



**REDACTED  
STYLE GUIDE**

**REDACTED  
ADDRESS**

**REDACTED  
CONTACT**

# REDACTED PROPOSAL WRITING & CONTENT STANDARDS

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## TONE AND VOICE

- Professional, direct, and confident. Avoid salesy or overly promotional language. We aim to show, not sell.
- Solution-focused. Emphasize how our process, people, and tools meet the agency's needs.
- Human but authoritative. Avoid generic filler; prefer grounded, actionable language.

*Examples:*

- “REDACTED will coordinate directly with district staff to schedule pickups without interrupting daily operations.”
- ✗ “We are proud to be the best in the business at customer delight.”

## LANGUAGE & TERMINOLOGY

- Always use "REDACTED" after the first instance of "REDACTED (REDACTED)" per response.
- Use client terminology from the RFP when possible (e.g., "Offeror," "Proposer," "Respondent").
- Use formal names for government entities (e.g., "Los Angeles Unified School District" on first mention, then "LAUSD").

**Terminology Preferences:**

Instead of	Use
customers	clients or agencies
downloads	data extractions
forms	official documents
files	records or images
scan	digitize (unless quoting client's own wording)

# FORMATTING STANDARDS

*Font:* Aptos, Matropolis, or Arial, 11 pt, black.

*Margins:* 1 inch on all sides.

*Spacing:* Single spaced; one extra line between paragraphs.

*Headers:* Use consistent heading levels (H1, H2, H3). Avoid over-nesting.

*Tables:* Use for clarity (e.g., showing timelines, roles, SLAs). Keep borders clean and minimal.

*Boilerplate Language:*

*MS Word Theme:* Please see appendix

## 508 Compliance & Accessibility Standards

To meet the needs of public sector clients and ensure digital accessibility, all proposal content must align with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and WCAG 2.1 Level AA standards. These requirements apply throughout the drafting process—not just at final production.

### Text & Structure

- Use **true heading styles** (Heading 1, Heading 2, etc.) in Word or Google Docs to structure content hierarchically. Do not mimic headings using bold or enlarged text alone.
- Avoid long, unbroken blocks of text. Use short paragraphs, logical headings, and bullets for easier screen reader parsing.
- Use plain language where possible to support readability across diverse audiences.

### Font & Color

- Only use approved, highly legible fonts: **Aptos, Matropolis, or Arial 11 pt minimum.**
- Ensure sufficient color contrast:
  - Body text must have at least a 4.5:1 contrast ratio with its background.
  - Large text (14 pt bold / 18 pt regular) requires at least a 3:1 ratio.
- Never use **color as the sole means** of conveying information (e.g., don't refer to "items in red" without another label).

## Links & Media

- Hyperlinks should use descriptive text (e.g., “View our case study”) rather than raw URLs.
- All images, charts, and infographics must include:
  - *Alt-text* in the source document, or
  - Descriptive text in the narrative body if alt-text isn’t available.
- Avoid images of text unless absolutely necessary, and ensure any such images are accompanied by a full-text equivalent.

## Tables & Lists

- Tables must have clearly defined header rows and consistent structure.
- Avoid merged cells, complex nesting, or empty cells that may confuse screen readers.
- Use numbered or bulleted lists (not manual formatting like hyphens or asterisks) to support structured reading.

## Document Metadata

- Set document language to English (US) in all files.
- Populate **title, author, and subject metadata** where applicable to support screen reader indexing.

## GRAMMAR & STYLE RULES

- Always use Oxford commas.
- Use active voice wherever possible.
  - “REDACTED digitizes 10,000 records per week.”
  - “10,000 records are digitized per week by REDACTED.”
- Write out all acronyms on first use with abbreviation in parentheses.
  - *Example:* “Records Management System (RMS)”
- Avoid contractions in formal content unless client-facing tone requires conversational style.

## CONSISTENCY RULES

- **Dates:** Use Month Day, Year format (e.g., June 15, 2025).
- **Numbers:** Spell out numbers one through nine; use numerals for 10 and above.
- **Timeframes:** Always use consistent units (e.g., “10 business days,” not “1.5 weeks”).
- **Measurements:** Use consistent units across documents (e.g., GB not gigabytes; pages not documents unless specified).

## BOILERPLATE INSERTION

- Insert all reusable content from the central Boilerplate Library, stored at:  
REDACTED ><LOCATION HERE>
- Common blocks include:
  - Company Overview
  - Security & Confidentiality Commitment
  - Project Team Qualifications
  - Quality Assurance Methods
  - Environmental & Sustainability Practices

Note: Always verify with the Proposal Manager before using modified boilerplate language. If adapting for client-specific needs, flag the edit in draft review.

