



NEXUS234 INNOVATION DISTRICT

BRAND GUIDELINES

2026



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OVERVIEW

VISION

Building the future through innovation, collaboration, and community engagement.

MISSION

Accelerating innovation, developing high-skill talent, and bringing new technologies to market in a place where ideas and people thrive.

PURPOSE

To support Nexus234's vision and mission by providing a visual identity that inspires creative thinking and engagement in the District.





PRIMARY LOGO



Use this logo first! Nexus234 is a bright, white-based brand. The primary logo is meant to be placed on white backgrounds and over pale brand-approved colors / images. When in doubt, default to this version of the logo.

More instructions available further in the Logo section (proper use and misuse cases) and in the Imagery and Graphics, and Application sections.

 **LOGO**

SECONDARY LOGO

nexus 234
INNOVATION DISTRICT

Use this logo second! In cases where navy is used as a background color and the logo is required (e.g., report cover pages, posters, social media posts), the secondary logo should be used. Strike a balance between use of white and navy backgrounds in Nexus234 publications, using navy backgrounds no more than about 40% of the time.

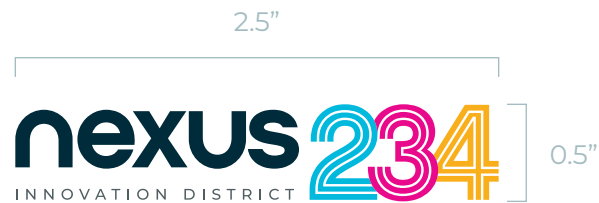
More instructions available further in the Logo section (proper use and misuse cases) and in the Imagery and Graphics, and Application sections.

≡ LOGO

MINIMUM SIZE

To preserve its quality and legibility, the logo must not be sized any smaller than 2.5" x 0.5" in print. These dimensions ensure that the smallest words of the logo, "Innovation District," are 6 pt or larger at all times. A sample at the exact minimum dimensions is provided.

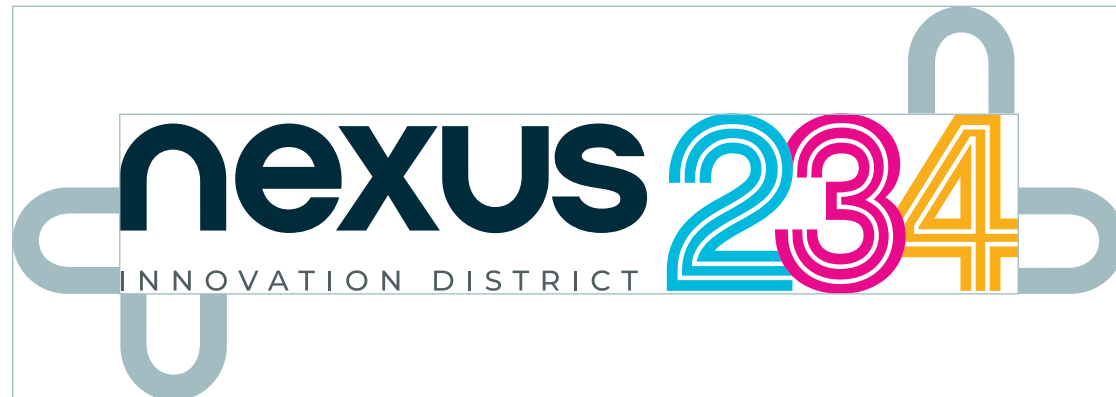
In digital applications where zoom features are available, the logo may be placed in smaller sizes. For dual use (print and digital), the minimum print size must be followed.



≡ LOGO

CLEAR SPACE

The Nexus234 logo requires at least the size of the “n” in Nexus of clear space around the entire logo. This clear space ensures the clarity and legibility of the logo remain intact and eliminates interference from graphics, imagery, or text. Clear space extends to the tops and bottoms of all rounded letter and number forms, as shown by the example below.



