

# Oulu Brandbook



# Contents

Higher Grade° of Responsibility .....	3	Main colors.....	20
Brand building blocks.....	4	Secondary colors .....	21
Brand cores .....	5	Logo color variations .....	22
A higher grade of.....	6	Typography: Oulun Graadi .....	23
Key messages: experts and cooperation .....	7	Font information .....	24
Key messages: students, youth and travelers .....	8	Using the degree symbol.....	25
Elevator pitch.....	9	Photographs and visual narratives.....	26
Brand persona .....	10	Layout principles .....	29
Tone of voice.....	11	Templates.....	30
Oulu's logo .....	12	Poster templates .....	31
Oulu's logo: story and use .....	13	Layout of images and titles: examples .....	32
Logo versions .....	14	Documents and announcement templates.....	33
Protected areas .....	15	Inspiration: products .....	34
Black and white.....	16	Inspiration: graphics, surfaces etc. ....	35
Departments .....	17	The Oulu brand was made by the people of Oulu.....	36
Public utilities.....	18	Contact information.....	37
Logo hierarchy and layout .....	19		

## Higher Grade° of Responsibility

Oulu's brand is Oulu and Oulu's citizens. Brand is the feeling that Oulu brings up in people. It communicates what people think of Oulu and how people experience our city.

This Brandbook is a guide or medley of how Oulu is described visually and verbally. The Brandbook recounts the most important aspects of Oulu's brand, directs the planning of messages and communication and guides the use of visual identifiers.

Oulu's citizens have participated in the brand work. Each act, idea, response, comment and feedback has guided the brand to represent Oulu better.

Oulu's coming European Capital of Culture year is also visible in the brand.

Above all, the brand must be real, meaningful and genuine – a higher grade of responsibility.

*Ari Alatossava*  
Mayor



# Brand building blocks

*The brand consists primarily of actions and messages. They are steered by Oulu's proven strengths, which form the basis of the brand.*

## **Positioning differentiation: a down-to-earth growth center living off the power of the North.**

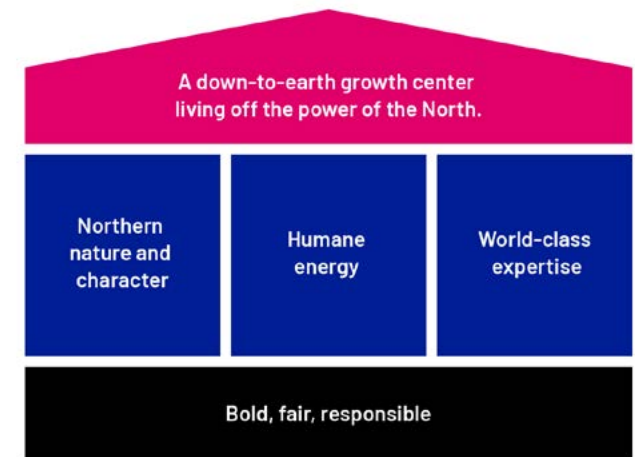
The positioning differentiation is the brand's target image, which sets it apart from the competition. Positioning is not the same as a slogan or a brand promise.

## **Supporting factors: Northern nature and character / humane energy / world-class expertise**

Supporting factors are the building blocks for positioning differentiation. They sharpen the focus on how we are going to create the desired positioning and strengthen it.

## **Values: bold, fair, responsible**

Values steer the brand and form the basis for all action.



## Brand cores

*Oulu's brand is encapsulated by the city's strengths – or the core thoughts that define Oulu and differentiate the city from others.*

### North

North is both a geographic location and an attitude. At its rawest, it is the proximity and impact of the rugged, beautiful, and varied nature of Oulu – the number one city for half of Finland. Our feet are steady on the northern ground: what we do, we do responsibly and in our own way. Oulu is bold, it influences more than it is influenced.

### Humane

The humane nature of Oulu is encapsulated in a community that welcomes you. People are encountered honestly, exactly as who they are. Working and doing things are important, but not the most important things in life – space and opportunities are provided for family, home and self-expression. It just feels like there's more time in Oulu.

### Smart

Oulu is home to a unique combination of intelligence and creativity. It manifests itself in the high level of educational attainment that forms a basis for the ability to solve problems and as a company culture that encourages experimentation. It may show as urban infrastructure that improves the quality of life, too. Oulu's insightfulness is clever and captivating.



## A higher grade of...

*Oulu's brand promise is based on the city's strengths. It has the courage to reach for the future and create something new. Our Higher grade of philosophy tells us not only about Oulu's location, but also environmental responsibility, technology, change, and urban development.*

Oulu is Finland's fifth largest city and very well known nationally, so there is no need for Oulu to advertise itself with a clever and facile little slogan. Oulu's brand promise is primarily an internal tool that steers all activities towards the desired future.

The promise is not a slogan and it will not be written out in conjunction with a logo. It can be present in the city's content and materials, where the promise must always be justified and fulfilled visually, verbally, or experientially. Repeating the promise is not an end in itself.

## A HIGHER GRADE OF

The Higher grade philosophy means that the promise lives and adapts to context. The presented nouns that supplement the phrase are chosen so that they are real or attainable and right for each specific theme. And that they embody Oulu. The nouns are compatible with the stated cores of the Oulu brand, linked to its key messages, and in line with instructions provided on the tone of voice.

TOLERANCE

RESPONSIBILITY

CREATIVITY

FAMILIARITY

MEANINGFULNESS

SUSTAINABILITY

RUGGED

HAPPINESS

INTELLIGENCE

OULUNESS

# Key messages: experts and cooperation

*What should we tell anyone out there who is interested in Oulu?*

*The first, general key message opens up the Oulu brand promise and functions as a signature for the brand cores. Chosen strengths, on the other hand, are listed based on the target group: we can all use the messages as they are to start conversations or augment them with additional observations.*

**Oulu offers a higher grade of living.  
It's a future European Capital of Culture  
with humane energy and buzzing with  
forward-looking high tech.**

## Companies in Finland and internationally

Oulu is a model city for cooperation: a hub of established and developing networks. The business-friendly environment puts all the opportunity in the world at your fingertips.

