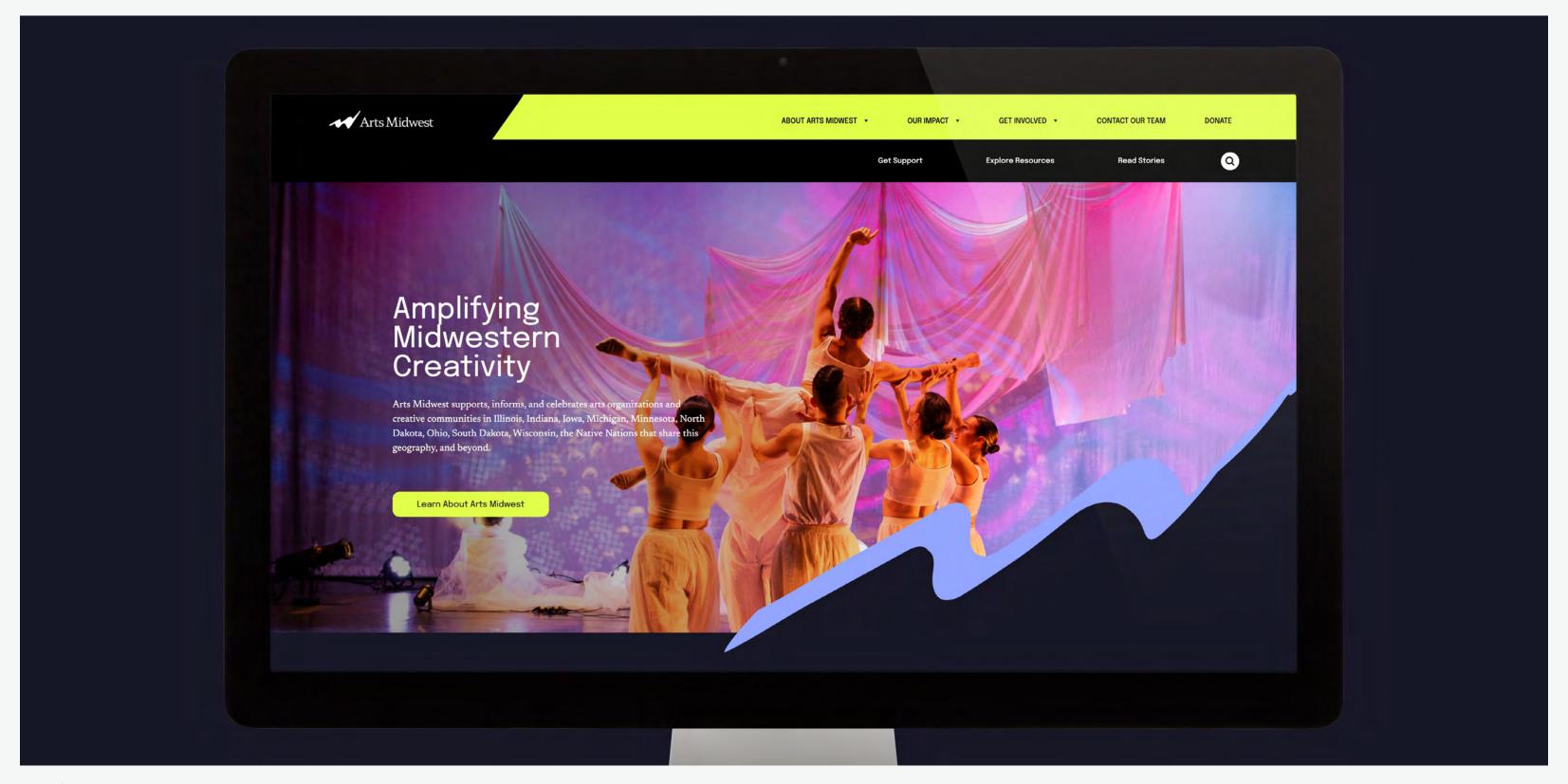


*The following pages capture real-life examples of brand applications.

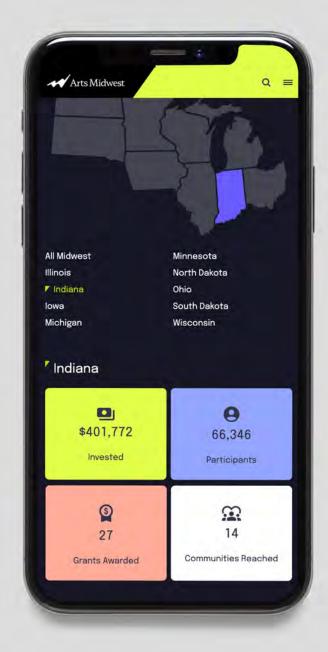


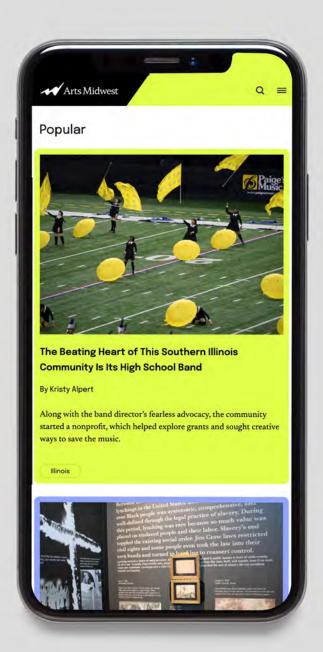
SAMPLE APPLICATIONS Website

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SAMPLE APPLICATIONS Illustration Style

























