



canadian museum
of nature
musée canadien
de la nature

Brand Guidelines

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7 December 2021

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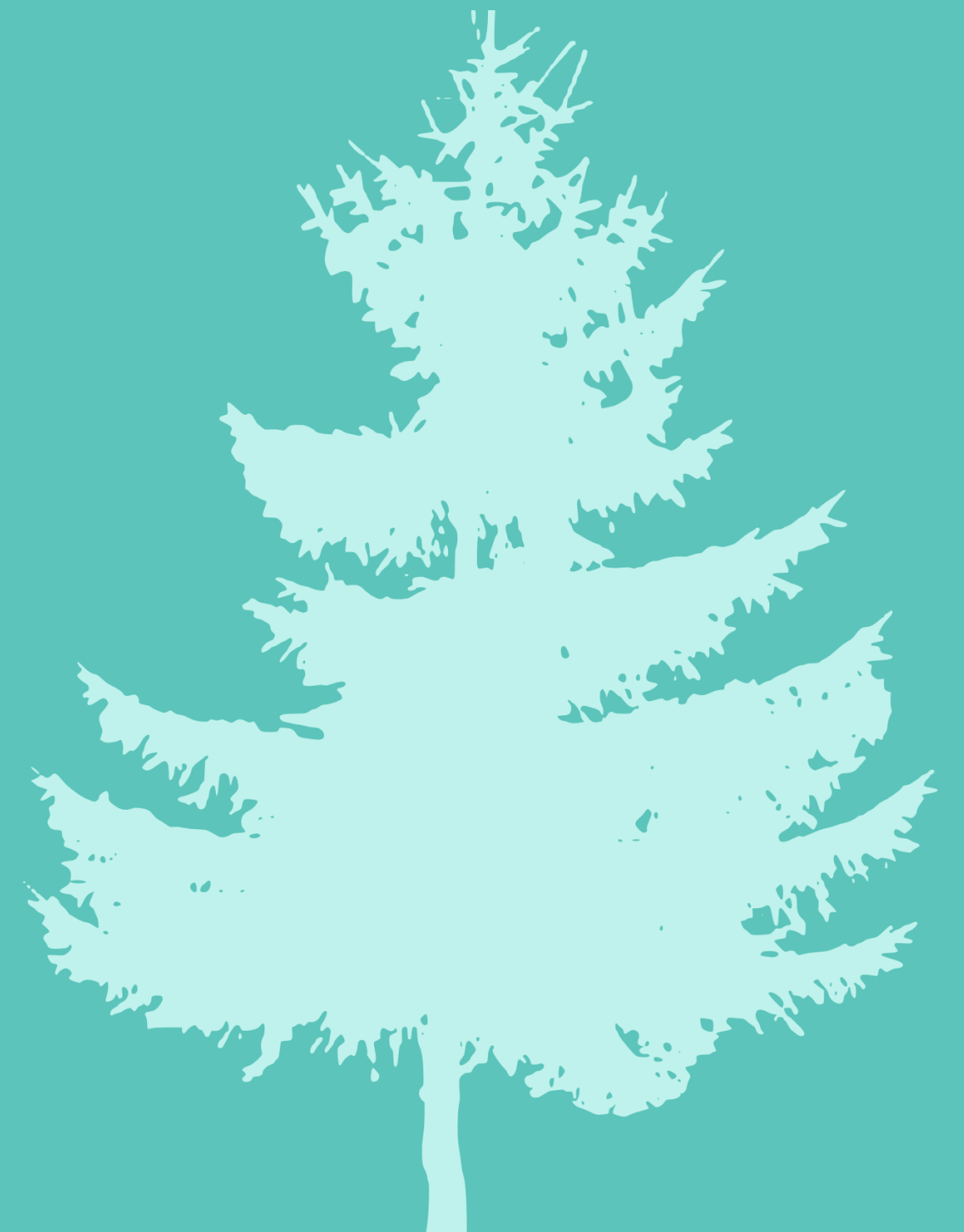
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1 Moodboard





2 Who We Are



About Us



240 McLeod Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K2P 2R1

1-613-566-4700

<https://nature.ca/en/home>

We're the oldest national museum in Canada! Created in 1856, our museum began as a geological showpiece: a place to house and display to the public the growing collection of animal and plant specimens uncovered during the Geological Survey of Canada (begun in 1842).

Still housed today in the first building purpose-built for a museum in Canada—the Victoria Memorial Museum (located just south of Parliament Hill in Ottawa, Ontario)—we're home to a vast collection of natural phenomena (*the largest of its kind in Canada!*): everything from dinosaurs, fossils, and minerals to plants and algae, furry creatures, and a state-of-the-art specimen-preserving cryobank.

We also oversee a world-class, cutting-edge research facility whose researchers and scientific experts are at the forefront of both national and international projects, like the Paleoecology of Canadian Dinosaurs project (which studies

Canada's prehistoric plant-eating giants and the ecosystems that supported them) and the Evolution of Alkaline Environments project (which took museum mineralogists all the way to the quartz mines of Cambodia!).

Our primary audience consists of two groups: school children who visit us on educational field trips, and visitors to Ottawa. Our audience is therefore highly diverse in their interests and backgrounds. They may have a personal interest in science, nature, history, or culture, or they may be required to learn about one or more of these subjects as part of their education. They may not know very much about the museum or its collections. Our secondary audiences are researchers, educators, and natural history enthusiasts who already have a vested interest in the museum and its collections.

Special exhibitions and rare visits by celebrity guest speakers are among the exciting range of events we offer. You can also rent our facilities for a once-in-a-lifetime private celebration!