## REVIEW & FINALIZATION PROCESS

- All content must go through:
- Technical Review (accuracy check)
- Compliance Check (meets RFP instructions and formatting)
- Final Editorial Review (tone, grammar, and visual polish)
- Use the Final Review Checklist located in the shared drive. <<Location>>

## APPENDIX:

### Typography Theme: REDACTED Proposal Style Set

ELEMENT	FONT	SIZE	STYLE	NOTES
Normal	Aptos	11 pt	Regular	Main body text
Heading 1	Metropolis	16 pt	Bold, All Caps	Section titles (e.g., SECTION 1: FORMATTING)
Heading 2	Metropolis	14 pt	Bold	Subsection headers
Heading 3	Metropolis	12 pt	Bold Italic	Tertiary groupings or checklists
Table Text	Aptos	10 pt	Regular	Apply to all tables for consistency
Quote/Callout	Aptos	11 pt	Italic, Light Gray Text (#4D4D4D), Optional border or light fill	For best practice callouts or quoted RFP content
Hyperlink	Aptos	11 pt	Underlined, #0563C1	Descriptive links only – no raw URLs
Captions/Footnotes	Aptos	9 pt	Italic, Gray (#666666)	Use for image/table notes, page footers
Intense Quote	Aptos	11 pt	Italic, Red (#B30000), border optional	Can be repurposed for warnings or client quotes
List Paragraph	Aptos	11 pt	Indent with bullets/numbers	Adjust spacing for clean list alignment
TOC Heading	Metropolis	14 pt	Bold, All Caps	For automated tables of contents
Strong	Aptos	11 pt	Bold	Emphasized text blocks or metrics
Subtitle	Aptos	12 pt	Regular, #4D4D4D	Optional pre- heading descriptor line
Book Title	Aptos	11 pt	Italic	Optional use for publication references

*Tip: Use line spacing set to Multiple: 1.15 and paragraph spacing After: 6 pt for open, readable content blocks.*

## Color Theme: REDACTED 508 Accessible Palette

THIS PALETTE ENSURES READABILITY ACROSS PRINT AND SCREEN, AND IS SAFE FOR GRayscale PRINTING WHEN NECESSARY.

<b>SLOT</b>	<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>HEX CODE</b>	<b>RGB VALUE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
Text/Background – Dark 1	Body text (normal)	#000000	0, 0, 0	Primary text
Text/Background – Light 1	Page background (light mode)	#FFFFFF	255, 255, 255	Always white
Text/Background – Dark 2	Subheadings or high-contrast accents	#2B2B2B	43, 43, 43	Optional deep gray
Text/Background – Light 2	Table fills / highlights	#F2F2F2	242, 242, 242	Subtle gray background
Slot	Purpose	Hex Code	RGB Value	Notes
Text/Background – Dark 1	Body text (normal)	#000000	0, 0, 0	Primary text

### Accent Colors

<b>SLOT</b>	<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>HEX CODE</b>	<b>RGB VALUE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
Accent 1	REDACTED Red – Primary	#B30000	179, 0, 0	Brand anchor color
Accent 2	Pale Red Tint	#F8DCDC	248, 220, 220	For background blocks or muted callouts
Accent 3	Slate Gray – Mid-tone	#4D4D4D	77, 77, 77	Subheadings, neutral dividers
Accent 4	Charcoal Gray	#666666	102, 102, 102	Soft contrast or chart outlines
Accent 5	Cool Gray (UI Neutral)	#A6A6A6	166, 166, 166	For de-emphasized UI elements
Accent 6	Light Gray – Secondary Fill	#D9D9D9	217, 217, 217	Alt-row shading or low-key fills
Hyperlink	Accessible Blue	#0563C1	5, 99, 193	High contrast
Followed Link	Visited link (grayscale safe)	#7F7F7F	127, 127, 127	Readable but not distracting

## How to Apply This in Microsoft Word

To create your custom style set and theme:

### A. Fonts:

- Go to **Design > Fonts > Customize Fonts**
  - **Heading Font:** Metropolis
  - **Body Font:** Aptos
  - Name and save as REDACTED Font Theme

### B. Colors:

- Go to **Design > Colors > Customize Colors**
  - Use the palette above to fill out the 6 accent colors + 2 text/background colors
  - Save as REDACTED Colors

### C. Style Modifications:

- Go to **Home > Styles Pane**
- Right-click and **Modify** each style (Heading 1, Normal, Table Text, etc.)
- Apply fonts, sizes, spacing, and set to "New documents based on this template"

### D. Save the Theme

- Go to **Design > Themes > Save Current Theme**
- Save as: REDACTED-Proposal-Theme.thmx