LOGO

VARIATIONS

Nexus234 has four logo variations: (1) primary (color on white) and (2) secondary (color on navy) and (3) solid black / navy, and (4) solid white. The primary and secondary logos shown on the previous two pages should be used first in every possible instance. Follow the instructions for background contrast carefully, and reference further sections in this document to understand correct logo uses.

Optional solid navy / black or solid white versions are available and may be used in special cases. For example, if Nexus234 sponsors an event by another entity, the Nexus234 logo may be placed over a non-Nexus234 background color in that entity's promotional materials. In this case, solid black or solid white logos may be needed.



Key Points for Application:

- 1. Primary logo first in every possible instance.** Tailor the District's promotional pieces in every medium to support the use of this logo variation. Encourage supporters and other entities displaying the Nexus234 logo to do so properly.
- 2. Secondary logo variation used next.** Seek a 60 / 40 balance between primary logo use and secondary logo use.
- 3. Save the solid navy / black and solid white logo variations only for special use cases.** The brand should endeavor to always use the primary and secondary options first.
- 4. Reference the brand guide for instructions and examples of proper / improper use.** Do not hesitate to ask for clarification about proper use.



≡ LOGO

PROPER USE CASES

- **DO:** Use the primary logo on white backgrounds.
- **DO:** Use the secondary logo on brand-approved navy backgrounds.
- **DO:** Follow the minimum size requirements.
- **DO:** Follow the clear space requirements.
- **DO:** Use the primary and / or secondary logos on image-based backgrounds, as long as there is quality contrast and no interference with the clarity and legibility of the logo.

nexus 234
INNOVATION DISTRICT

nexus 234
INNOVATION DISTRICT



≡ LOGO

MISUSE CASES

- **DON'T:** Use the primary or secondary logos on any background colors but the brand-approved navy or white.
- **DON'T:** Change colors of any part of the logo.
- **DON'T:** Ignore the minimum size requirements.
- **DON'T:** Interfere with the clear space requirements by putting text or busy images inside the designated boundaries.
- **DON'T:** Place logos on images that do not have adequate contrast or are too busy.
- **DON'T:** Skew, twist, rotate, or otherwise distort the logo in any way.
- **DON'T:** Delete any portion of the logo.
- **DON'T:** Add elements to the logo.



Montserrat

Montserrat

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890 !?&%#\$

TYPOGRAPHY

HIERARCHY

Montserrat contains a wide variety of weight options that retain legibility and clarity at all sizes. All weights may be used in the brand, but a suggested hierarchy is provided here.

When building pieces for social media or for infographics, focus on short but powerful messages. In these pieces the message should be set in Montserrat Black (examples are provided in the Application section of this document). Pair important phrases and data points with strategic lighter font weights.

H1: MONTSERRAT BLACK, ALL CAPS, 28 PT

H2: MONTSERRAT EXTRABOLD, ALL CAPS, 20 PT

H3: MONTSERRAT BOLD, ALL CAPS, 15 PT

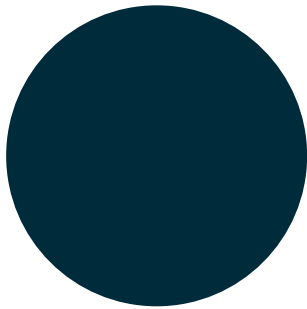
H4: MONTSERRAT BOLD, ALL CAPS, 10 PT

Body copy set in Montserrat Regular, 10 pt with 16 pt leading. Body copy can feature bold or italic words or phrases as needed. Paragraphs should have a minimum of 6 pt between them.

This entry is a sample paragraph to demonstrate ideal spacing between blocks of content set in body copy style.