▼ Creative Midwest Media Cohort About The Program

 $The \ Creative \ Midwest \ Media \ Cohort \ program \ supports \ organizations \ in \ producing \ media \ projects \ that \ cover \ stories \ of \ Midwestern$ creativity in the nine-state region of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin, or the 42 Native Nations that share this geography. The inaugural participants each received a \$15,000 grant and are participating in

During the Creative Midwest Media Cohort gathering, representatives from cohort organizations will convene in Minneapolis, Minnesota. This in-person experience seeks to build connections among diverse media-makers and story-sharers in the Midwest and encourage learning and knowledge-sharing.

Locations



Arts Midwest Lakeside Center, 3033 Excelsior Boulevard

We'll be meeting in two spaces in Lakeside Center. All of the panels and cohort discussions will take place in the Conference the Media Happy Hour on Thursday will take place in the Arts first glance—look for the door with a red light! Midwest office, located on the third floor in suite #380.



Volstead's Emporium 711 W Lake Street

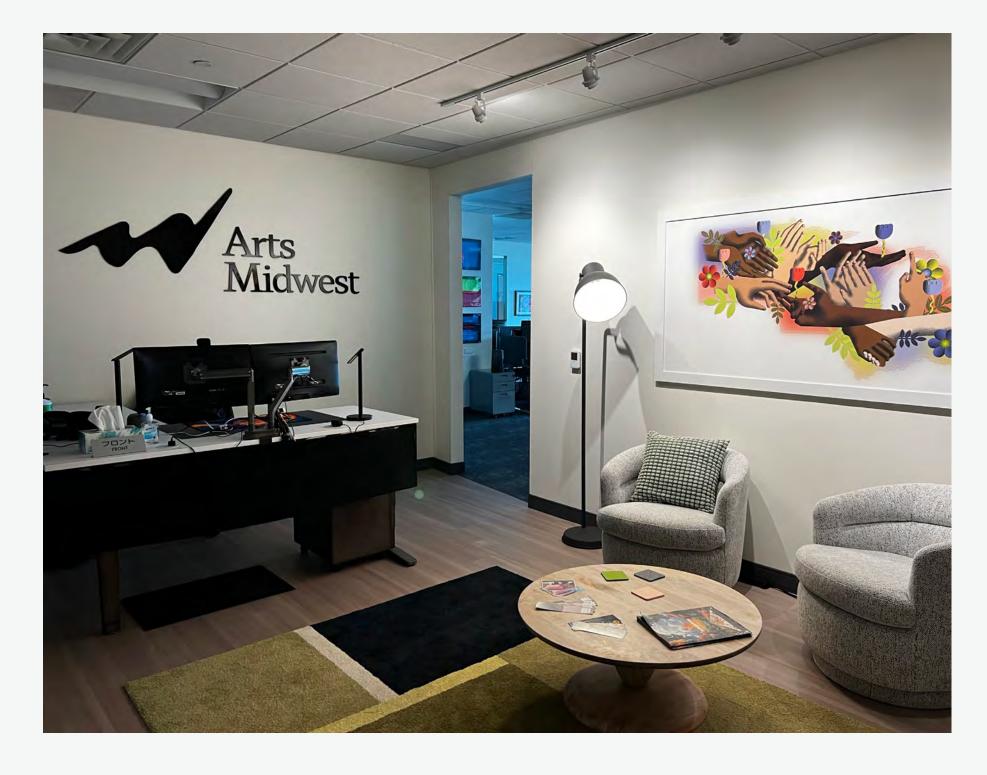
Dinner on Wednesday will take place at Volstead's Emporium, a "speakeasy" themed restaurant that is a 5-minute walk from Room on the ground floor, just past the elevators. Breakfast and the Moxy Uptown hotel. Volstead's can be a bit hard to spot at