Our Mission

Our brand vision is guided by a single purpose: to preserve the natural world for future generations.

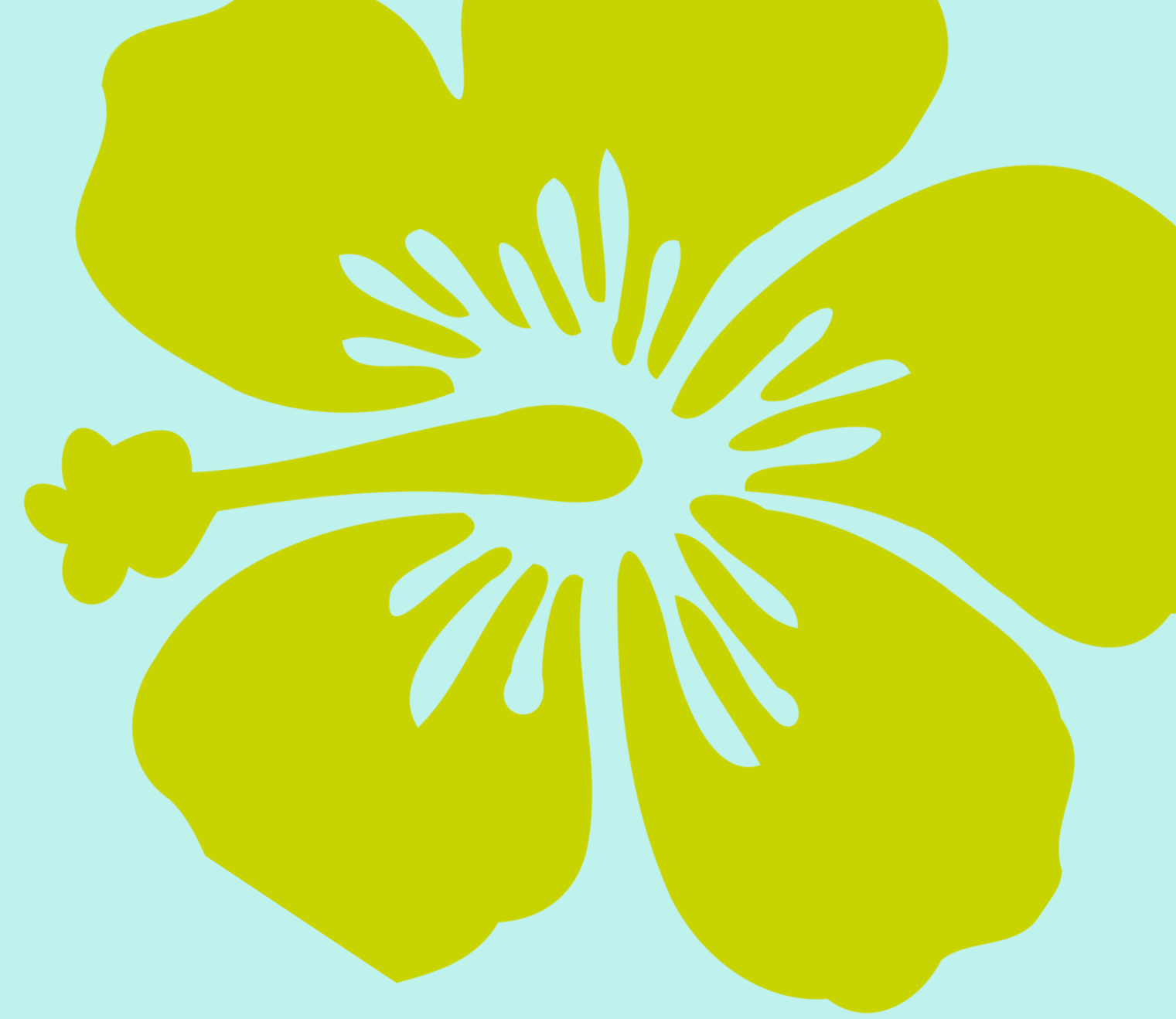
Our mandate, as laid out in the *Museums Act* (1990), is “to increase throughout Canada and internationally, interest in, knowledge of and appreciation and respect for the natural world by establishing and developing for research and posterity a collection of natural history objects, with special but not exclusive reference to Canada, and by demonstrating the natural world, the knowledge derived from it, and the understanding it represents.”

Our mission is both global and national. We put every part of the natural world at the forefront of everything we do. We promote:

- sustainability for the future
- study and preservation
- research excellence and new forms of learning
- the creation of opportunities for engagement with nature through research, display, and public outreach relevant to the 21st century

We want to make knowledge accessible and engaging for a wide range of audiences. Not just about the past, we’re also about the present—showcasing amazing new discoveries and breakthroughs in the world of nature and science to a 21st-century audience. **We’re a place for completely unique experiences!**

3 Logo Usage



Brand Logos



canadian museum
of nature
musée canadien
de la nature

The Canadian Museum of Nature has two brand logos:

- an emblem consisting of a four-part square mosaic tile containing the four letters of the brand's name in English and French and a maple leaf
- a wordmark rendered in lower case, in English and French

Both of the organization's logos are rendered in **Alata** typeface, a geometric low-contrast sans serif font that's monumental but also friendly and a little playful. It also prioritizes legibility.

The emblem consists of a simple design that incorporates both the English and French brand names in a single unit. The maple leaf is both a nod to the Canadian flag and a symbol of the museum's institutional focus: the natural world. The choice of lower case for the wordmark expresses the approachable, friendly, and inclusive characteristics of the brand.

Logo Dos and Don'ts



canadian museum
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Both the emblem and wordmark logos can be used for digital, print, and social media content.