*Key points to consider in communication:*

- Oulu is, in all ways, a Smart City and a center for world-class expertise and innovation. 5G and 6G, radio and health tech, printed intelligence, and the world's smartest hospital are just a few examples of Oulu know-how.
- The steadily growing expertise hub of northern Finland is at your disposal, as are the networking opportunities, influential people, and communities of a multidisciplinary university and research city.
- In a city with a high quality of life, recruitment works, and people settle down. Oulu supports companies in finding the right experts, in Finland and internationally.
- Oulu offers an innovative environment, an intelligent platform for experimentation, and all the support needed to start something new. Solutions to the problems of the future will be discovered in Oulu.

## Experts here and elsewhere

Discover, get inspired, and fulfil your potential in Oulu. You'll have the space and opportunity for a chilled-out, unhurried life, and meaningful work and career. In Oulu, the days roll by on people's terms – and at nowhere near the same financial cost as in the other big cities.

*Key points to consider in communications:*

- The fearless creation of something new and world-class education enable a particularly Oulu kind of happiness and work that has meaning and impact on a global scale.
- Oulu is a place where you can live a high-quality life with moderate costs. We are all continuously engaged in building a better, more inspiring, and more meaningful Oulu – together. The growing future European Capital of Culture offers events, culture, well-being, and things to do for us all.
- Everyday benchmarks and bigger dreams are reached easily and ecologically in a lively biking city. Sustainability underscores everything: nature is present in the city and it is treasured. Oulu is committed to the goals of Agenda 2030 as well as the European Circular Cities Declaration.
- Oulu welcomes people from all over the world, treats all equally, and welcomes them into the community.

# Key messages: students, youth and travelers

## Students and youth

In Oulu, children grow up to be global citizens with deep roots. The city brings together creativity, nature, know-how, and caring in a way that helps people grow up to be strong and balanced, able to stand on their own two feet.

*Key points to consider in communications:*

- In Oulu, development and collaboration help create meaning and surprising connections using culture, science, and technology: a European Capital of Culture continuously generates more jobs and well-being for the region.
- Not only does Oulu offer the highest quality and most diverse education on all levels available in the North, but it also offers you the world: jobs in half of Finland are within reach, as well as opportunities for postgraduate education and the power of our extensive international networks.
- In Oulu, you can continue developing yourself: the city is committed to its youth and lifelong learning – education and expertise from Oulu are global exports.
- Taking care of oneself and connecting to nature is easy. Oulu invests ecologically and socially in the future and offers a high quality of life in all its phases.

## Travelers

Oulu offers northern experiences and opportunities. The region draws strength from bodies of water and urban nature, offering a higher grade<sup>o</sup> of surprising thrills. Come as you are and be yourself – we are, too!

*Key points to consider in communications:*

- Oulu is an excellent destination for sustainable travel. Our natural and cultural values are reason enough to visit Oulu, and the four real and changing seasons offer even more options for things to do.
- Irresistible and responsible cultural events of all stripes are available: events combining madness, culture, sports, and innovations with just the right touch really stick with you.
- Whether you're a tourist, a travel operator, or attending a conference, the travel services and experiences Oulu offers are constantly developing. All visitors are offered an opportunity to experience their own kinds of Oulu moments.
- Oulu's restaurant scene offers a northern experience and clean tastes, whether you're looking for street food on hot tarmac or fried vendace and potatoes on the shore.



## Elevator pitch

*The elevator pitch for Oulu evokes the desired first impression the city wants to make. Our purpose is to distill and maybe even exaggerate a little to be suitably provocative. When we are creating an elevator pitch, we must always be aware of who we are talking to and adapt it for the audience – on the fly, if necessary. The most important thing is to establish a connection. Here's an example:*

Oulu. Born in the gentle embrace of the waters, a down-to-earth city with its feet planted in the northern soil, developing in nature's terms to become the best in the world. In many ways, we are the most insightful place in the northern hemisphere: we take advantage of the infinite know-how of our region, so we can best share our good fortune with the rest of Finland and the world.

Our northernness is manifested in our relaxed hospitality, bold deeds, and tenacity – the keys to success for individuals and companies. Our superpowers are the different people, neighborhoods, and Oulu's rich and varied nature. We have the space, time, and opportunities for authentic encounters – of a higher grade<sup>o</sup>, naturally – that may change your life.

## Brand persona

*For us to be able to relate to a brand and find ourselves in it, it must have human characteristics. For that reason, Oulu has a brand persona that reflects us and what we consider important to us.*

If you ran into Oulu on the street or in social media, you'd feel you've met a trustworthy and charming, intelligent person who is pleasant company. Oulu likes to meet all kinds of people. Oulu might have a cheeky look on its face and ask you about you and your life, while sharing amusing stories about itself. With a twinkle in its eye, Oulu would challenge your perceptions. You notice that Oulu is actually quite worldly, even though it doesn't rub it in your face.

It's not until it tells you about its experiences that you realize how knowledgeable about the world it is and how willing to learn more. Oulu is creative and persistent, looking to work and succeed together. The two of you could hop on your bikes and head to a nearby brewery to sample their wares and talk for hours.

# Tone of voice

*The tone of voice matters every bit as much as the story. That's why we've defined a unified tone of voice for Oulu and one that differentiates it from others by accentuating its unique characteristics. We use the tone of voice in all of Oulu's communications – internally and externally.*

## **Oulu is fair, trustworthy, and natural, so it talks HONESTLY and tells it like it is.**

*How is it seen and heard?*

Our messages are understandable and inclusive. We talk about us, but in a way that signals we are also open to others. We include current and future inhabitants of Oulu. We are excited and exciting!

*What's the impact?*

We strengthen our pull and grip by approaching the recipient and by being stoked about our city.

## **Oulu is intelligent, responsible, and bold, so it talks WITHOUT FEAR**

*How is it seen and heard?*

We give it to you straight. We are proud of our expertise, but we don't hide our mistakes. We are open about how we learn. We have the courage to display thought leadership, to challenge and lead by example.

*What's the impact?*

We take our place in the urban discourse and define our own place nationally and internationally.

