



# Branding & design in Applaud

How to deliver a branded experience for your workforce

# ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

The primary aim of this document is to help Applaud customers and partners to leverage the branding and design capabilities of Applaud in order to deliver the best workforce experience solution for their employees.

A grayscale photograph of a hand holding a pen over a notepad. The text 'SKILLS REQUIRED' is overlaid in white, bold, uppercase letters. The background is dark and slightly blurred, showing a desk and a chair.

# SKILLS REQUIRED

**applaud**

# SKILL - GRAPHIC DESIGN

**Applaud has a number of features that can help you to deliver fully branded solutions. Paying attention to how your brand is utilised within Applaud will ensure the best experience for your employees.**

This work covers many aspects including:

- colours
- logos
- images
- fonts
- tone of language

Creating perfectly branded assets is an important piece of work in order to deliver a successful project - so you'll need somebody on the project team with extensive graphic design experience.

Adobe Creative Suite skills (Photoshop, Illustrator, XD) are considered must-have in order to deliver to the full capability of what Applaud can do.





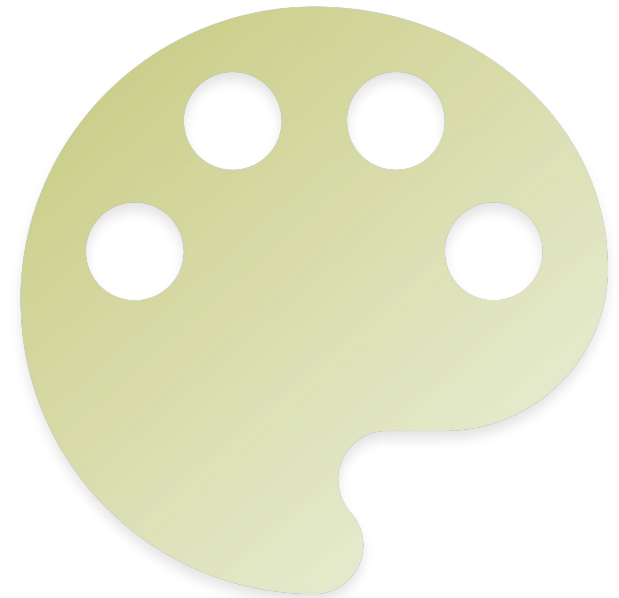
# SKILL - UI DESIGN

**We have a wonderful array of UI components available within the product, but you need to understand which features to use when.**

Implementation teams need to be supported by a UI designer, as they will need the ability to confidently use Adobe Experience Designer (XD) to craft branded assets that match the client branding whilst working within the Applaud design system.

The UI designer will also be adept at knowing user-expectations in terms of placement and colour of buttons, when to use help text, which features of a list are best display of the model data and much more.

The Applaud team are on hand to offer help and guidance to customers who are working with UI designers.



# SKILL - USER EXPERIENCE (UX)

**Before you start building anything within the product, you will usually need to have completed wireframes of the solution - this work is best completed by somebody with UX experience.**

Depending on who is assigned to the team, they may not be a fully trained UX designer, but they will need to know the basics - such as appropriate use of language, when to use a radio button vs a dropdown list, which colours to use for certain types of button etc. They will certainly need to know their way around Balsamiq Cloud - the tool Applaud typically use for wireframing!

In most cases, we will already have an existing template for the required functionality - and there will almost always be a wireframe of this template that can be used to start with. If you are unsure, please reach out to the Applaud team - they'll be able to help you.



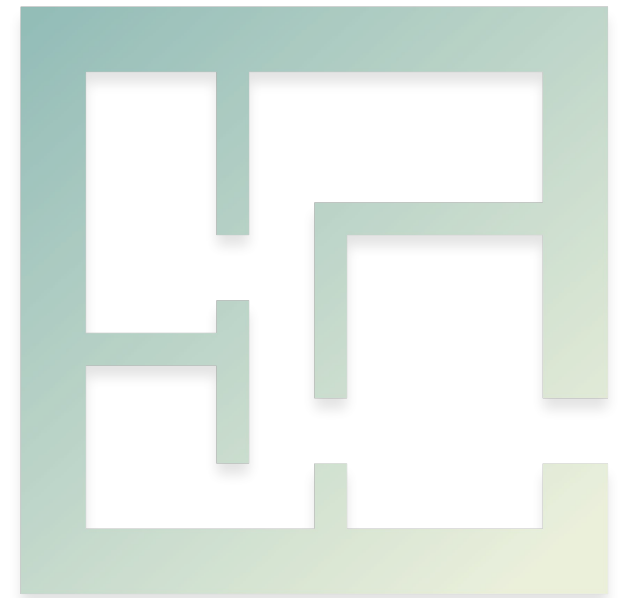
# SKILL - WIREFRAMING

**The ability to understand and ideally create low-fidelity wireframes in Balsamiq cloud is very important.**

Having a wireframe signed off before build will help the project manager to create a project plan and assign people to work on each part of the build.

Even the most “out-of-the-box” template driven builds will have some level of wireframing needed.

Having the ability to understand and edit wireframes is essential in order to accurately build against a solution design and to aid team collaboration.



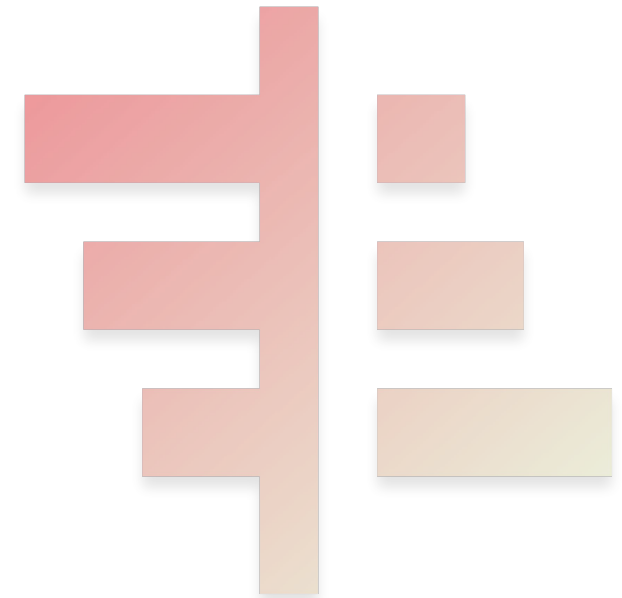
# SKILL - ORGANISATION / PROJECT MGMT

**Organisation is key to building any successful software deployment. PLanning and resource allocation are critical to keep things moving and delivered on time and on spec.**

Depending on how your organisation like to work, you may use use Agile / Kanban / Scrum project planning. At a minimum, we recommend you keep a track of everything in a fair degree of detail through Google Spreadsheets. This will help your internal teams align and collaborate effectively, but this will also help if you need to pull in Applaud experts to help with projects taht are in progress.

All builds can be broken down into actionable chunks, with tasks assigned to different people working on the build.

Day to day comms for the project may be handled via group chats (Skype / Google Chat) to keep a record of everything so that you can refer back to it if needed.