The emblem should always appear in the format, brand colours, and font employed here on the left. Its colours should not be altered as the current colour relationships meet legibility and accessibility requirements. The wordmarks can appear in other (single) brand colours.

The wordmarks should always be right justified with the words arranged and spaced as in the examples on the left. Line spacing should be 110%. Both the English and French wordmark must appear in every instance of usage, and in the same font size and colour.

The French wordmark must always retain the accent aigu.

Logos should not overlap each other, nor should any graphic elements or imagery overlap or obscure any part of the logos. Logos can overlap imagery or graphic elements. Logos should not be distorted or modified with special effects.

The emblem is the brand's official logo and must be used in every instance of branding. The wordmarks are optional but must always be used in conjunction with the emblem; the wordmarks should be placed below the emblem, as in the example on the left.

The proportional ratio between the emblem and watermarks demonstrated on the left (5:1) should be used in every instance.

Use of the wordmark in combination with the emblem may be preferable for promotional content that will benefit from additional identification (e.g., educational materials, government documents, international communications, or content requiring brand clarity for greater accessibility).

4 Brand Colours



Brand Colour Palette

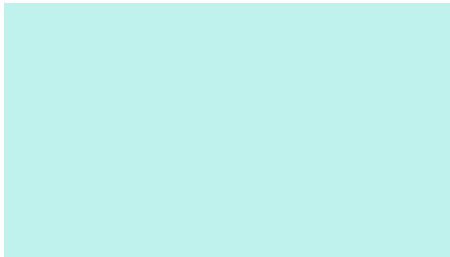
Split
Complementary



#006307



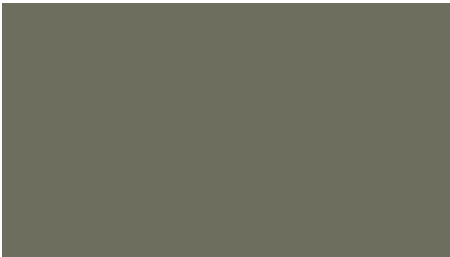
#5CC4BA



#BFF2ED



#C9D400



#6D6ESD

Triad



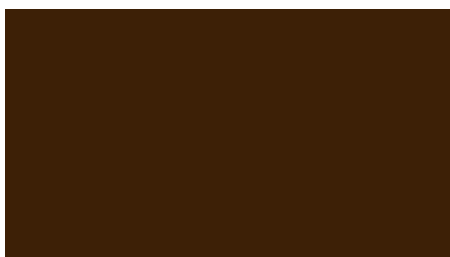
#006307



#B6CFB7



#200A63



#3D2006



#7D6148

Complementary



#006307



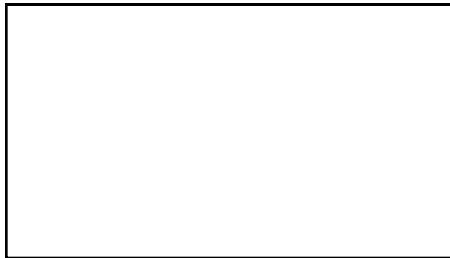
#6E8570



#42091F



#630D2E



#FFFFFF

Brand Colours

verdant pine



arctic glacier



spring maple



great lake



fresh snow



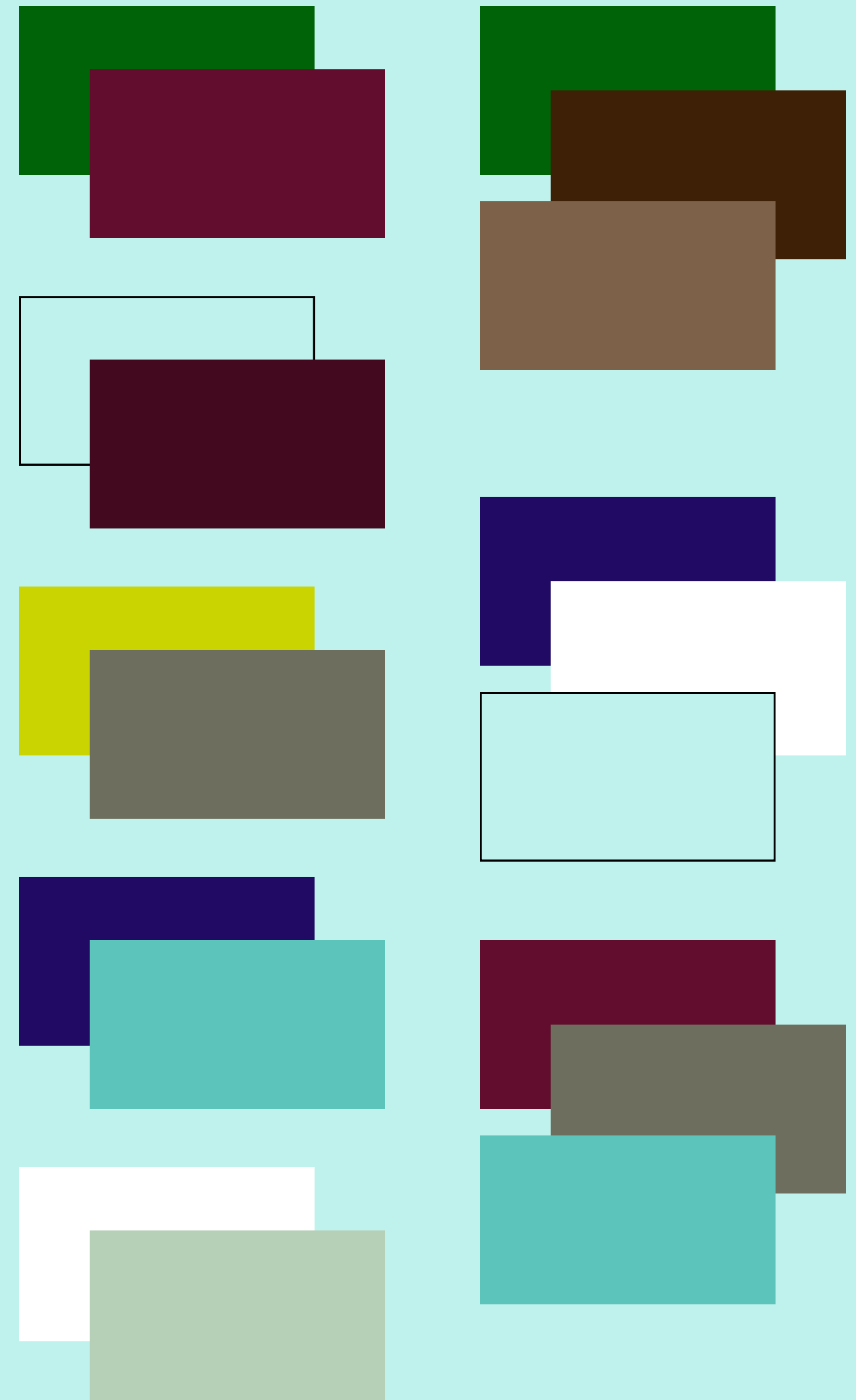
Brand Colour Dos and Don'ts

Content should prioritize the five brand colours. The lightness of these colours can be adjusted but only when this is absolutely necessary (e.g., to better accomodate legibility or accessibility requirements). Adjustments should adhere to the specific examples identified in the Brand Colours page above (here, only for verdant pine, spring maple, and fresh snow, in increments of 10%).

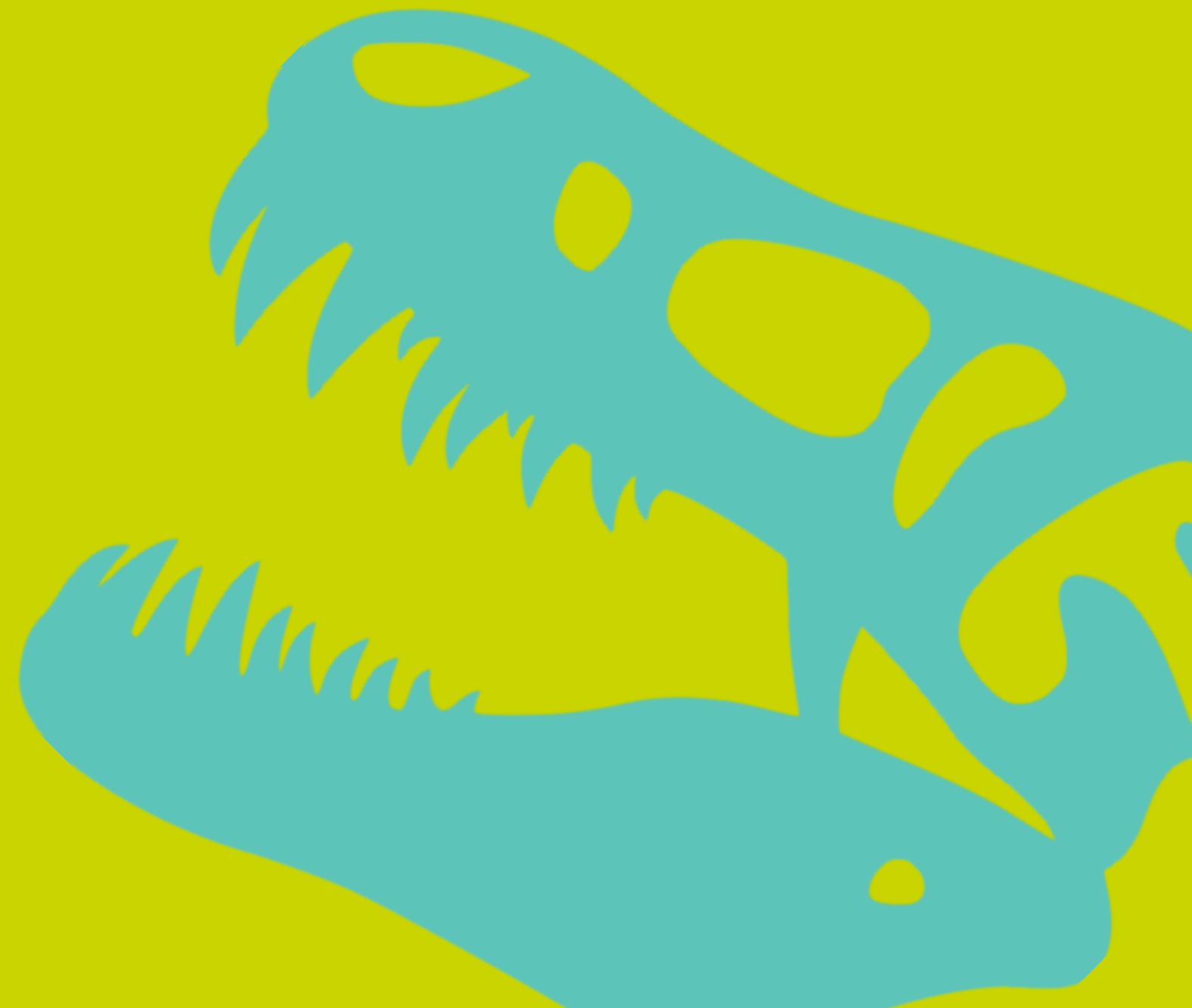
Additional colours from the Brand Colour Palette can also be used when contrast with brand colours is necessary or an alternative colour is required in order to better suit the content's specific visual requirements (see the suggested pairings and combinations on the right).