## **Oulu is northern, lively, and relaxed, so it speaks in a GOOD-NATURED manner**

*How is it seen and heard?*

We describe things in a joyous way and even use superlatives, as long as we do it with thought. In the right context, we will talk about ourselves, but with a twinkle in our eye: we have the guts to be almost incisively self-deprecating, but we never ridicule others. We do not get stuck in negativity but communicate with humor. We learn to talk about Oulu in a positive manner in all situations.

*What's the impact?*

We sound like our people and attract more and more recipients to be influenced by our messaging.

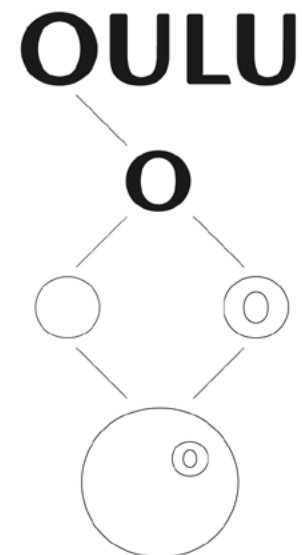
## Oulu's logo

Oulu's logo combines the old and the new. The familiar and unique shade of purple is joined by a maritime blue. Together they form a gradient that illustrates the different sides of Oulu – its contrasts. When the color is combined with the name Oulu in its familiar typography, Oulu's logo is born: unique, familiar, fresh, and all Oulu.



## Oulu's logo: story and use

The letter O is the basis for the logo. The letter provides the logo with its elliptical shape as well as the degree symbol used as a part of it. They are united by an organic shape that lives atop the ellipse and adapts to the situation: when the world changes, so does Oulu.



## Logo versions

There are different sizes with vertical and horizontal orientations available for different situations. The different versions are named by size.

The most common sizes used are S and L.



## Protected areas

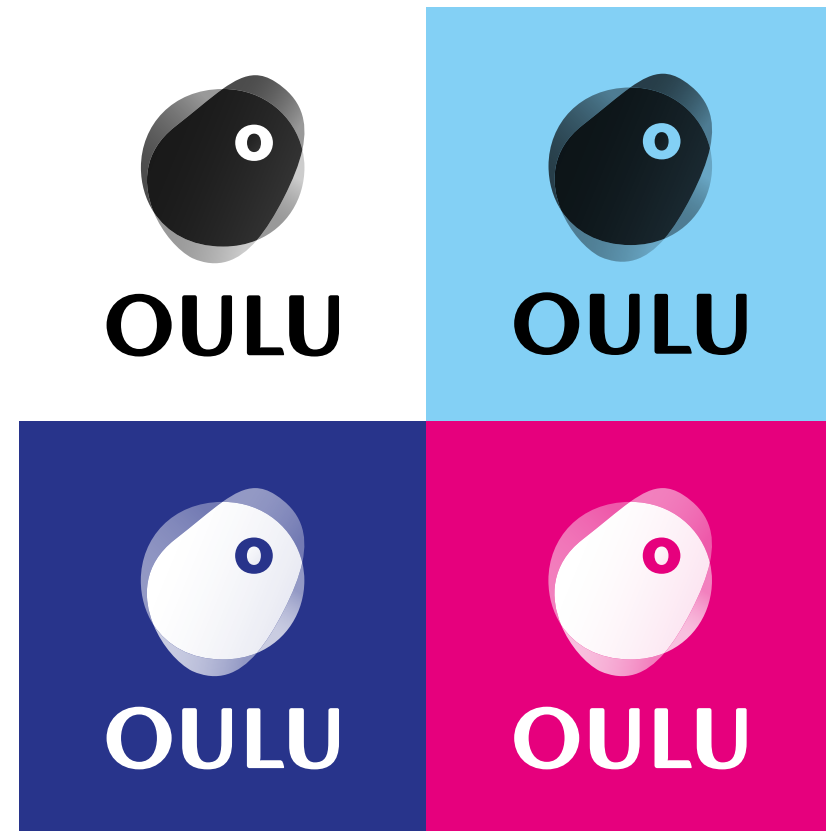
We do not combine the logo with other elements. It's always clear and clean. That's why we have defined protected areas around the logo and no other elements should be placed within that area.



## Black and white

If the Oulu logo is used without the gradient color, black and white versions can be used. In these versions, the gradient is replaced with transparency. The background color affects the logo's appearance.

If a completely black or white logo without transparency is needed – for example, for printing reasons (solid version of the logo) – please contact the city of Oulu's communications team.





## Departments

The different departments of the city of Oulu use colors and elements of the Oulu logo in their materials. There are different versions of the department logos: versions with the Oulu logo present vertically or horizontally, as well as separate versions without the Oulu logo. When using separate logos, Oulu's logo must always be included in the publication (see instructions on page 18).

When we create visual identities for ventures, events, or other initiatives with a close connection to Oulu or its public utilities, using Oulu's main colors as well as its own Oulun Graadi typography is strongly recommended. This way, the identities are unified and easily recognizable as a part of the Oulu identity.



## Public utilities

Some public utilities use a unique look that is distinguishable from the basic colors. The logos use a separately chosen additional color and a variation of the living shape.

In materials, we use Oulu's look but tinted with the chosen additional color. The white degree sign connects the logo to Oulu's look. Some public utilities use an adapted form of the Oulu brand (such as Oulu Waterworks).



## Logo hierarchy and layout

The Oulu logo is generally placed in the bottom-right corner in the city of Oulu's own materials, and it is aligned with the degree symbol in the upper-right corner.