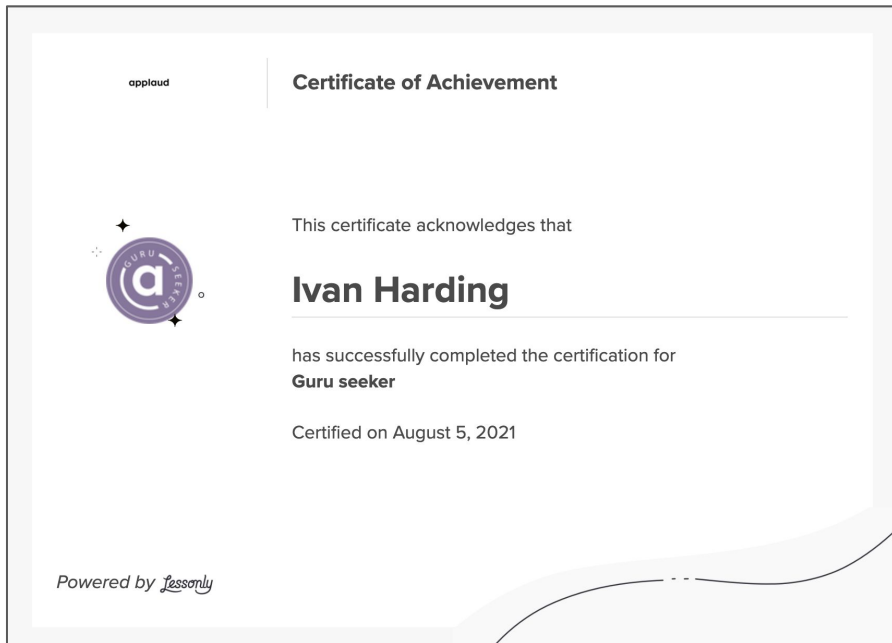


# SKILL - APPLAUD CERTIFICATION

**It would be ideal if all members of a build team had at least Applaud Guru Seeker certification.**

This will give a good grounding in key Applaud concepts and provide the majority of the knowledge needed to configure most things you'd need.

[Check out Applaud Academy >](#)



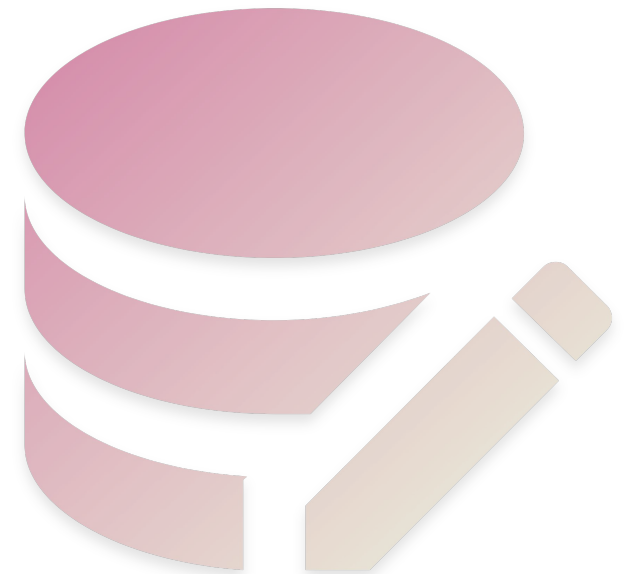
# SKILL - DATABASE DESIGN

**Our amazing user interface is nothing without logically designed models to provide the data** - so having a team member with a deep understanding of database design is vital.

An understanding of key database concepts such as foreign keys, relationships, models, property types, booleans etc. would be considered important when designing the solution.

Much of the functionality within an Applaud deployment will often be available within an existing template - which includes pre-built models that handle a lot of common requirements out-of-the-box. However, you'll almost always need to extend an existing model in some way - so ensure you have somebody within the team who can take care of the database design.

Nothing more frustrating than under-estimating the importance of this and ending up trying to re-work a model half way through a build.



# SKILL - ATTENTION TO DETAIL

**Attention to detail is critical - for everybody in the team.**

Imagine spending 3 weeks building in Applaud - it looks incredible, hits every point in the solution design... and then during the demo the Head of People Services spots that you've misspelled their name or used an old logo. It is embarrassing at best, and can lead to delays.

Always allow plenty of time to test everything end to end - multiple times. This is especially true when we've agreed to give the customer access to login and explore.

**Design. Develop. Test. Test. Test. Test. Sell :-)**



A black and white photograph of a hand holding a pen over a document, with a laptop in the background. The scene is dimly lit, with the hand and pen being the primary focus. The text 'CYCLE OF DESIGN PHASES' is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

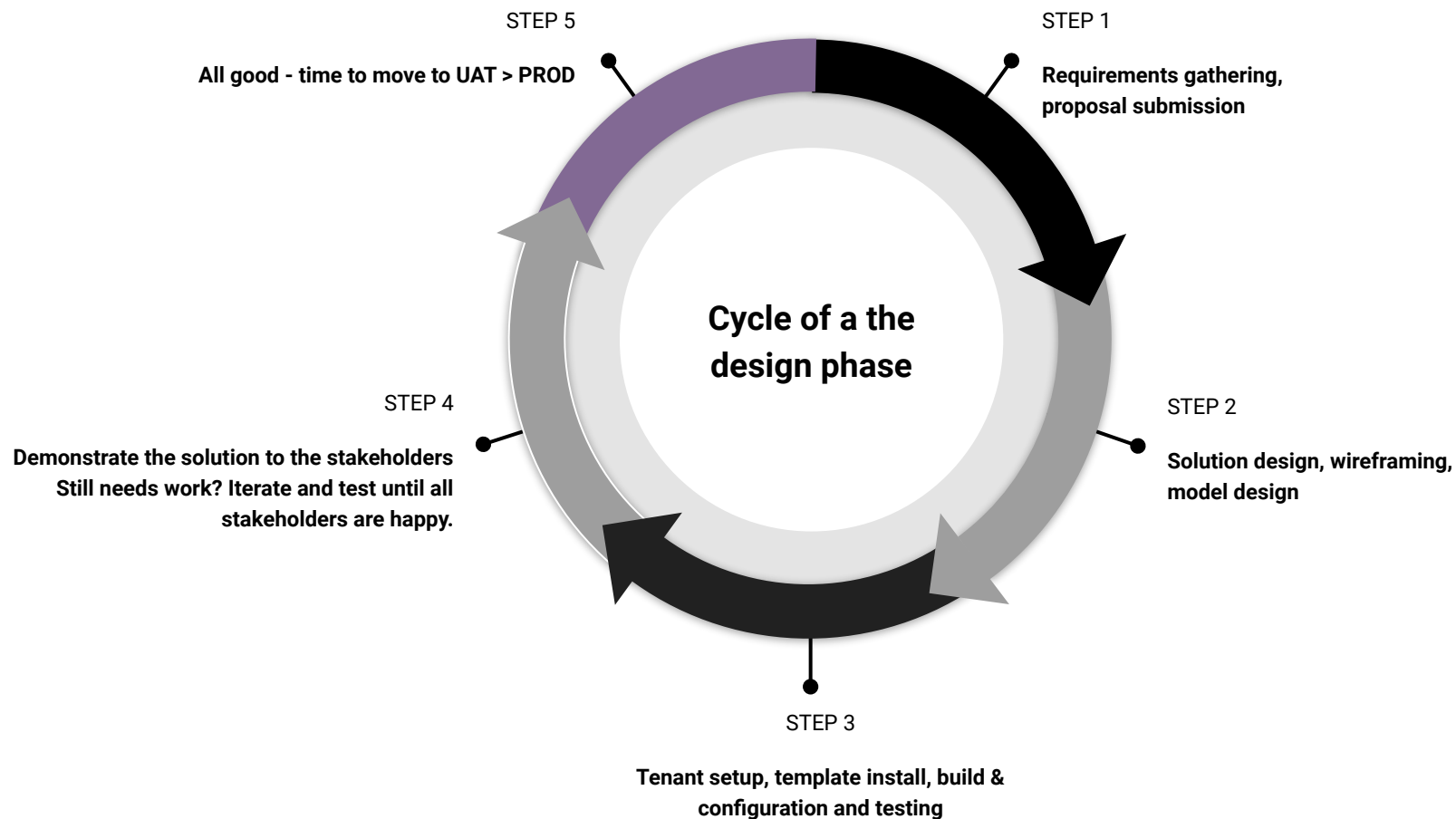
# CYCLE OF DESIGN PHASES

**applaud**

# CYCLE OF DESIGN PHASE

## Teamwork makes the dreamwork!

A successful Applaud project will usually involve people from various teams - including business analysts, product and engineering.