COLOR

COLOR PALETTE

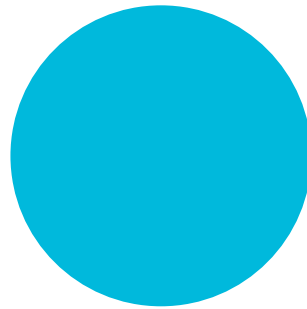


NAVY

HEX: #002b3a

RGB: 0 | 43 | 58

CMYK: 96 | 72 | 52 | 56

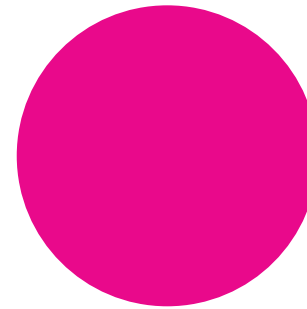


BLUE

HEX: #00b9dc

RGB: 0 | 185 | 220

CMYK: 77 | 0 | 11 | 0

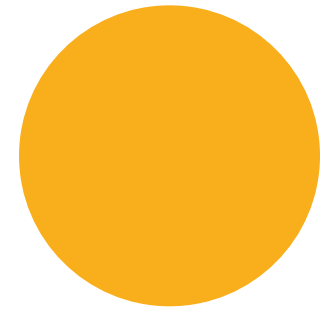


PINK

HEX: #e90a8b

RGB: 233 | 10 | 139

CMYK: 1 | 99 | 1 | 0

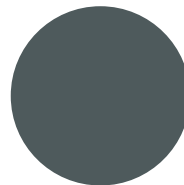


YELLOW

HEX: #f9af1c

RGB: 249 | 175 | 28

CMYK: 1 | 35 | 99 | 0

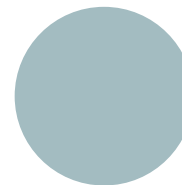


DARK GRAY

HEX: #4d5a5c

RGB: 77 | 90 | 92

CMYK: 69 | 53 | 53 | 28



LIGHT GRAY

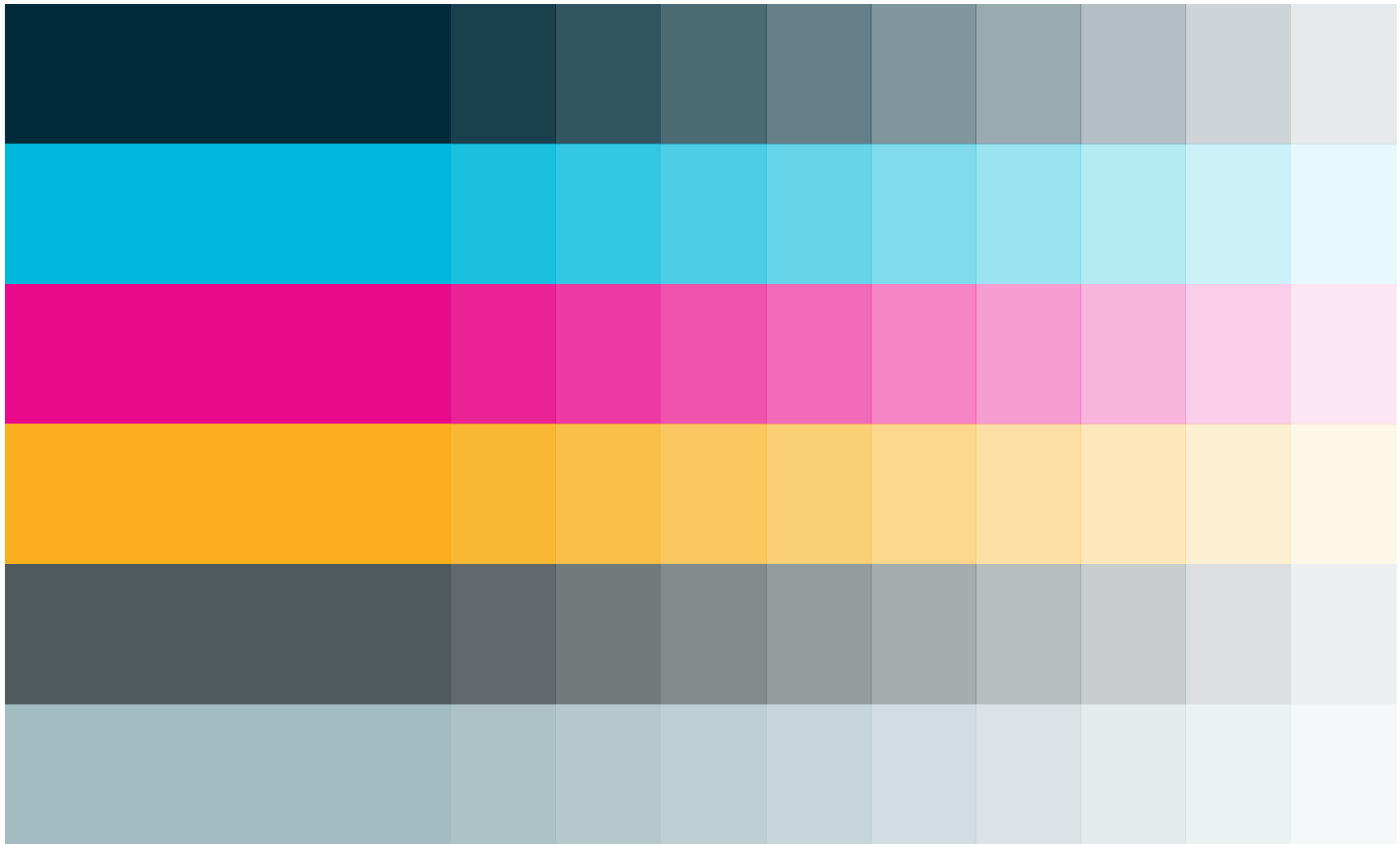
HEX: #a3bcc1

RGB: 163 | 188 | 193

CMYK: 37 | 16 | 20 | 0

COLOR

COLOR PALETTE



COLOR

ACCESSIBILITY GUIDELINES



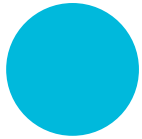
NAVY

Highly accessible. Can be used for text of all sizes and in all font weights. Ideal for H3 and lower heading levels in body copy to ensure accessibility. Can be used for backgrounds with both white text and yellow text.



DARK GRAY

Intended solely for text use on white backgrounds. Highly accessible at all text sizes and font weights on white. Do not use on navy. Can be used sparingly in graphics / icons.



BLUE

Primarily for decorative use. Accessible for text use on navy backgrounds for all but very small text. Best for decorative use on white backgrounds. Do not place text over fully saturated blue.



PINK

Primarily for decorative use. Accessible on white and navy backgrounds for large text (e.g., H1 or H2 level headings, H3 headings if bold and reasonably sized) and for graphics. Do not place text over fully saturated pink.



YELLOW

Highly accessible for text use on navy backgrounds only (all text sizes and as graphics). Best for decorative use on white backgrounds. Do not place text over fully saturated yellow.



LIGHT GRAY