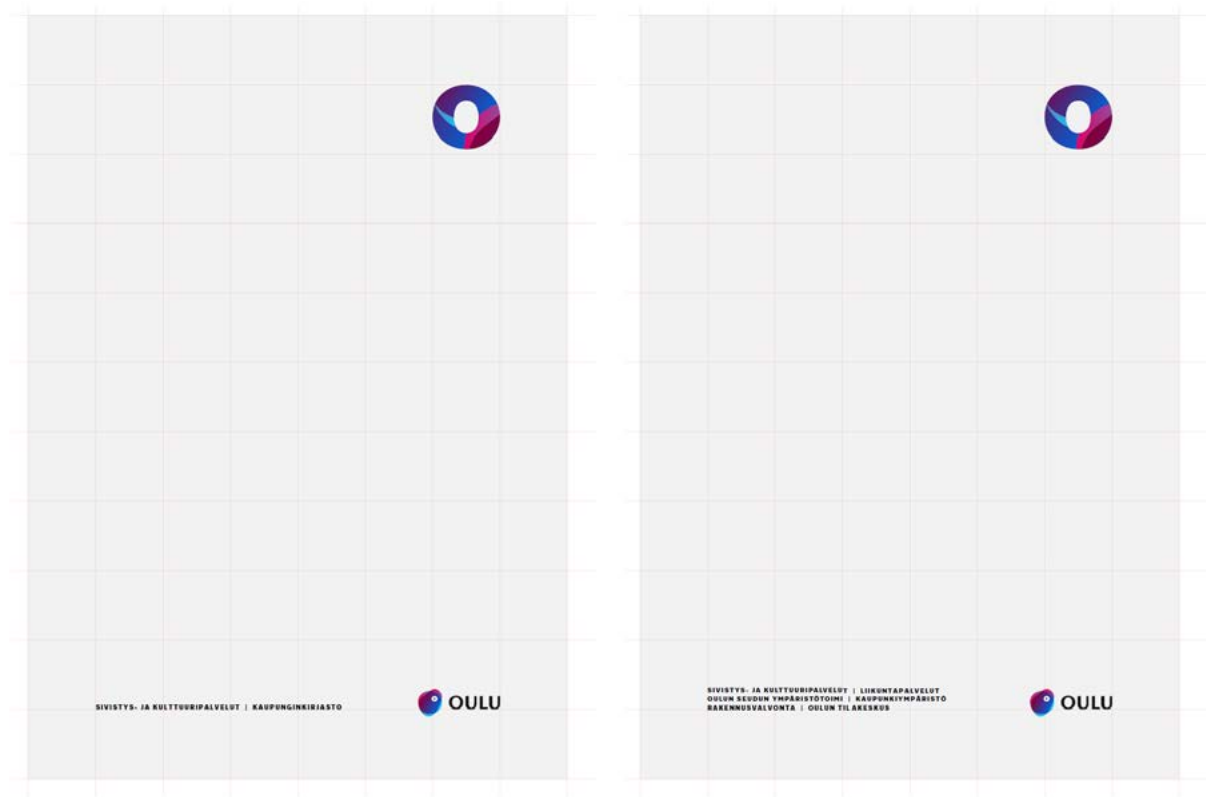
Do not repeat the Oulu logo in city's materials, for example, when listing the logos of event organizers.



See the examples on the right for how to separate the Oulu logo and list the departments next to it.

In international communications, primarily use the basic Oulu logo and in specific cases, you may mention "Finland".

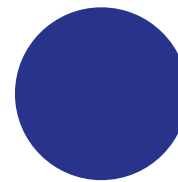
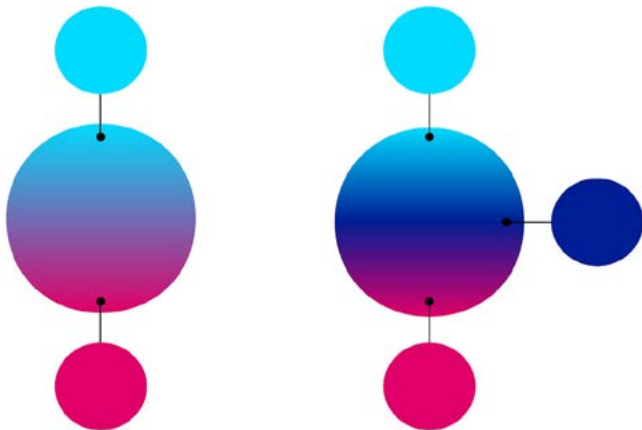
Further information about layout and mentioning "Finland" from the city of Oulu communications team



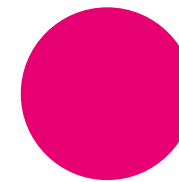
## Main colors

Oulu's colors are fresh. The familiar shade of magenta is combined with a pleasant, maritime blue as well as the gradient created by combining the two colors.

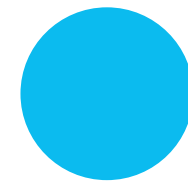
When we create the gradient, it requires a secondary color to preserve the brightness of the gradient. The secondary color, too, is one of Oulu's colors.



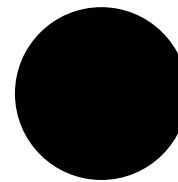
**DARK BLUE**  
C100 M90 Y0 K0  
R0 G30 B150  
#001E96  
PANTONE 286 C  
RAL 5002



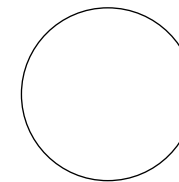
**MAGENTA**  
C0 M100 Y15 K0  
R225 G0 B105  
#E10069  
PANTONE 213 C  
RAL 4010



**LIGHT BLUE**  
C70 M0 Y0 K0  
R0 G219 B255  
#00DBFF  
PANTONE 306 C  
RAL 5012



**BLACK**  
C0 M0 Y0 K100  
R0 G0 B0  
#000000  
PANTONE BLACK 6 C  
RAL 5004

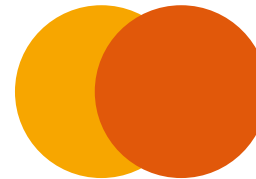
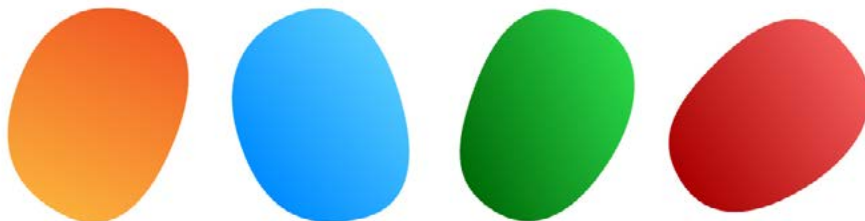


**WHITE**  
C0 M0 Y0 K0  
R255 G255 B255  
#FFFFFF  
PANTONE -  
RAL -

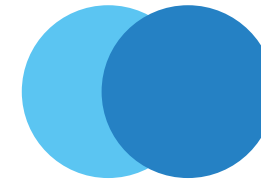
## Secondary colors

We use secondary colors primarily in the expression of public utilities and projects that are developed from the Oulu logo's variations. The secondary colors can be used in different graphic contexts, campaigns or events with consideration. They can also be used for the needs of public utilities as long as main colors are also used and Oulu is recognizable.