A grayscale photograph of a hand holding a pen, poised to write on a document. The background is slightly blurred, showing a laptop and a desk. The overall tone is professional and focused.

# REQUIREMENTS ANALYSIS

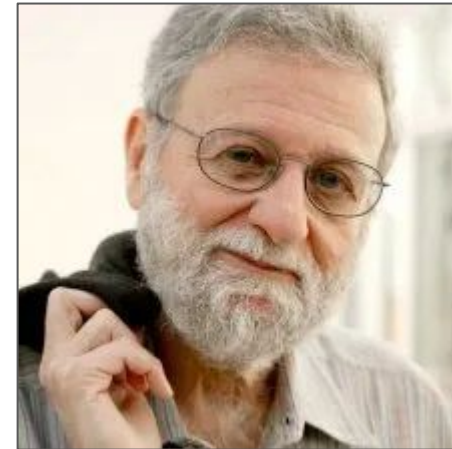
**applaud**



# REQUIREMENTS - SOLVE THE CORRECT PROBLEM

**The importance of effective requirements gathering and analysis cannot be stressed highly enough. Getting to the heart of the business problems is key to ensuring the solution design meets and exceeds the expectations.**

- Typically, but not always, your company will have already invested a lot of time putting together information that will help solution designers to understand their challenges
- Try to get access to as much background information as possible before starting any wireframing
- Don't be afraid to challenge ideas being proposed and offer solutions that you know will get to the heart of the problems - simply "building what HR asked us for" will almost always lead to low adoption rates with end users



**“A brilliant solution to the wrong problem can be worse than no solution at all; solve the correct problem.”**

**[Don Norman](#)**

The man who introduced the term “user-centered design”

# UX - THINKING FRAMING

Once you have all the information from the customer, it's time to evaluate exactly what the problems are, who will benefit from a solution to this problem. We can frame problems in the following way:

**If we** {do, build, provide x thing},  
**then** {these people}  
**will** {some desirable outcome}  
**We'll know when** {actionable metrics}

## EXAMPLE

Ministry of Justice were looking for a way for senior civil servants to declare when they have received gifts in order to give transparency both internally and to the public if a freedom of information request is submitted.

**If we** {build a gift declaration form},  
**then** {senior civil servants}  
**will** {be able to easily submit details of gifts received}  
**We'll know when** {transparency managers see these gift requests come to them for approval and there will be a historic record of gifts received by the senior civil servants available on their gifts page}

A black and white photograph of a hand holding a pen over a notepad. The text 'BRANDING 101' is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font in the center of the image. The background is dark and slightly blurred, showing the notepad and the hand. The overall mood is professional and focused.

# BRANDING 101

applaud

# BRANDING - ESSENTIALS

## Consider these points as must-haves

- **Logo**  
Always use a high quality, crisp and current version of the customer logo
- **Colours**  
Always use the same colours as per the customer brand - down to the specify hex values
- **Fonts**  
Where possible, using the same fonts as per the customer website will result in a great brand
- **Footer**  
Most customers ask for a footer - you'll need to lean on somebody with HTML and CSS skills for this
- **Images**  
Always use high quality images, taken directly from the customer's website

## CREATE A NEW BRAND

To get started - you'll need to **create a new brand**. Details of how to do this can be found in this help article.

<https://support.applaudsolutions.com/hc/en-us/articles/4403419804689-Create-a-new-brand>



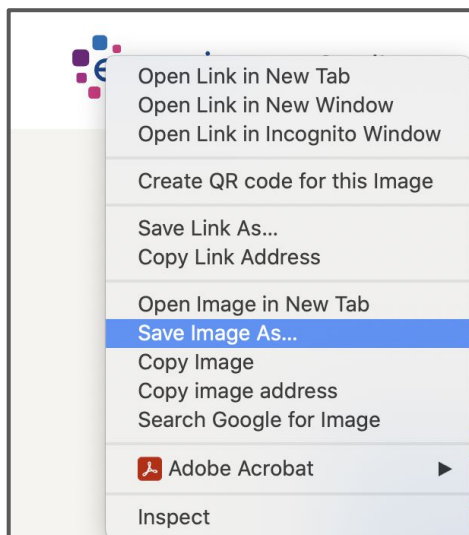
# BRANDING - GET THE LOGO

**Obtaining and preparing the logo is usually the first step of the branding process**

- **Use a high quality version of the correct company logo**

In most Applaud deployments we will use the company logo as it is displayed on the corporate website. In rare cases, the customer may have a name they wish to use for their employee experience system - such as MyPlace for National Trust, or AIMS for WIPO. In the latter case, it will involve obtaining a logo from the customer (which will always be more difficult than you may think). If unsure, use the logo from the website.

- Go to the company website in your browser (this guide assumes you are using Google Chrome)
- Right-click on the logo and choose “Save Image As” - save the file to your computer
- Ideally, we’re looking for an SVG - as whilst we cannot upload this to Applaud, it gives the greatest design possibilities as it can be infinitely scaled, recoloured and de-constructed for use in other assets
- If SVG is not available, a transparent PNG is the next best option



\* SVG files can be imported into Adobe XD (as seen here) you can then rescale, crop and export to PNG



# BRANDING - PREPARE THE LOGO

## If using a “dark” brand

When you set the primary and secondary brand colours to anything other than white (or very light colours), the brand can be considered to be “dark”. In this case, where possible, use a white (or high contrast) version of the company logo. This tends to work well in most cases across all browsers and devices.

## If using a “light” brand

When you set the primary and secondary brand colours to white or very light colours, the brand can be considered to be “light”. In this case, use a darker logo.

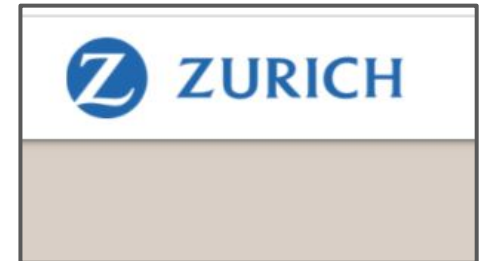
## Recommended logo specification:

- **Suggested Dimensions:** Minimum of 64px height @72dpi - ideally 160px height saved at 144dpi\*
- **File format:** 24 bit (transparent) PNG file

JPEG and GIF files are also supported but transparent PNG is best

## Optimize the image to reduce file size

Our own application will compress images during upload, however, it is best practice to process all images through another tool called [TinyPNG](#) before uploading to Applaud. This lossless compression will give the smallest file size before it even gets to Applaud (which is important to reduce page load speeds).



\* Most design applications allow you to export different sizes to suit various device screen densities. To get a 144dpi export from Adobe XD, export at @2x size.