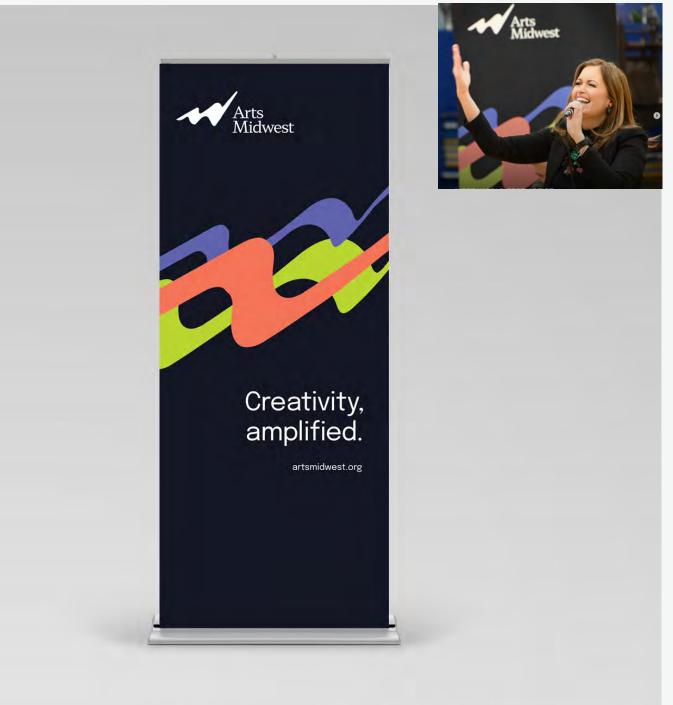


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SAMPLE APPLICATIONS Office Signage & Banner





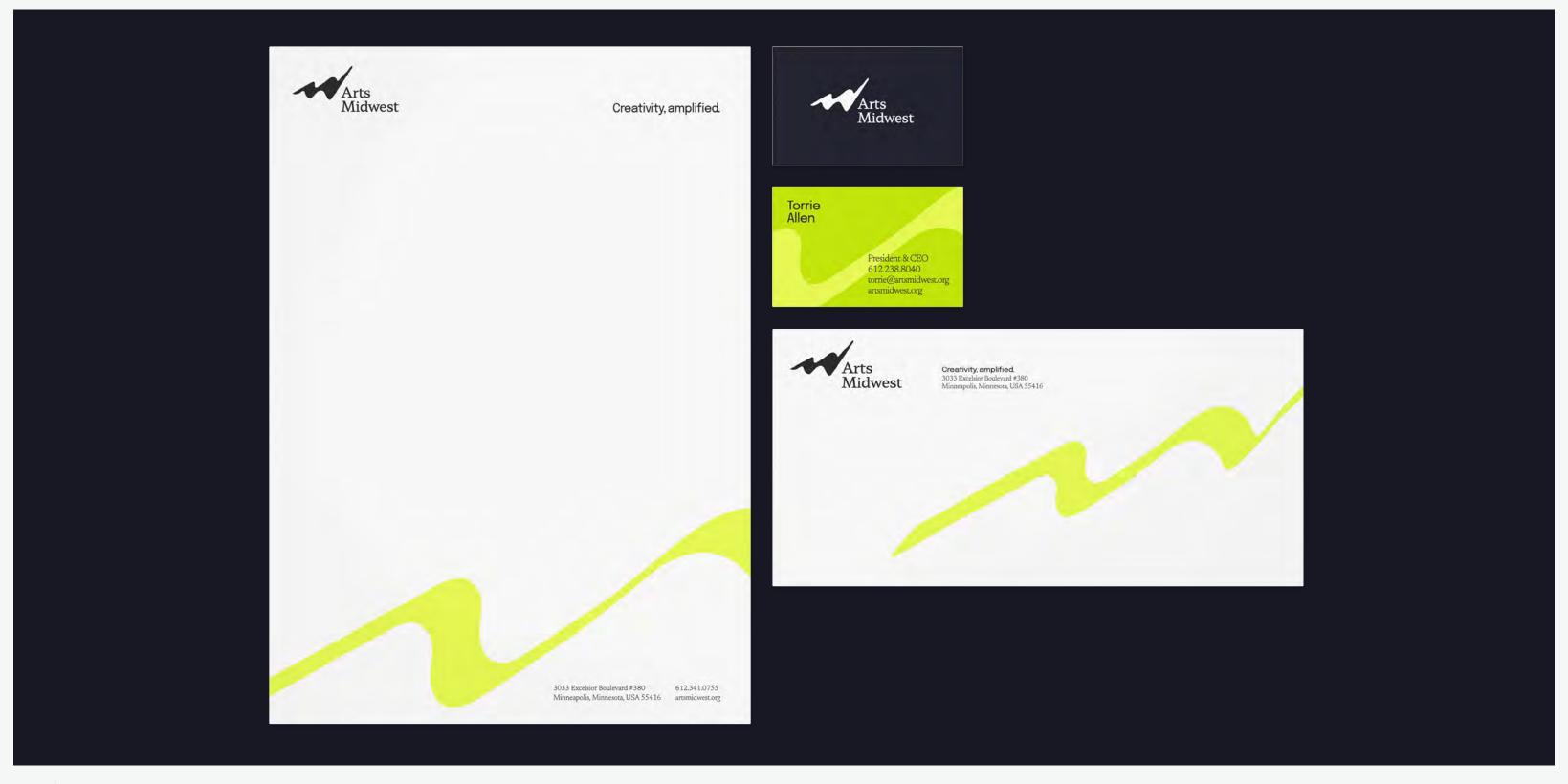


SAMPLE APPLICATIONS Swag & Speaker





SAMPLE APPLICATIONS Stationery







Brand Guidelines

DESIGNED BY BRITEWEB