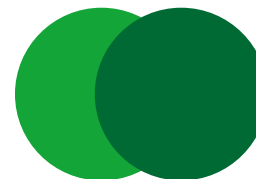
Secondary colors are happy and bright, and their two different shades are used to create gradients.



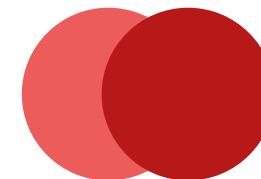
C0 M40 Y100 K0  
C0 M75 Y100 K5  
R250 G175 B60  
R240 G90 B3  
#FAAF3C  
#F05A23  
PANTONE 137 C  
PANTONE 1655 C  
RAL 1028  
RAL 2009



C60 M0 Y0 K0  
C80 M40 Y0 K0  
R85 G200 B255  
R0 G140 B255  
#55C8FF  
#008CFF  
PANTONE 2985 C  
PANTONE 285 C  
RAL 5012  
RAL 5017



C80 M0 Y100 K0  
C100 M30 Y100 K20  
R40 G215 B75  
R0 G110 B10  
#28D74B  
#006E0A  
PANTONE 360 C  
PANTONE 356 C  
RAL 6018  
RAL 6032

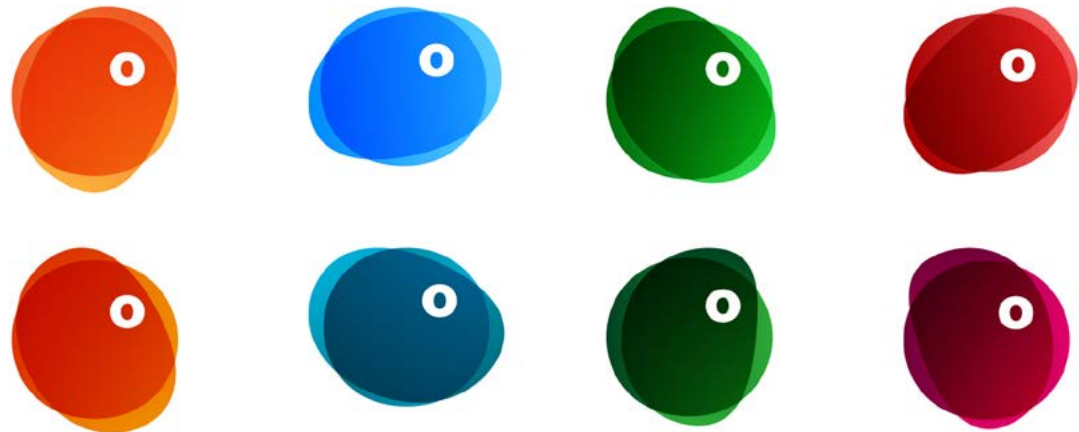


C0 M75 Y60 K0  
C20 M100 Y100 K10  
R240 G90 B90  
R170 G0 B0  
#F05A5A  
#AA0000  
PANTONE 1785 C  
PANTONE 1805 C  
RAL 3017  
RAL 3020

## Logo color variations

When we mold the living form of the logo and use secondary colors, we create unique signs for Oulu's public utilities and departments. The colors characterize the functions of the public utilities and departments. The white degree symbol creates a connection to the Oulu logo.

Always contact the city of Oulu's communications team when designing color variations.



## Typography: Oulun Graadi

Oulun Graadi is the unique font of Oulu. Its nature is a higher grade° of gentle. There are ever so slight changes in the thickness of the line and the line endings are oblique, like in Oulu's logo. Instead of straight diagonals, there are flatter arcs, and the tighter interior corners open up to a slight smile. The font's unique forms are warm and abundant with a human touch.

The creatively combined oblique forms make the font lively and idiosyncratic.

**Higher  
grade of...**

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZÅÄÖ**

**abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
vwxyzåäö**

**123456789  
!"#€%&/()=?@£\$§|[]**

## LARGE HEADING (UPPER CASE)

OULUN GRAADI

# HIGHER GRADE OF

## LARGE HEADING (LOWER CASE)

OULUN GRAADI

# Higher grade of

## LOGO FONT

OULUN GRAADI

**BUSINESSOULU**  
**KAUPUNKIYMPÄRISTÖ**  
**SIVISTYS- JA**  
**KULTTUURIPALVELUT**

## HEADINGS

OULUN GRAADI

6X **First headline**  
4X **Second headline**  
2X **Third headline**  
1X **Fourth headline**

## LARGE HEADING LEAD PARAGRAPH

BARLOW

DO, NONSIMUNTERE ARBISSES REI  
PUBLICA TRIBUS, FURNIUS; NENT CORAT  
OREI INTI, SE NIR QUAS HOSTIA PATUS  
ANDERIS.

Do, nonsimuntere arbisses rei publica tribus,  
furnius; nent corat orei inti, se nir quas  
hostia patus anderis, condiusti.

## LEAD PARAGRAPH

BARLOW

DO, NONSIMUNTERE ARBISSES REI PUBLICA  
TRIBUS, FURNIUS; NENT CORAT OREI INTI, SE  
NIR QUAS HOSTIA PATUS ANDERIS, CONDIUSTI  
SED APERCEPERI FACCHUID IGNATUIUM  
MANDAMED IM FINC.

Do, nonsimuntere arbisses rei publica tribus,  
furnius; nent corat orei inti, se nir quas hostia  
patu anderis, condiusti sed aperceperi facchuid  
ignatuium mandamed im finc.