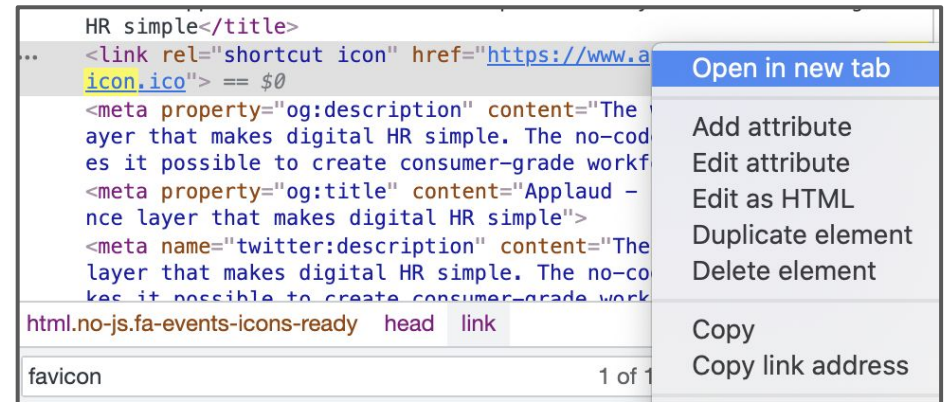
# BRANDING - PREPARE THE FAVICON

The favicon is the small logo that is displayed in web browser tabs - you'll need this to create a new brand

## Find the favicon used on the customer website

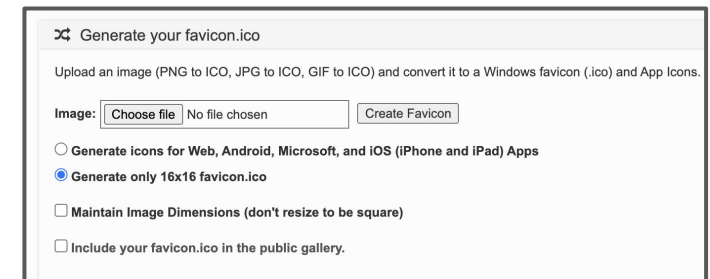
This should be your first thing to try.

- Go to the URL of the customer website
- Right click on the website header area > then choose "Inspect" to open Chrome Dev Tools
- In left-hand column of the Dev Tools inspector, you'll see the HTML of the page. Use the search to look for "favicon".
- If a favicon.ico file exists, right click on the blue href URL and choose "Open in new tab"
- Finally, from the new tab, right click on the image and choose "Save image as"



## Could not find a favicon? Let's generate one!

If you could only find a .png favicon, there is a great free tool here which can be used to create a valid favicon - visit <https://www.favicon-generator.org/> and follow the simple steps.



Then upload the generated favicon when creating your new Applaud brand.

## Favicon specification:

- **Dimensions:** 16x16px @72dpi
- **File format:** The favicon must be a valid .ico file

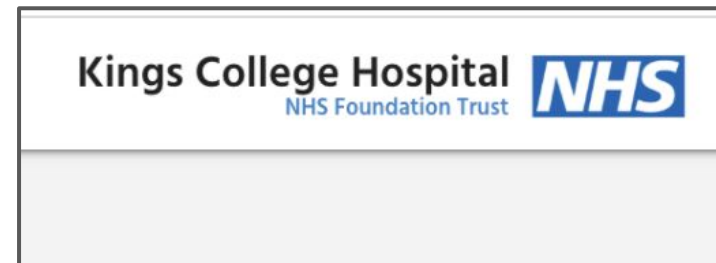
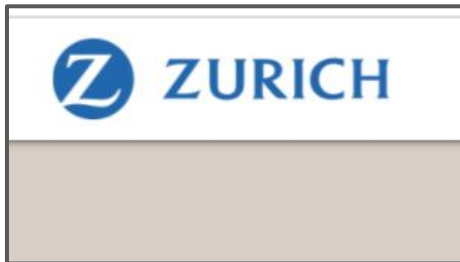


# BRANDING - LOGO EXAMPLES

If using a “dark” brand, white logos work best:



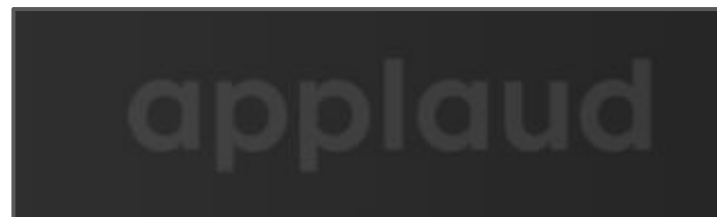
If using a “light” brand, you can use most logos except light or white ones



Don't do this:



No white boxes!



Poor contrast ratio

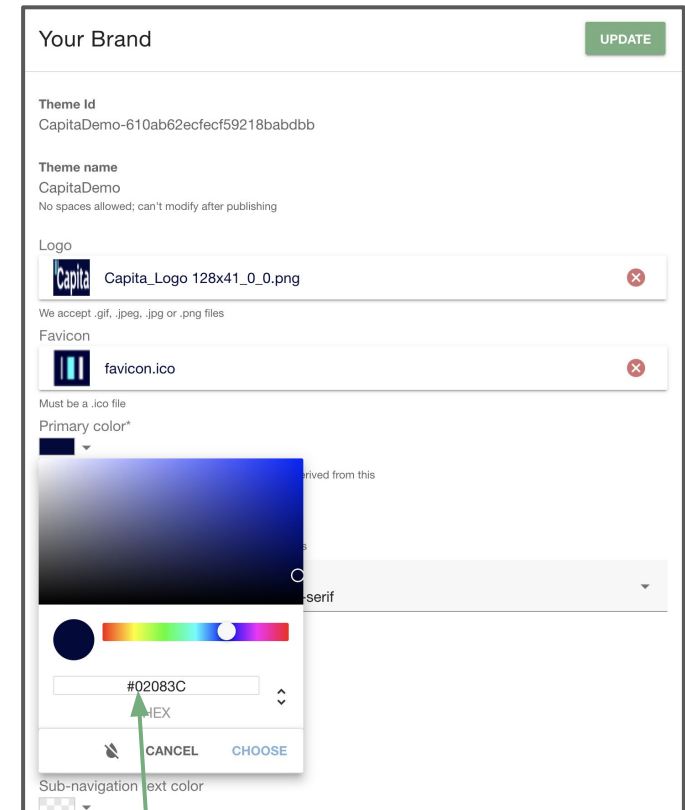


Too complex / illegible text

# BRANDING - COLOURS > BASIC

## How to choose the right colours for the customer and setup in the Applaud brand

1. Go to the URL of the customer website
2. Right click on the website header area > then choose "Inspect" to open Chrome Dev Tools
3. In right-hand column of the Dev Tools inspector, you'll see the CSS properties of the highlighted HTML element - for the purpose of this guide, you are looking for the **background-color** property. Once you find this, you should note down the hex value - this is the alphanadecimal string of 6 characters pre-fixed by a #
4. This hexadecimal value is usually a great starting point when setting the **primary** and **secondary** colours in your Applaud brand