Interacting colours should meet accessibility requirements (for example, text rendered in fresh snow overlaid on arctic glacier will not meet accessibility guidelines for legibility or ease of visual recognition).

Graphic elements or text rendered in one of the brand colours should not overlap another element or passage of text in the same colour.



5 Typography



Brand Typeface for Headings: Source Serif Pro

About Source Serif Pro

Source Serif Pro is a subtle serif font, with characteristics that fall somewhere between a serif and a sans. It is highly legible and easy on the eye, so works well for content intended for a diverse audience.

As a font with European origins, it brings to mind the typefaces traditionally associated with museum branding (accessible, professional, and historied) but its gentle curves and organic bulbous serifs keep it from being too old-fashioned or archaic.

It is a workhorse font with a wide variety of styles, making it useful for lots of different headings in a range of media and formats.

The following weights and styles are permitted for use:

Regular
SemiBold
Bold

Aa

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
UVWXYZ
0123456789 ~!@#\$%^&*()[],.

Brand Typeface for Body Copy:

Lato

About Lato

Lato is a sans serif typeface created by Łukasz Dziedzic in 2010. Lato means “summer” in Polish. The font’s classical proportions (especially apparent in the upper case) make it highly legible and visually engaging.

As a visually simple sans serif, Lato presents an excellent contrast with Source Serif Pro. It also coordinates well with the brand logo font Alata (below), exhibiting many similiar characteristics.

Like Alata, Lato is both monumental and playful, professional and approachable. It expresses the duality of our museum’s brand identity as both authoritative and fun. As Dziedzic described it, the font is equal parts “serious and friendly.”

The following weights and styles are permitted for use:

Regular	<i>Italic</i>
Medium	<i>Medium Italic</i>
SemiBold	<i>SemiBold Italic</i>
Bold	<i>Bold Italic</i>
Extra Bold	<i>Extra Bold Italic</i>

Aa

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
UVWXYZ
0123456789 ~!@#\$%^&*()[],.

Brand Typeface for Logos:

Alata

About Alata

Alata is a geometric low contrast sans design, created by Spyros Zevelakis and further refined by Eben Sorkin in 2018. Its monumental and historical characteristics (it draws from both archaic Greek letters and early 20th-century poster lettering) make it highly suitable to the museum context. Its tapered ascenders give it both sharp and playful qualities that offer added visual interest. It's also highly legible, meeting accessibility requirements and making it a useful font for the brand emblem and wordmarks.

The typeface provides for a wide range of figures, including oldstyle figures, small numbers (including superiors and fractions), and case sensitive forms.

The following weights and styles are permitted for use:

Regular

Aa

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
UVWXYZ
0123456789 ~!@#\$%^&*()[],.

Typeface Hierarchy

H1

Header 1

H2

Header 2

H3

Header 3

H4

Header 4

Body Copy

Body Copy

Body Copy

Body Copy

Body Copy

Body Copy

CTA Text

CTA TEXT

Typeface Hierarchy Sample 1

H1, bold, 72 px,
120% line spacing

H3, regular, 56 px,
120% line spacing

Body Copy, regular
and italic, 24 px,
150% line spacing

About Us

We are the oldest national museum in Canada

Still housed today in the first building purpose-built for a museum in Canada—the Victoria Memorial Museum (located just south of Parliament Hill in Ottawa, Ontario)—the museum is home to a vast collection of natural phenomena (*the largest of its kind in Canada!*): everything from dinosaurs, fossils, and minerals to plants and algae, furry creatures, and a state-of-the-art specimen-preserving cryobank.

Typeface Hierarchy Sample 2

H4, bold, 48 px,
120% line spacing

Body Copy, medium,
medium italic, 24 px,
150% line spacing

About Us

Still housed today in the first building purpose-built for a museum in Canada—the Victoria Memorial Museum (located just south of Parliament Hill in Ottawa, Ontario)—the museum is home to a vast collection of natural phenomena (*the largest of its kind in Canada!*): everything from dinosaurs, fossils, and minerals to plants and algae, furry creatures, and a state-of-the-art specimen-preserving cryobank.

Typeface Hierarchy Sample 3

CTA Text, 3 px letter spacing,
capitals, bold, 36 px,
120% line spacing

Body Copy, extra bold,
24 px, 150% line spacing

GET IN TOUCH

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Typeface Dos and Don'ts

The variety of typeface weights and styles available for brand usage are intended to provide content creators and designers with some flexibility.

Selections and combinations of these weights and styles should take into account the visual relationships between different elements, such as headings, subheadings, and body text.

The font sizes identified above (for the headings, body text, and CTAs) are intended as a general proportional guideline but can be modified to fit the specific needs of individual content types. Similar proportions, however, should be retained in order to maintain consistency of brand identity across different types of content or communication channels.

Italics should be used sparingly and only within the body text for the purpose of emphasis (as in Samples 1 and 2 above). When using italics don't mix different weights or styles. For example, if the body text is Medium, use Medium Italic.