## BODY TEXT

BARLOW

Edionsed moluptatio. Ibus et quid utempost idit, imuscimin nimpe etur  
andae non re, anis ut omnis mo dus aliquo cumenih itatus apiende aut  
posam estrum, tem doluptat venis accus sediatu, que optium vel iumquam  
hillabor as nus molorpo reribus cienimagnati comnis aut alibusa nditempost  
as eos velibusam il is dolorpos vollibu struptatem dolorer ibust, qui des

## HIGHLIGHT / QUOTE

BARLOW

//  
Do, nonsimuntere arbisses rei  
publica tribus, furnius; nent corat  
orei inti, se nir quas hostia patus  
anderis, condiusti sed aperceperi  
facchuid ignatuium mandamed  
im finc.

//

## FONT INFORMATION

Body text font is **Barlow**.  
<https://fonts.google.com/specimen/Barlow>

Heading font is **Oulun Graadi**.  
<https://www.ouka.fi/brandi>

Secondary font is **Segoe UI**, used e.g., in Microsoft Word and  
PowerPoint templates. You may also use the Open Sans font  
instead of Segoe UI.

For Cyrillic letters, the **Frutiger Neue** font is used.



## Using the degree symbol

The Oulu degree symbol is not a logo and can't be used as such alone. The degree symbol stands for the Higher grade<sup>o</sup>... philosophy and we use it as a graphic element to increase interest in different situations and surfaces. The degree symbol is usually placed in the upper right-hand corner of materials or elements.

The pattern inside the degree symbol is composed of the elements of Oulu's logo and it can be altered by moving said elements. This way, we create a variety of living surfaces. Public utilities and departments that use their own secondary color in their materials can use the degree symbol in said color.

We can also use the white degree symbol on surfaces where appropriate. Otherwise, the degree symbol is never used in a single color, but always with a live pattern inside it.



## Photographs and visual narratives

The starting point of the image concept for Oulu's brand is to connect the brand's core facets with real life and Oulu itself. The images lean on the differentiation of Oulu's brand promise and the way the city delivers on it – in a fun way. Images should show Oulu as a whole and in whole, proud of its different neighborhoods and people. All of us who live in Oulu can find something to relate to and people who look like us in the city's visual narrative. The pictures provide us with the opportunity to augment our ideas of what it means to be in or from Oulu and the roles different people can play in the life of the city.





The images we use in our communications represent Oulu in an honest and inspiring way. The images may manifest the Higher grade°... philosophy: something is askew, better, in the wrong place, as chaos in order or just different in an abstract manner. In Oulu, the unique and different, ugly or unconventional are all a higher grade° of pretty!



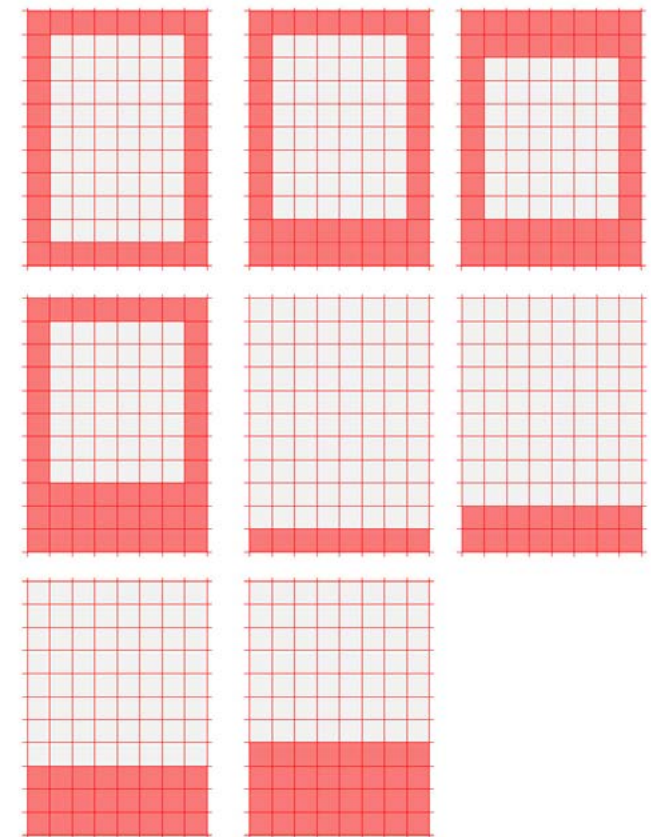
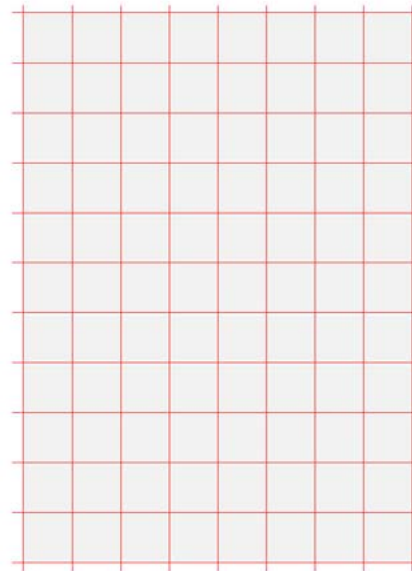
The images we use in our communications make an impression and stand out from the mass. We show Oulu as authentic and sincere. All kinds of emotions, special and interesting attractions, and people, as well as the rough and edgy side of Oulu can be shown in the visual depictions of the city. We use the images to bring its development and layers to life.

Images help us attract attention and evoke feelings. They could even have a documentary feel to them. We don't process them to the point where they look too clean or plastic but depict – in addition to the core facets of the Oulu brand – culture, the urban city, and nature, as well as the many ways in which people can thrive in Oulu. We bring into the images our real four seasons and the city's many contrasts.