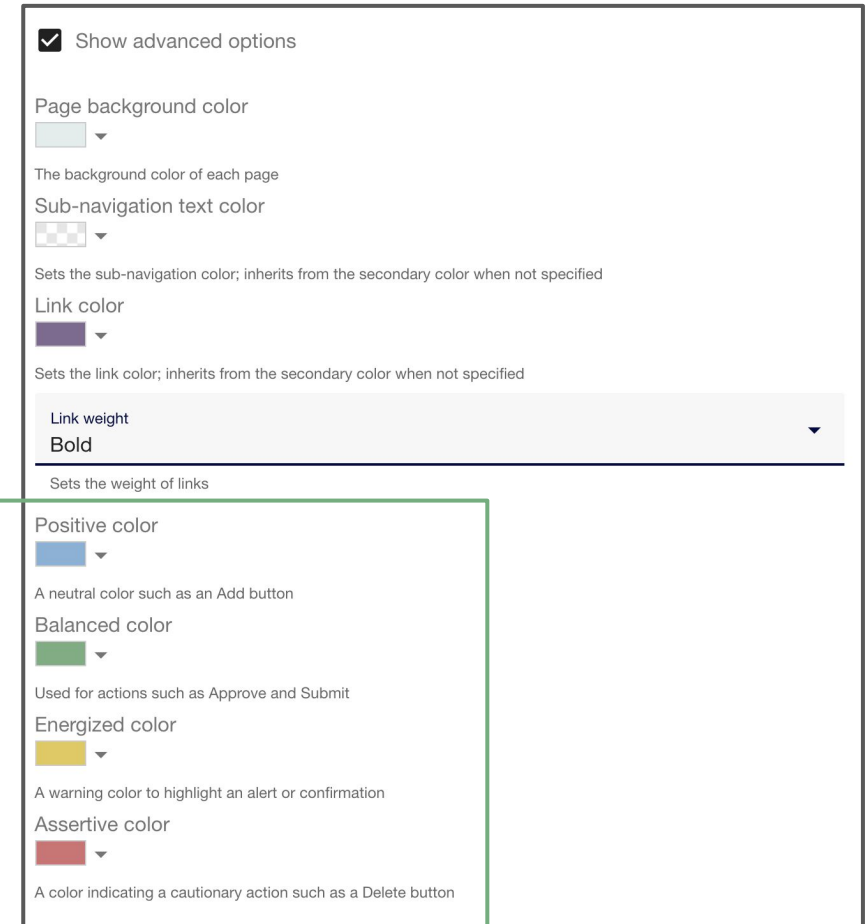


**background-color: #02083c;**

# BRANDING - COLOURS > ADVANCED

## To really make the most of the Applaud branding capabilities

- In the Applaud brand settings page, check the “Show advanced options” checkbox. This will reveal many additional settings which can be used to further refine the brand.
- the page background colour is a bit of an unsung hero of branding - by default, it is set to a light grey. Which is good, because light grey always works well... but in UI design, there are many more than 50 shades of grey. More like millions. Again, refer to the customer website CSS for inspiration.
- Finding the best colours to use for the “mood colours” involves a bit of digging and design experience. Use the customer website to look for examples of buttons, links, warning and information messages to help guide you on how to set the mood colours in the Applaud Brand. Use Chrome Dev tools to explore the CSS as mentioned previously in this guide.



Show advanced options

Page background color  
[Light Grey] ▾  
The background color of each page

Sub-navigation text color  
[Checkered] ▾  
Sets the sub-navigation color; inherits from the secondary color when not specified

Link color  
[Purple] ▾  
Sets the link color; inherits from the secondary color when not specified

Link weight  
Bold ▾  
Sets the weight of links

Positive color  
[Blue] ▾  
A neutral color such as an Add button

Balanced color  
[Green] ▾  
Used for actions such as Approve and Submit

Energized color  
[Yellow] ▾  
A warning color to highlight an alert or confirmation

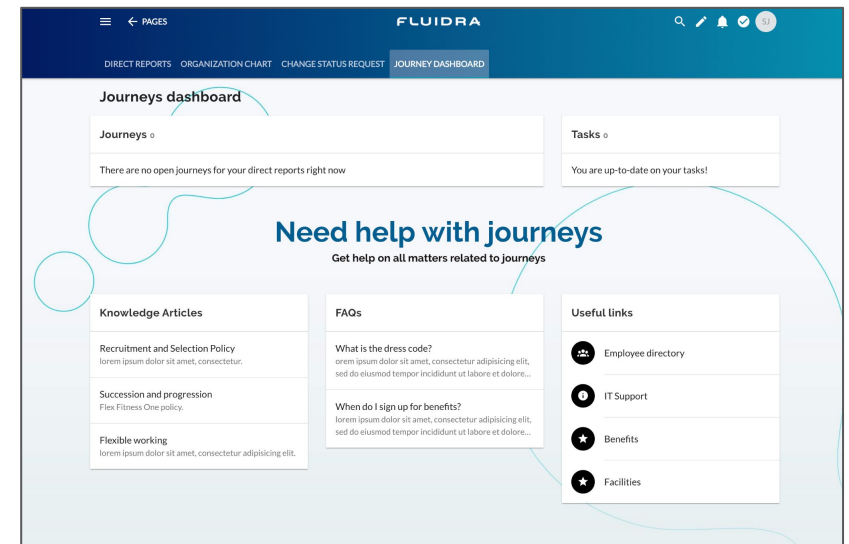
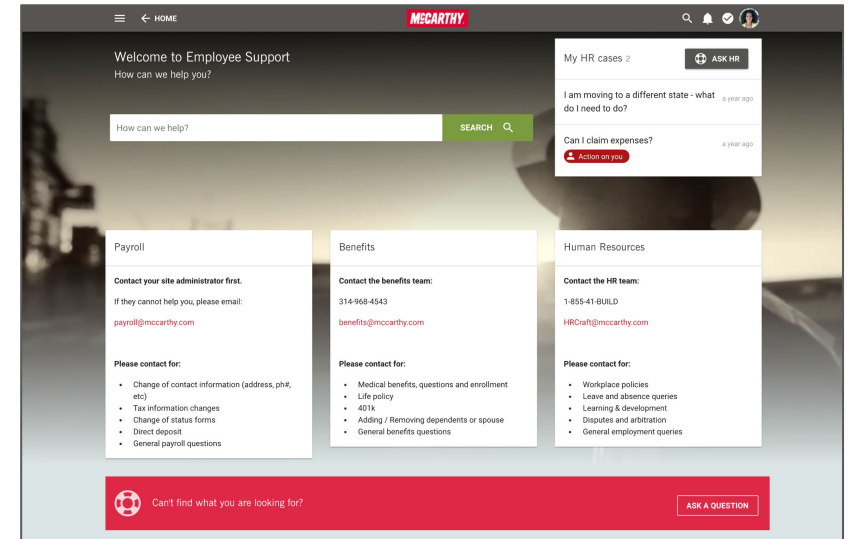
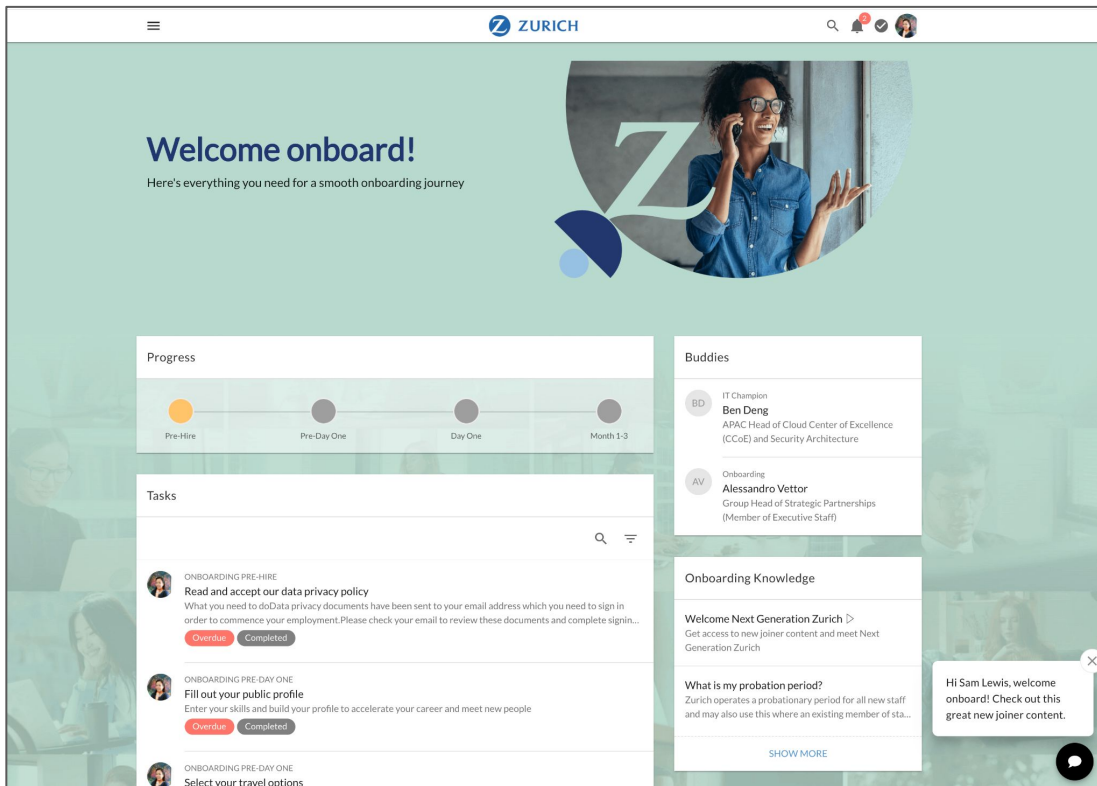
Assertive color  
[Red] ▾  
A color indicating a cautionary action such as a Delete button