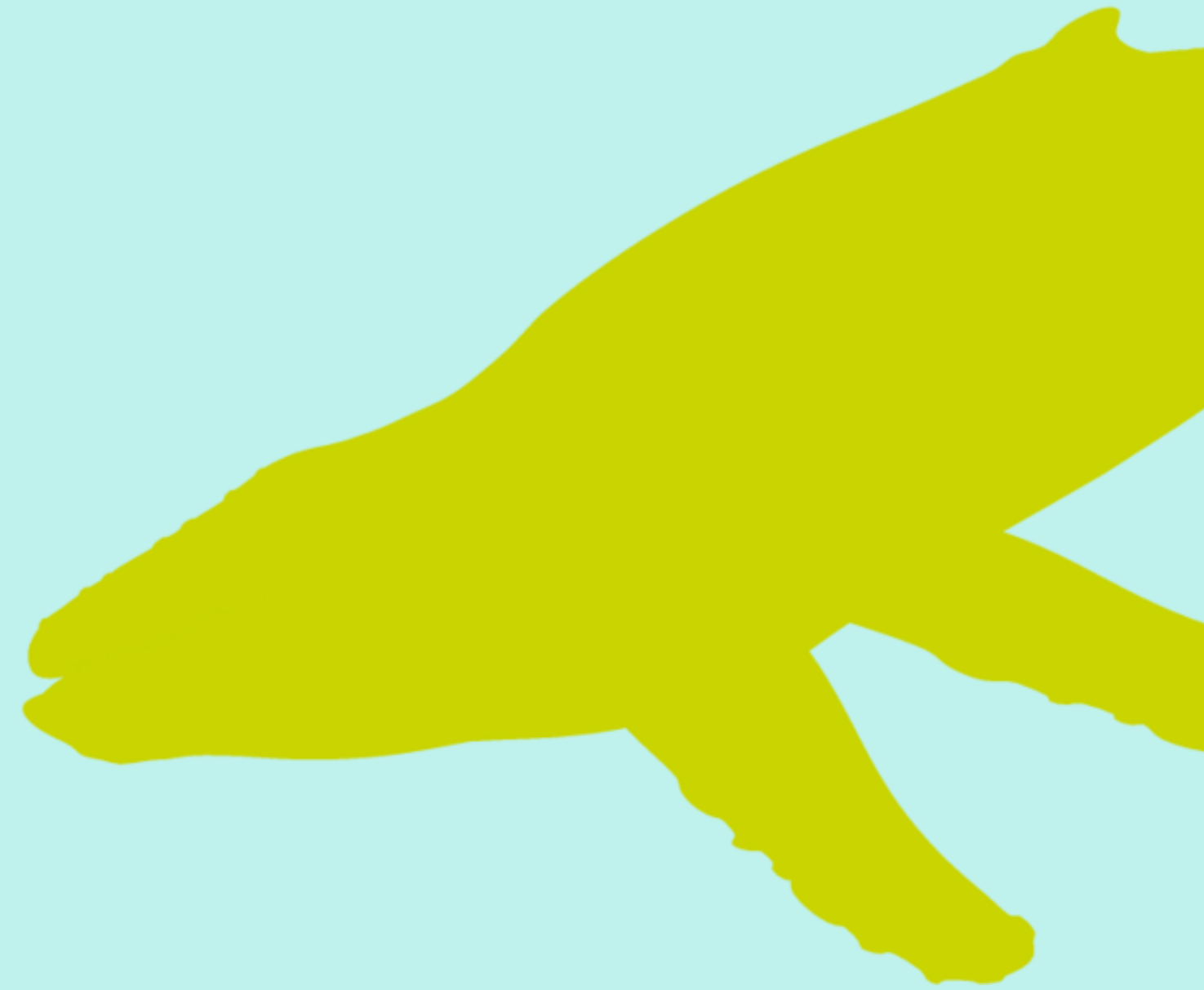
CTAs and navigation buttons should always be rendered in bold capitals with 3 px letter spacing. Font size should be substantial enough to attract the reader's attention, but can be adjusted to suit the context and proportional relationship with other textual content on the page.

Line spacing for headers should be 120%.
Line spacing for body copy should be 150%.