Not accessible for text on any background (white or navy). Best used as a color wash (e.g., a pale gray box filled with dark gray text) and as an addition for graphics / icons.

≡ IMAGERY AND GRAPHICS

VISUAL ELEMENTS

The “234” in the District logo can and should be used as a decorative element. It should be used in large scale, and retain its original colors (2 in blue, 3 in pink, 4 in gold). They can be aligned vertically or horizontally, but cannot change order (must always be displayed in numerical order as 2-3-4).

Overlapping the numbers is allowed and encouraged. While being used as a decorative element, the numbers can run off the edges of pages. Take care to ensure the three numbers overlap one another in a visually pleasing way. You may strategically cut away or hide portions of the numbers to ensure clean display.

Can be placed over images. As with the logo, ensure clarity and contrast. Requirements not as strict as logo placement.



≡ IMAGERY AND GRAPHICS

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography can and should be used in brand application. Photos used as the main image / focal point in any medium (printed pieces such as posters, handouts, reports, flyers, brochures, and on the website) must be professionally produced. Blog posts and social media posts are encouraged to feature professionally produced photos, but can also use non-professional photography (e.g., photos taken on participant phone).

Photos taken professionally for this brand should:

- Be bright, with engaging composition
- Be people- and activity-focused
- Focus on priority sectors and the people working in them
- Be as unstaged as possible (e.g., if featuring a person sitting at their desk, have the photo be of them working not staring into the camera)
- Include people, even if the focus is landscapes or buildings
- Avoid unnecessary motion blur
- Avoid tropes (e.g., innovation or ideas represented by a lightbulb, teamwork represented by handshakes, puzzle pieces, etc.)