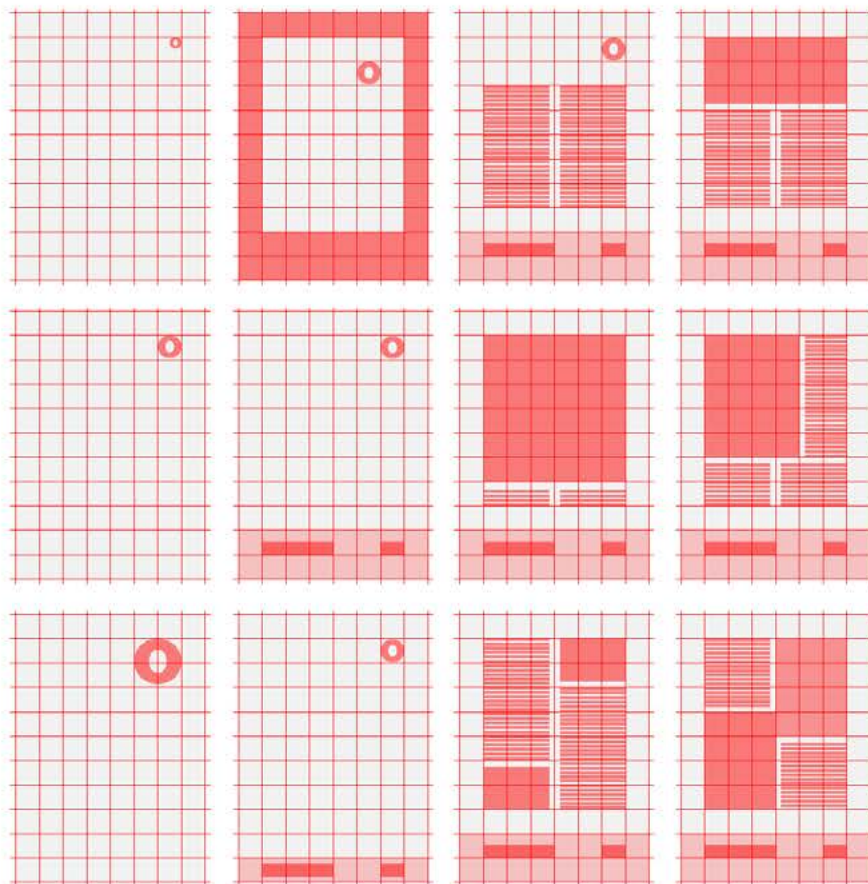
# Layout principles

By following the layout principles, we make sure that Oulu's publications are unified and recognizable. The main layout principle is a grid that helps users place elements and texts in the proper locations. The basic ideas are large margins, clear picture areas, and high readability. We can use the Oulu degree symbol to increase the recognizability of the materials.

