**BESPIN: Ecosystem Marketplace**

Website Content Strategy

**General Content Writing Guidance**

The BESPIN Ecosystem Marketplace serves skilled UX practitioners and novices alike. It’s important for the website’s written content to effectively communicate best UX practices, services, capabilities, and resources to users with a wide range of UX experience. While it’s important to highlight BESPIN’s expertise, it’s also necessary to write content with user empathy, education, and collaboration in mind.

Beyond the information conveyed on each page, the clarity, tone, and structure of written content play an essential role in successfully communicating with users. The following suggestions are intended to serve as guidelines for writing effective content.

**Keep information organized, focused, and concise.** Ensure that the information provided on each subpage directly supports the overall intention of that subpage. For example, if a piece of information on the Mission page doesn’t relate to the purpose of the BESPIN Ecosystem Marketplace, consider eliminating it or moving it to the relevant subpage. Similarly, break up different areas of focus within each subpage into separate, focused sections.

Examples:

**Write with** [**plain language**](https://plainlanguage.gov/) **best practices in mind.** Plain language ensures accessible, easily-understandable content. Writing web content with plain language best practices in mind increases the likelihood that users will easily comprehend important information quickly and thoroughly. It eliminates jargon, overly complicated language, and lengthy sentences.

Examples:

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**Write with an authoritative voice, maintain a supportive tone.** To foster collaboration both virtually and (eventually) in-person, highlight the UX expertise and services and expertise that BESPIN offers. Stress that this is a space for sharing UX best practices and resources for both skilled users and novices. Keep in mind that one of the objectives for this website is to position BESPIN as a trusted, long-term partner.

Examples:

**Capitalization and Grammar Guidelines**

To create a sense of consistency and cohesion across the website, follow these style recommendations.

**Title Case:** Applies to the capitalization of Headers, Subheaders, Featured Links or Resources, and Call to Actions.

**Punctuation:** Use serial commas (commas after the penultimate term in a series of three or more terms). Use em dashes (—) without spaces before or after in place of two dashes (--).

**Active voice:** Writing in the active voice is preferred because it makes subjects and actions clear, eliminating ambiguity about who should complete which tasks or responsibilities. In the active voice, the person or agency that’s acting is the subject of the sentence. In the passive voice, the person or item that is acted upon is the subject of the sentence. Passive sentences often include a form of the verb “to be,” e.g. was, were, could be, or have been.

Active: You must sign the form.

Passive: The form must be signed.

Active: You must include the following information in your application.

Passive: The following information must be included in the application for it to be considered complete.

**Present tense:** Verbs are direct and straightforward when written in the present tense. This is why sentences sound clearer and more urgent when they’re written in the present tense. This makes it easier for users to comprehend calls to action and other important information.

Instead of writing: These sections describe types of information that would satisfy the application requirements as it would apply to this grant program.

Write it as: These sections tell you how to meet the requirements for this grant program.

**Content Recommendations for Specific Components**

Each subpage of the Marketplace website will feature a combination of some or all of these components. The aforementioned content writing and tone recommendations should be applied to each component, but the following recommendations include writing suggestions, word counts, and examples specific to each component.

**Hero Image:** Choose arelevant image (.png or .jpg) measuring [dimensions]. When possible, select images that portray BESPIN’s collaborative values, UX expertise, resources, or team.

**Headers:** State the title of the overall page (5 words max). In the case of a page that’s as focused as a contact page, the header serves as the page’s primary call to action. This is why it’s important to keep this header very clear and direct. Examples: Contact Us, Connect With Us, Send Us A Message. For a broader page featuring more written content, such as the mission page, the header should be 1-2 words that sum up the page’s purpose or the focus of the rest of the content on the page. Examples: Mission, Mission Statement, Purpose, Our Objective, BESPIN Overview.

**Subheaders:** Concisely describe the focus of the page (15 words max). Keep language plain, focused, and to-the-point. This is a good place to state the most important piece of information that the user should take away from this page. Examples:

**Subsection Content:** Keep the content focused on the page’s overall purpose (# words max). For a page dedicated to BESPIN’s mission statement for the platform, any content on the page should serve the purpose of explaining or supporting the mission statement. If the page is dedicated to a specific project or resource, all information featured in the subsection should support the user’s understanding of that project or resource. For longer sections with multiple pieces of important information, break the information into focused paragraphs to assist the reader’s comprehension.

**Call To Actions:** Clearly state the purpose of this subsection’s call to action (5 words max). In the case of a call to action that directs the website users to the scheduler tool where they can schedule time with the platform, the language used should directly reflect that action. Examples: Schedule Time With Us, Make An Appointment, Schedule A Session With Us, Use Our Scheduler App. For a call to action that submits a form, the call to action only needs to be 1-2 words long. Examples: Submit, Submit Message, Send Email

**Form Field Text:** The text should plainly state the purpose of each field (3 words max per field). Examples: Name, Email Address, Phone Number, Message

**Featured Item Titles:** (# words max).Examples: Partners or Resources

**Featured Item Descriptions:** (# words max).Examples: Partners or Resources

**Expandable/Collapsable Item Title:** (10 words max).

**Expandable/Collapsable Item Description:** (50 words max).