Sample photography on this page sourced from istockphoto.com



IMAGERY AND GRAPHICS

ICONOGRAPHY

Strategic iconography can be used in the application of the Nexus234 brand. Focus on icon styles that feature clean lines and clear imagery. Wherever possible have a creative design unique icons that suit the look of the brand and the topics discussed. However, using resources like Google's material.io icon system is acceptable. Linework icons are the first choice, as this style mimics the lines in the Nexus234 logo. Filled icons are also acceptable.

When displaying Nexus234's priority sectors, always use the same icons. This will ensure visual consistency.

The sample icons below are excellent examples of what to use in the Nexus234 brand, and are featured on the main website.



**LIFE SCIENCES AND
FORENSIC TECHNOLOGIES**



AEROSPACE AND DEFENSE



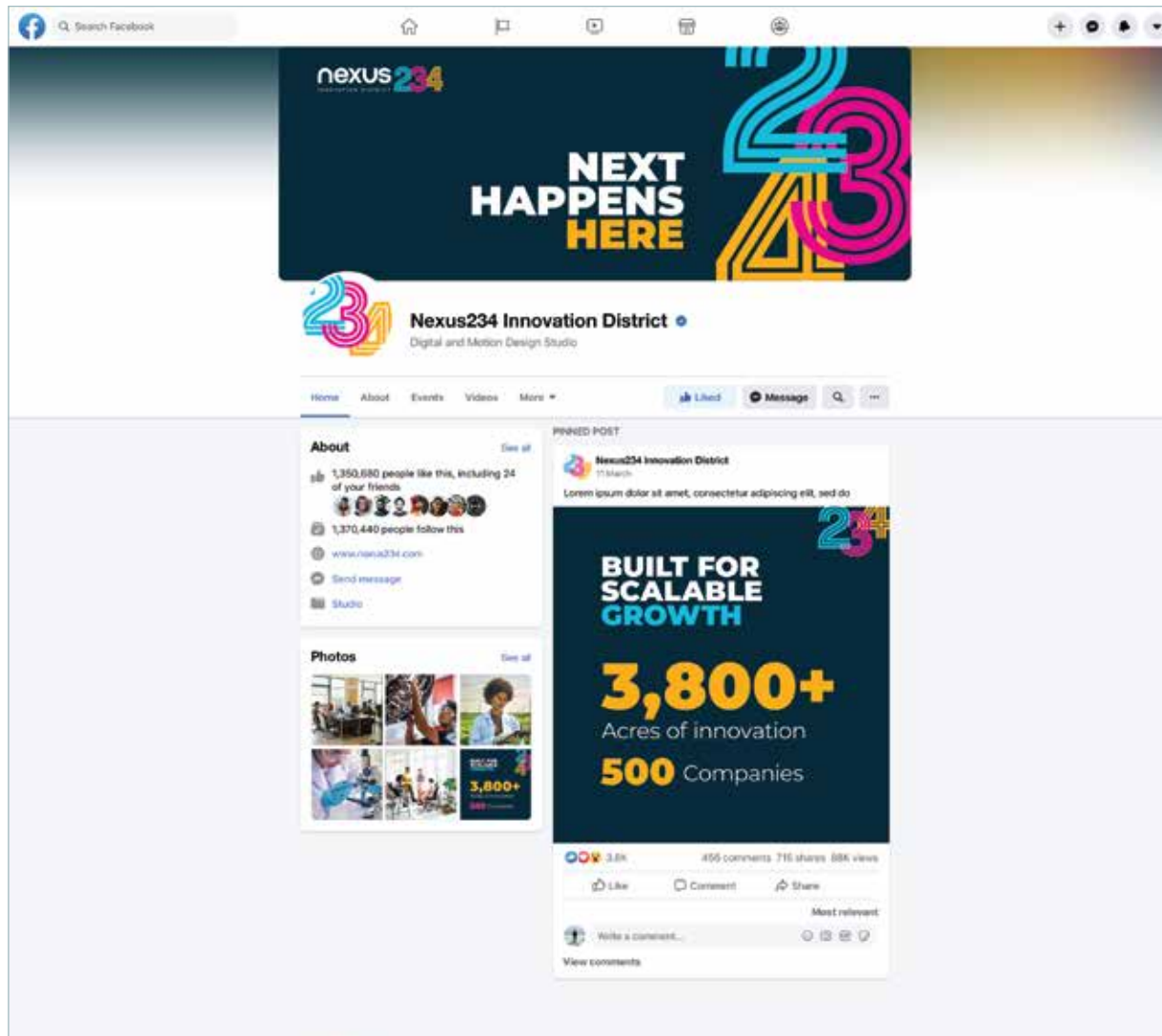