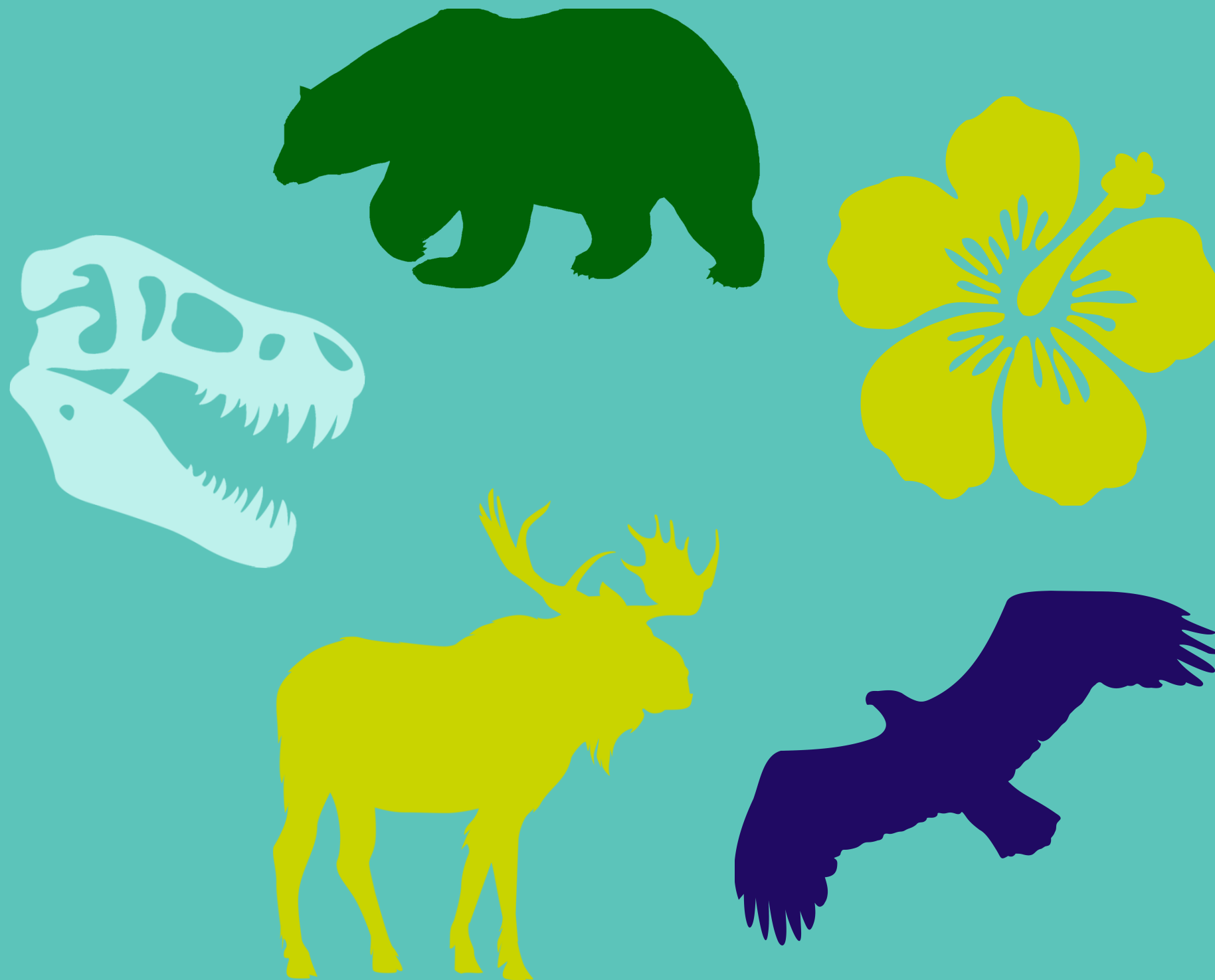
All typeface usage should prioritize legibility and accessibility requirements.

Text can also be offset from the background colour with the use of a rectangular framing element in another colour, as in the example here. This is an optional design element that can be used at the content creator's or designer's discretion to create clarity, emphasis, or visual interest. Always keep in mind the need for readability when choosing text and background colours. Margins surrounding the text should be consistent and uniform, and the framing element's corners should be slightly rounded.

6 Graphic Elements



Graphic Elements



Graphic elements should take the form of simple silhouettes, as in the examples on the left, and be rendered in brand colours.

Silhouettes should be taken from photographs or images of objects and specimens in the museum's collections.

There is some flexibility when it comes to the use of graphic elements: sizes and proportions can be modified to suit different types of content. They can be used in both a generally decorative or symbolic context or a more explicitly referential one, depending on the type of content.

Graphic elements can be used in conjunction with photographs and text, as demonstrated in the Moodboard and the examples on the next page.

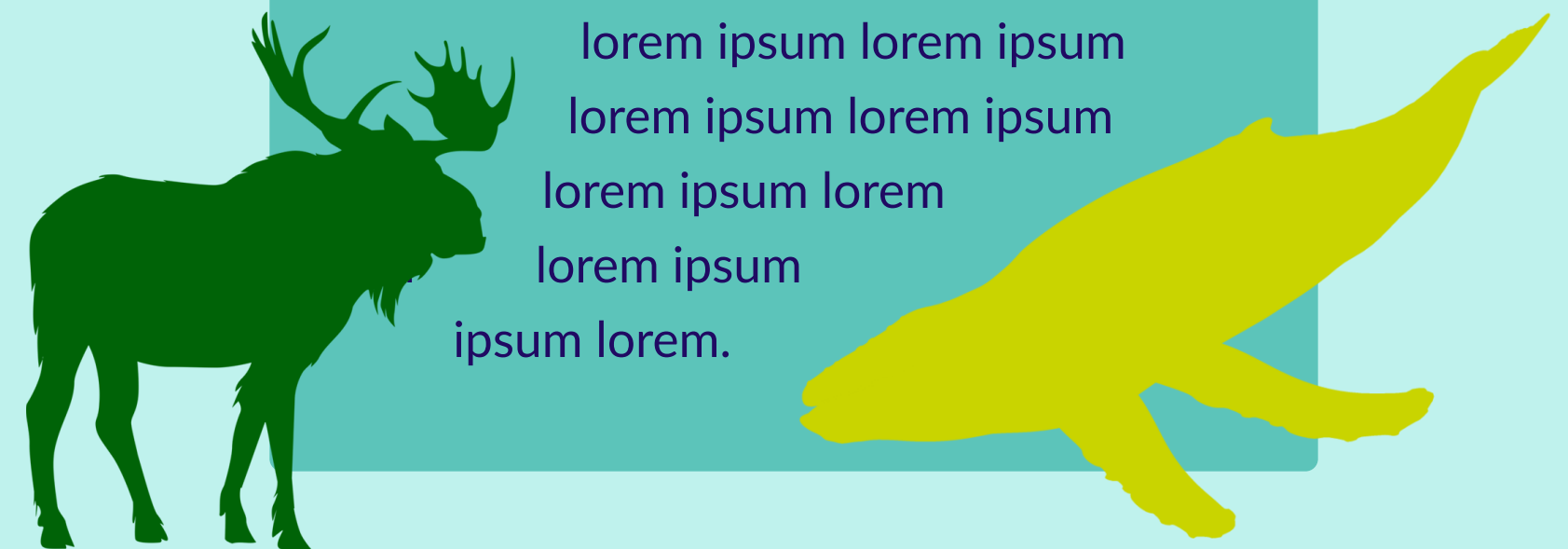
Graphic elements can overlap photographs or other graphics but they shouldn't obscure important visual information or be used in a way that might create confusion for the viewer.