**Mood colours**  
Used to draw attention to different levels of messaging importance or severity.

# BRANDING - BEYOND THE BRAND SETTINGS

## A really stand-out branding job goes way beyond setting up a new brand

- Background images are a crowd pleaser!
- Use colour / tonality / style of images to match the brand
- Introduce brand colours on headers within rich text blocks





# BRANDING - EXTRA TOUCHES

Use your imagination to push the boundaries of what the Applaud platform can do!

- Use embedded content in rich text blocks - such as YouTube videos or other iframe content such as Spotify podcast players

## Announcement detail

Our global parental leave policy is in the news - again!

Six months off - fully paid - for all new parents is the norm at Spotify... and it's causing quite a storm in the global media.

This is an example of an embedded YouTube Video



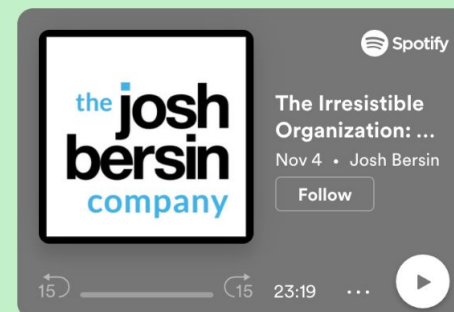
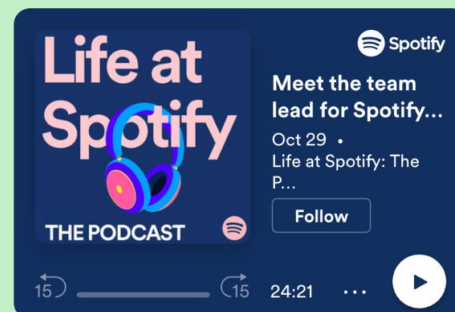
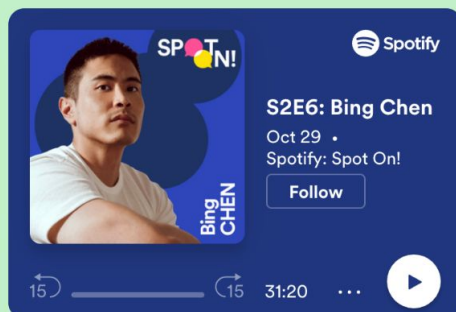
Was this helpful?

 GIVE FEEDBACK

Your feedback matters. Please tell us what you thought of this article.

## Listen. Learn. Love!

Check out these recommended podcasts



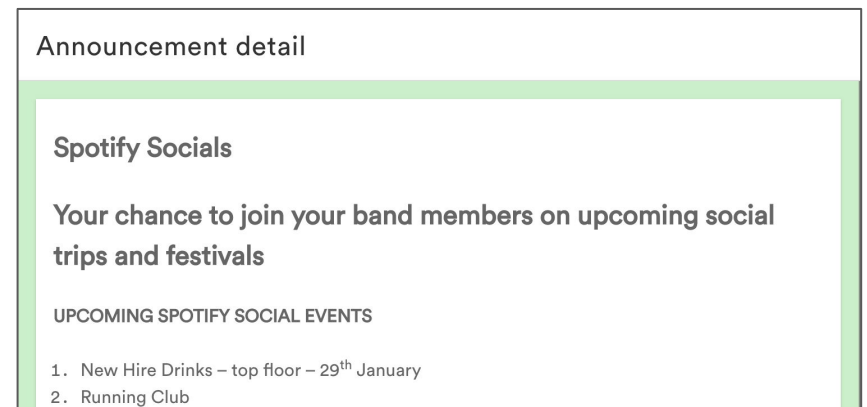
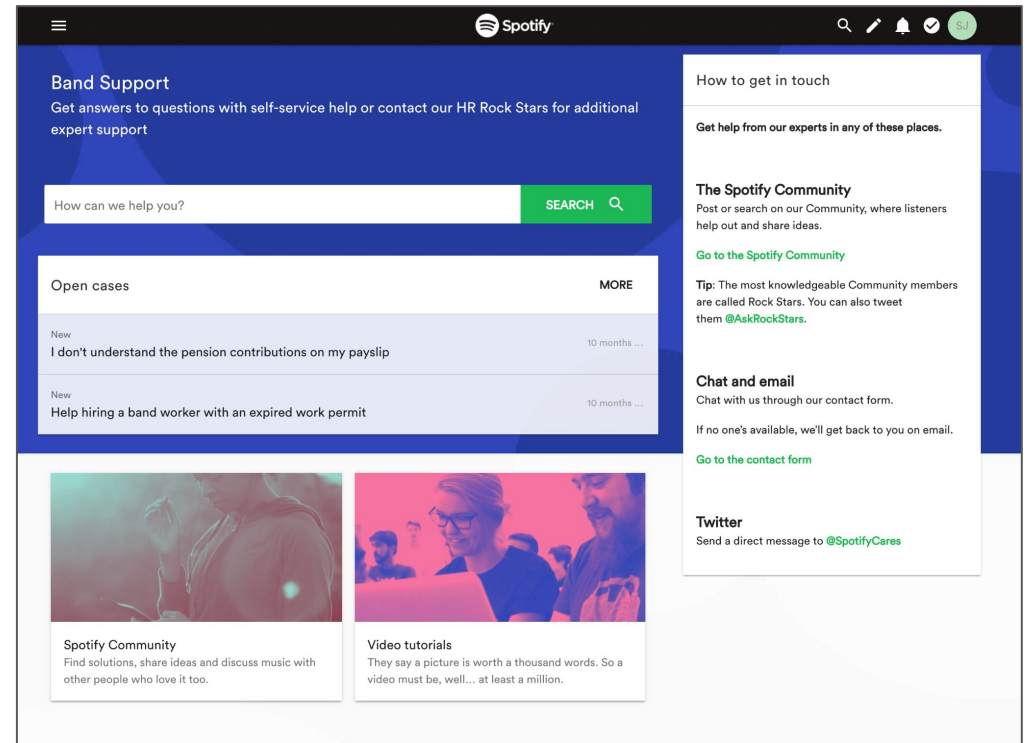
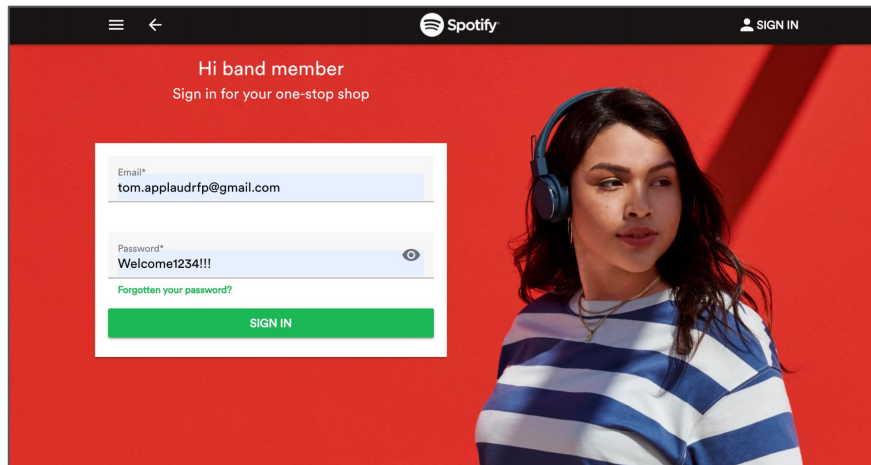