**SEMICONDUCTORS AND
ELECTRONICS**



**DATA CENTERS, AI, AND
CYBERSECURITY**

APPLICATION

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA



Social media platforms for the District should leverage the power of the brand's graphic elements to engage audiences.

Focus on profile pictures that use the 234 graphic, page header images that feature a short but powerful message, and content that is curated and focused on priority sectors, events, partners, and participants.

EXAMPLE PROFILE ICONS

Both are provided in accompanying source files



≡ APPLICATION

SAMPLE POSTER



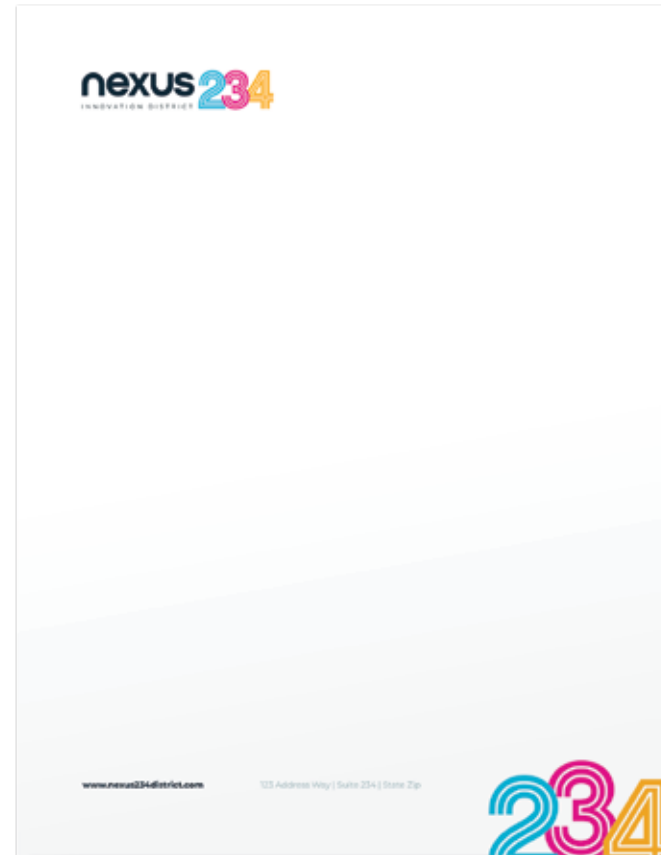
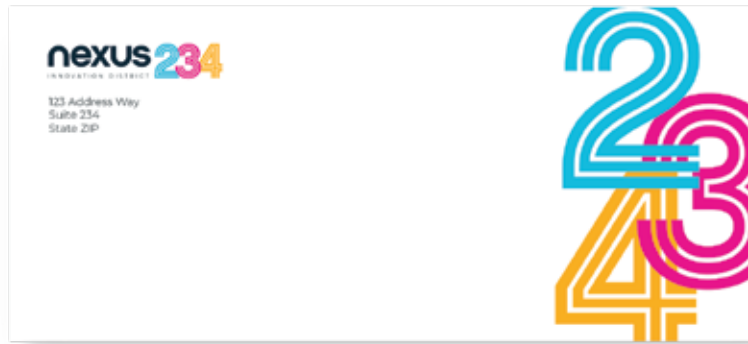
≡ APPLICATION

SAMPLE SIGNAGE



≡ APPLICATION

SAMPLE STATIONERY



≡ APPLICATION

SAMPLE CLOTHING AND SWAG



PARTNERS

Occasionally, Nexus234 and partner logos will need to be displayed together, or partner logos will be featured in Nexus234 materials.