Using Graphic Elements: Examples

With Photography



With Text

[illegible]

7 Photos



Photos



Photography should showcase the museum's collections, activities, and research initiatives. It also needs to express the diversity of the museum's audiences, employees, and research staff, who should see themselves reflected in and represented as vital components of our brand. Photos can be selected to suit the content in question (for example, photos of children interacting with the museum's displays should be used for content directed at our visiting school groups).

Photos should be of sufficiently high resolution to ensure legibility and accurate representation of visual information. Resolutions can be adjusted according to the type of content or channel in question (the recommended resolution for images included in Facebook posts, for example, is 1080 x 1350 px).

Photos should not be manipulated or distorted. They should be colourful, but colours must remain true to life in order to accurately represent objects or specimens in the museum's collection.

When using more than one photograph in the same item of content an effort should be made to unify the proportions of figures or objects depicted. Photos of small or microscopic objects or specimens must be of a high enough resolution that details are clearly legible.

Photos can be used for illustrative and educational purposes as well as to add visual interest. Careful thought should be given to the photos chosen for any type of content, and consideration given to the value those photos will provide to the viewer.

Alt Text should always be provided for photographs used in online content. Alt Text should be approx. 15 words/125 characters max.

Photos of museum spaces, staff, or collection objects do not require copyright permission or credit lines. Photos from an external source or depicting persons or objects not directly under the legal jurisdiction of the museum must be accompanied by the relevant copyright and credit as stipulated by the licensor.

Using Photos: Examples

Photos should be framed by thick border lines that feature the brand colours.

Content creators and designers are free to choose the arrangement of lines and brand colours, to suit different types of content.

Lines should not obscure any important elements in the photos, especially faces or details of the objects or specimens featured.

Graphic elements can be used in conjunction with photos, but should follow the guidelines outlined above, under Graphic Elements.



8 **Brand Identity and Voice**



Brand Identity

Our Values

Our core values are knowledge, innovation, engagement, and inclusivity. Caring for and creating lasting relationships with the natural world are principles that underpin each of our initiatives and activities.

Our Personality

Our character attributes are curiosity, creativity, collaboration, and courage.

We are professional but approachable, well-informed but endlessly curious, conscientious but open-minded, responsible but engaging.

Our Brand Goals

We want our communications to speak to a 21st-century audience, and to keep pace with the evolution of the museum as an institution that's currently underway in the cultural sector.

Like other federal museums who've recently rebranded (such as the National Gallery of Canada) we're eager to ensure that our communication channels—our website, social media posts, advertising, and digital and print promotional materials—accurately express our cultural relevance and better reflect the diversity of our audiences' interests and needs. Our current brand identity doesn't sufficiently convey the vibrancy of who we are and what we do.

Our brand needs to showcase the impact and variety of our activities, to encourage new forms of engagement with our collections and initiatives, and to express who we are in a visually compelling way that matches and even rivals our competitors.

Brand Voice

What We Say

Our tone is warm and friendly but always polite and factual. We use contractions but we don't use colloquial terms or phrases.

We use the first person when referring to the museum and the second person when addressing our audience directly: "We're excited to welcome you to our upcoming exhibition."

We use simple sentences with shorter words that can be easily understood by audiences with diverse linguistic abilities or accessibility requirements. We tailor our language to suit special audiences like school children, using age-appropriate terminology in consultation with educators.

We use the correct scientific terminology but always explain its meaning in simple terms so that everyone can understand.

Our content is always presented in both English and French.

What We Don't Say

We don't use offensive or culturally insensitive terms or phrases. We always check to make sure the language we're using is appropriate. We don't use words or phrases that discriminate against, exclude, or neglect individuals or groups on the basis of age, gender, ability, religion, ethnicity, culture, social status, or language.

Our tone is never patronizing or condescending. We don't use scientific terminology without explaining its meaning in simple, easily understandable terms.

Although we are a federal institution and our brand name includes reference to our Canadian identity, we don't exclude the many Peoples who live in Canada and don't identify as Canadian; we include and refer by name to Indigenous Peoples—whether groups or individuals—and acknowledge the diverse cultures who occupy this land and its natural environment.

9 Social Media Guidelines



Social Media Guidelines

Our channels

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CanadianMuseumofNature>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/MuseumofNature>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/museumofnature>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/canadanaturemuseum>

Social media content should always reflect the same brand values and identity as other types of content.

Photography should follow the same guidelines outlined above (under Photos).

Textual content should prioritize accessibility and take into account the unique parameters and limitations of each social media platform.

Facebook and Instagram posts, for example, can feature imagery and include only short texts that cover the most essential information. Limit hashtags and links to the most relevant ones—a few at most for each post.

Public comments should be monitored carefully to ensure they also remain true to the brand's values. Negative comments are permissible as long as they remain respectful. Racist, abusive, or profane commentary should be immediately removed, without response or explanation.

Alt Text should always be added to any images.

Images should not feature text overlays, which will be illegible to electronic screen readers. If text cannot be extracted from images, ensure that it is also repeated within the text of the post itself.

Word counts

Facebook: 40-50 characters for the first line, followed by key information in short paragraphs. 63,000 characters max.

Twitter: 280 characters max.

Instagram: 138-150 characters max. for the first paragraph, followed by key information in short paragraphs. 2,200 characters max.

**We look forward to
learning with you!**



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