# BRANDING - USE OF LANGUAGE

Using language that resonates with the company audience will always give your Applaud implementation an edge

- Observe how the company uses language on their own websites and communications - try to incorporate this tone of voice into Applaud

For example, at Spotify, you are not an employee - you are a **band member!** Their best support staff are called **rockstars**



# BRANDING - THE POWER OF FONTS + COLOR

Fonts and colours are one of the most important visual identifiers when looking to get Applaud to match a customer brand.

- When using rich text blocks, H1 and H2 headings will inherit the font family that has been setup in the brand custom font settings - if you colour match the text to the colour used on the customer's existing website, it really makes Applaud feel like "it's meant to be". This really helps Applaud fit in with existing technology landscapes.

## Applaud

### Customer's existing website

#### Protecting and advancing the principles of justice

Justice runs deep through our nation's shared principles so your work will underpin how we live and work together. We are the guardians of our justice system and of its global reputation for being fair, open and dynamic. We're responsible for criminal justice, prison and probation services, civil courts, tribunals and family law hearings, safeguarding victims and regulating our legal services.

We are a department of over 70,000 staff operating in roles such as policy development, international justice and judicial support. Our staff include, probation officers helping people turn their lives around, commissioners developing modern, secure prisons and digital gurus revolutionising the services in our courts.

"I can be a person who works in a motivating."

Charlotte Jackson  
Ministry of Justice

#### Highlights from our Permanent Secretary

News, blogs, and announcements from Antonia Romeo and across the Civil Service



02/11/2021 10:56  
How to break through in the Civil Service: our top tips



01/11/2021 12:22  
International Week of Deaf People 2021

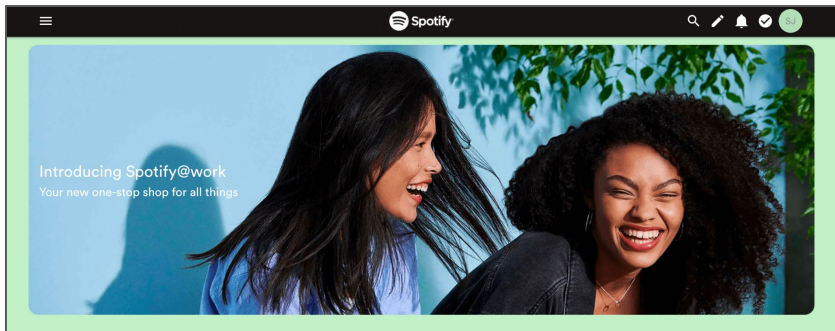


26/10/2021 10:59  
A message from our Permanent Secretary, Antonia Romeo

# BRANDING - USE CUSTOMER IMAGES

Grab images from customer websites and put them to use throughout Applaud

Advert block (background image)



Page background + image used in a rich text block

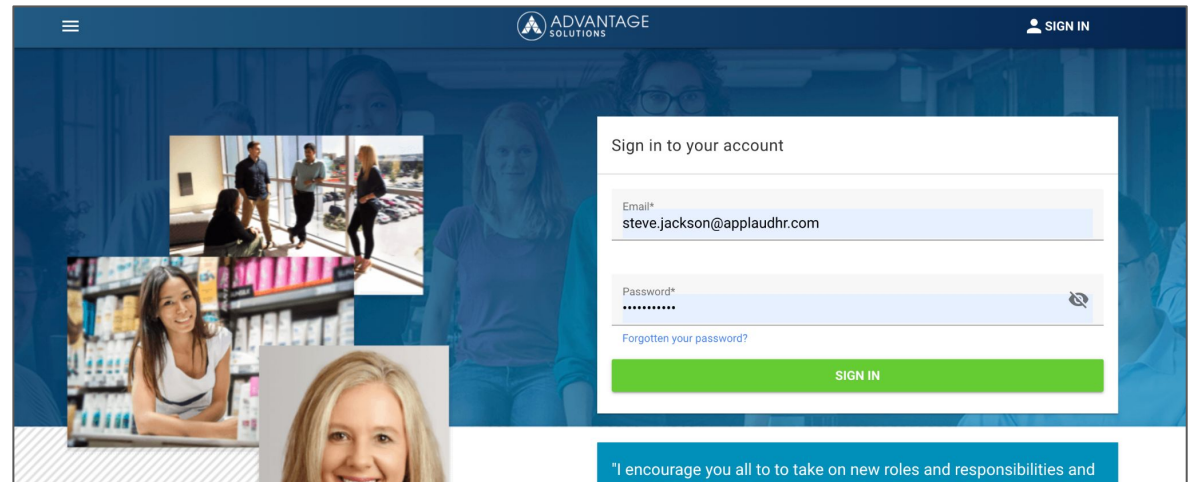
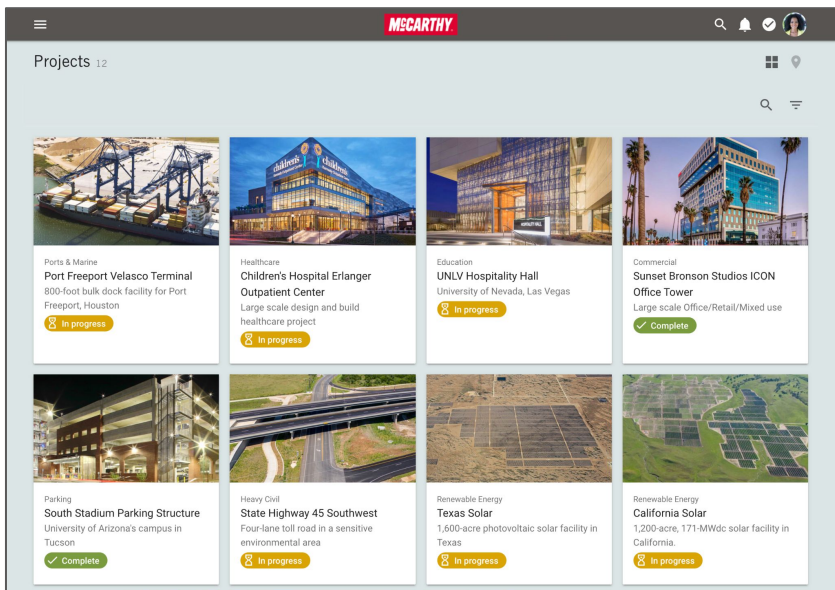
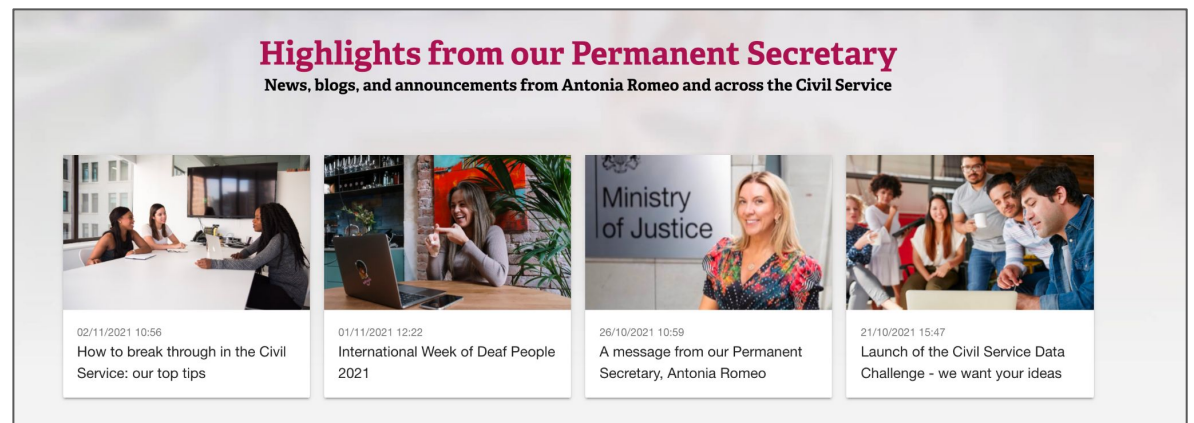


