

Quick guide:

# Our Brand Voice Traits

We want our voice to **cut through the noise**, so we're...

## EXPERT

When being EXPERT, we...

**Do** remind people of our qualifications – our credentials, resources, experience and scale.

**Do** be as precise as possible – not “the Museum leads a large consortium of scientists”, instead “the Australian Museum leads a consortium comprising 54 scientists from 29 different institutions across 7 countries.”

**Do** remember that a specific person's personal expertise is valuable and readers will associate that with the Australian Museum.

**Don't** come right out and say something to the effect of ‘this is why we're qualified’. Reference the qualifications, and let readers infer the expertise.

**Don't** expect people to be able to make the link between the subject matter and the qualifications. For example, what does having a large collections team have to do with being qualified to measure the impact of climate change? Take them on the journey from specimens to data to conclusions.

We want our voice to **excite and inspire**, so we use...

## WONDER

When using WONDER, we...

**Do** put ourselves in the shoes of someone who might be new to the subject matter – what might this topic look like, what might seem incredible about it, to fresh eyes?

**Do** be enthusiastic. The Museum plays a curatorial role, which means it's here (physically or otherwise) for a reason. It's special. We want to express that.

**Do** lean into emotion. Though wonder might be created by information, it's felt, not thought. So make them feel.

**Don't** exaggerate or overstate or deceive. We want to uncover and present why the truth is Wonder. With all that we have to offer, we shouldn't ever have to make anything up.

**Don't** dumb things down. Go for ‘What might this look like to fresh eyes?’, not ‘How do I simplify this for a child?’.

**Don't** ignore your own feelings. If you don't genuinely feel something is Wonder, it'll likely seem inauthentic to the reader too.

We want our voice to **propel us forward**, so we're...

## PROGRESSIVE

When being PROGRESSIVE, we...

**Do** identify and spotlight the work/ actions of the Australian Museum that advance society (locally or globally) socially, scientifically, environmentally or culturally.

**Do** remember that empathy is key here – focus on what part of the progress will get people excited or inspired, or reframe something potentially dry in a more engaging and evocative way.

**Don't** confuse institutional progress for societal progress.

**Don't** generalise – if the progress we're describing is nebulous and generic, it's probably not going to sway anyone. Make it feel real.

We want our voice to **embrace all that we are**, so we're...

## SPECIFIC

When being SPECIFIC, we...

**Do** identify specific and exceptional features, specimens or statistics to elevate rather than speaking broadly.

**Do** ask – what's the most interesting fact, and what's the best specific example or representation of that?

**Do** celebrate and elevate niche areas of interest – even if a person isn't interested in that specialisation, they'll be interested in our enthusiasm and expertise.

**Don't** bury readers in details – this is about being decisive, rather than comprehensive.

**Don't** mistake interesting-to-you or relevant-to-the-Museum for interesting-to-them. Using empathy and ensuring you have a clear idea of who your audience is will be crucial here.

**Don't** use jargon – translate, then communicate.