As with the Nexus234 logo, the first choice is to display partner logos in their original colors on a white background. If this is not possible, the second choice is to display the partner logos in solid white over Nexus234 navy.

Order of display on Nexus234 materials is: Nexus234 logo first, George Mason University logo second, Prince William Economic Development third, and the City of Manassas fourth.

Logos must be displayed as intended by their respective brand guidelines, particularly with respect to minimum size and clear space requirements. Choose the lockup of each partner that best suits the space and size requirements of the Nexus234 piece being created.



PRINCE WILLIAM
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



PARTNERS

When displayed with partner logos, the Nexus234 logo is presented first. The partners are separated from Nexus234 by a fine line set in the brand approved light gray and listed in the approved order. Partners are to be displayed in solid black or their original colors.

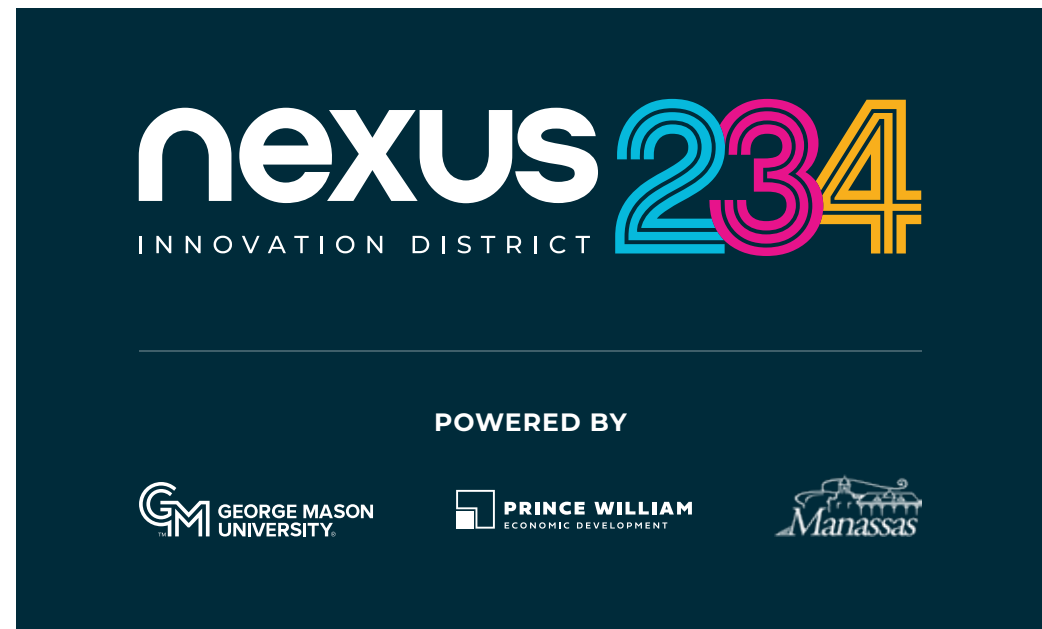
As with the rest of the brand, the first choice for display of the logos should be on a white background. Navy may be used as a secondary choice. When displaying the logos on a navy background, the dividing line is white set to a low opacity, and partner logos must be displayed in solid white.

Clear space rules described earlier in this document must be followed. The dividing line must never interfere with the Nexus234 logo clear space. The same visual space must be provided between the line and partner logos and “powered by” title.

Partner-only lockups are available on the next page of this document.



POWERED BY



POWERED BY



POWERED BY



QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions about how to apply the Nexus234 Innovation District brand, please contact us!

Stiletto Consulting Inc.

info@thinkstiletto.com