Image used in custom list block



Page background + image used in list (grid) highlight template





# BRANDING - WOW FACTOR FROM THE VERY START

In a real implementation, many customers will use single sign on (SSO) - so employees will not see the sign in screens. However, if you are not using SSO, Applaud has templates for branded sign in screens / anonymous home screens to ensure your employees get the full branded experience from their very first touch point

- You can use the sign in templates or create your own pages.
- Setup a nice branded background image
- Consider what happens on mobile - often we add in a mobile only logo
- You'll need to set the anonymous home and sign in modal pages from dashboard > settings in order for them to display.

### Override default pages

Authenticated users home

Home X

To revert back to the default authenticated users home page, remove the page you entered above

Anonymous home page

Sign in X

Default page shown for anonymous users visiting the site

Sign in page

Sign in modal

Login page shown when trying to access content that requires sign in. Shows in a modal

Page not found (404)

404 Page X

Override the default 404 page with your own page

Ministry of Justice

SIGN IN

Sign in to your account

Email\*  
steve.jackson@applaudhr.com

Password\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

Forgotten your password?

SIGN IN

Highlights from our Permanent Secretary  
News, blogs, and announcements from Antonia Romeo and across the Civil Service

Launch of the Civil Service Data Challenge - we want your ideas

A message from our Permanent Secretary, Antonia Romeo

How to break through in the Civil Service: our top tips

International Week of Deaf People 2021

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Sign in to your account

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Password\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

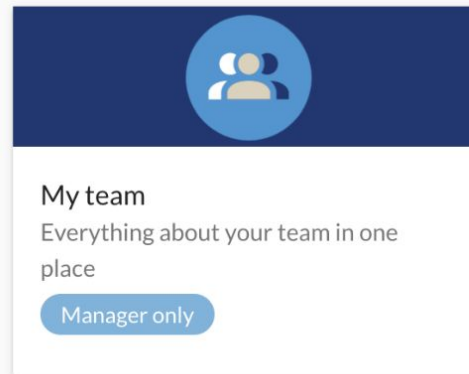
Forgotten your password?

SIGN IN

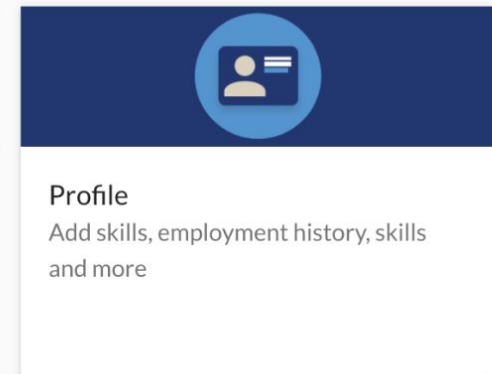
Highlights from our Permanent Secretary  
News, blogs, and announcements from Antonia Romeo and across the Civil Service

# BRANDING - NAVIGATION ITEMS

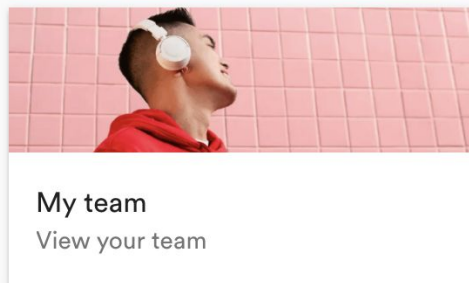
Going the extra mile to stylise the navigation items to match a custom brand always goes down well.



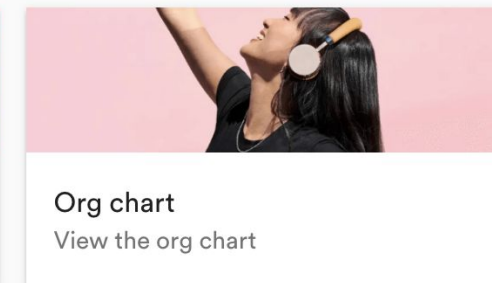
My team  
Everything about your team in one place  
Manager only

This navigation item has a dark blue header with a white icon of two people. The main content is white with a blue pill-shaped button labeled 'Manager only' at the bottom.

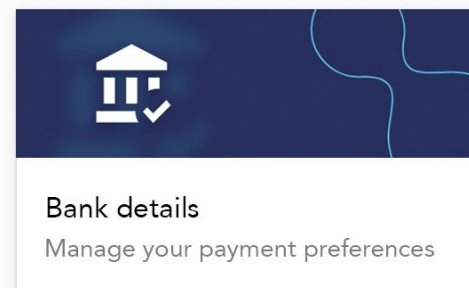
Profile  
Add skills, employment history, skills and more

This navigation item has a dark blue header with a white icon of a person and a list. The main content is white.

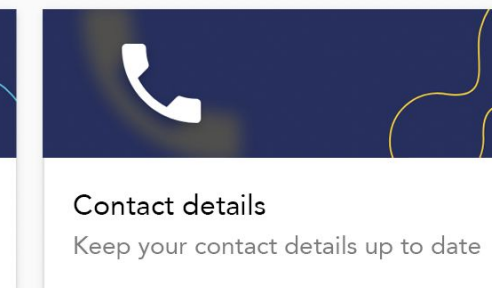
My team  
View your team

This navigation item features a header image of a man wearing headphones against a pink background. The main content is white.

Org chart  
View the org chart

This navigation item features a header image of a woman wearing headphones against a pink background. The main content is white.

Bank details  
Manage your payment preferences

This navigation item has a dark blue header with a white icon of a building with a checkmark. The main content is white.

Contact details  
Keep your contact details up to date

This navigation item has a dark blue header with a white icon of a telephone handset. The main content is white.



A group of people, including men and women, are seated in a row of chairs. The image is dark and semi-transparent, with the word 'QUESTIONS' overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters in the center. The people are wearing various styles of clothing, including patterned blouses and dark trousers. The background is a light-colored wall with a grid pattern.

# QUESTIONS

**applaud**