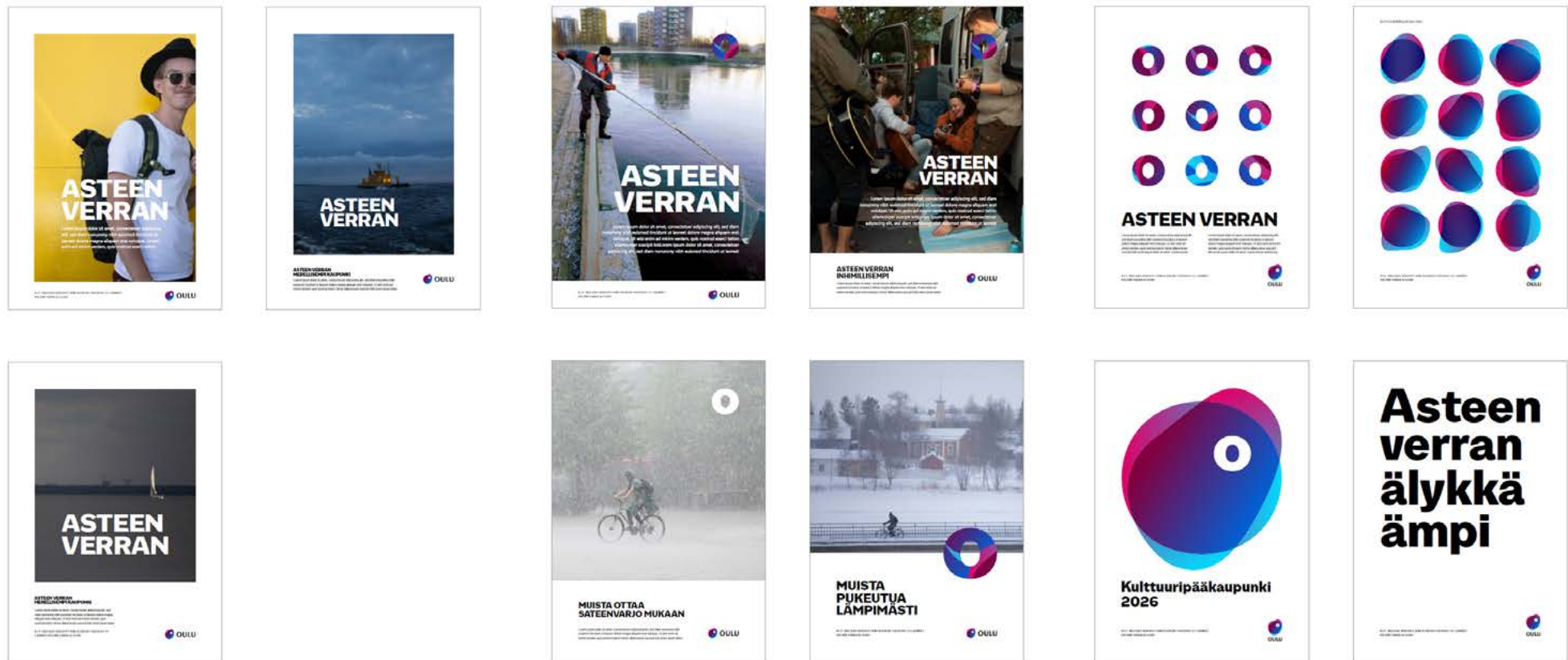




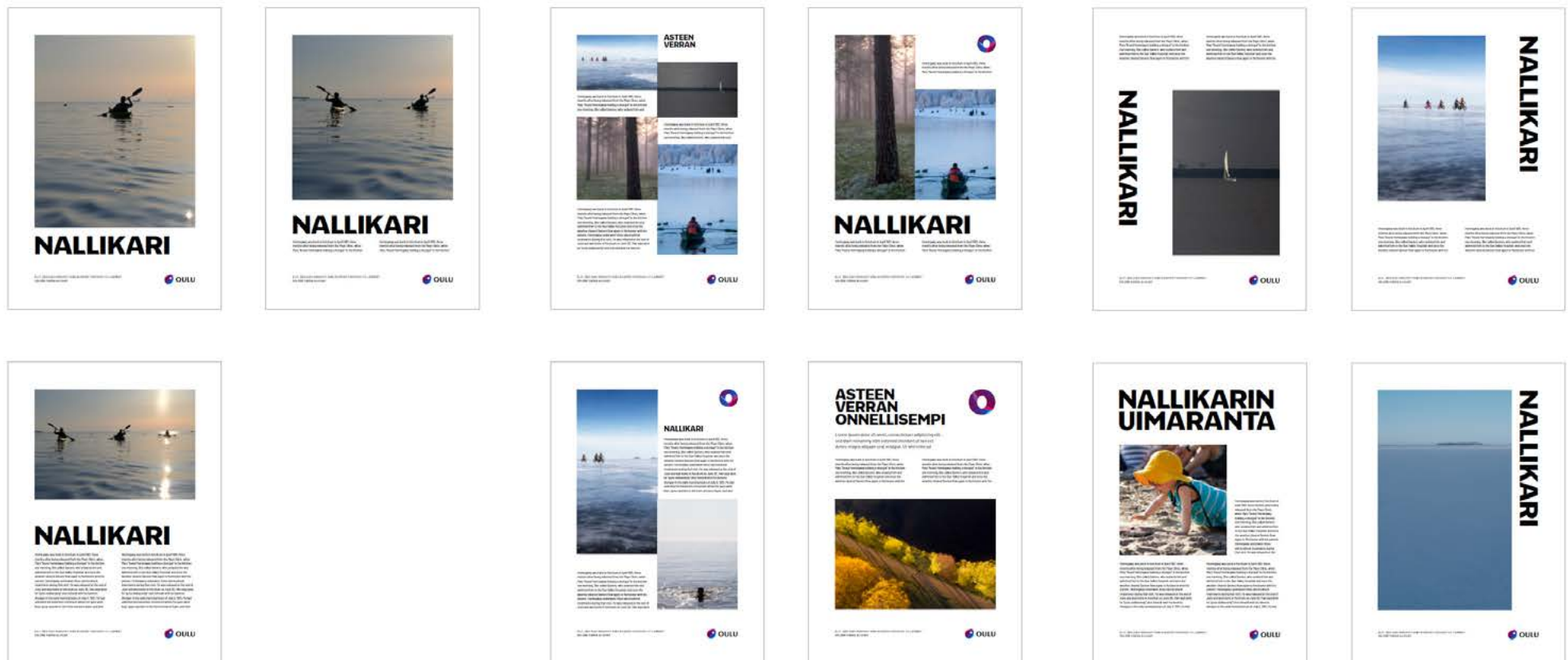
## Templates



## Poster templates

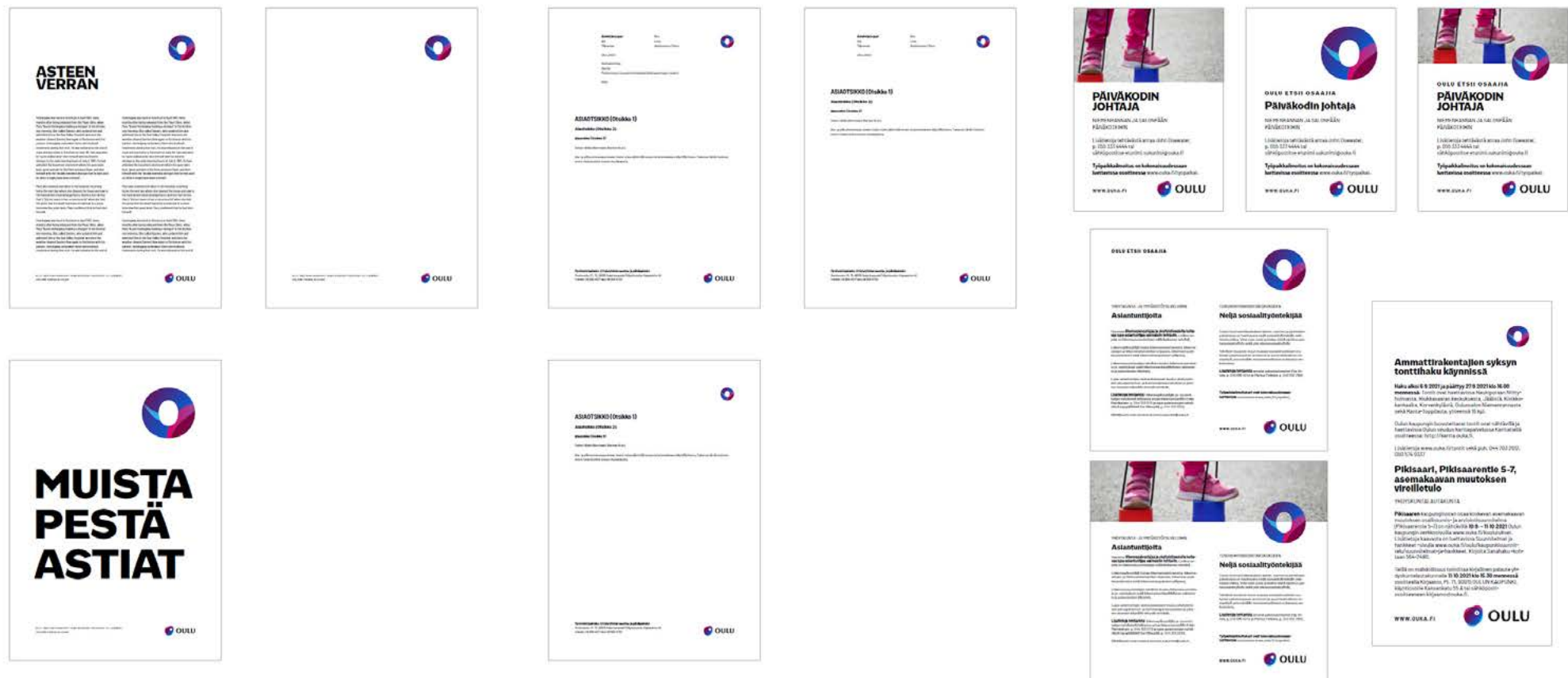


## Layout of images and titles: examples

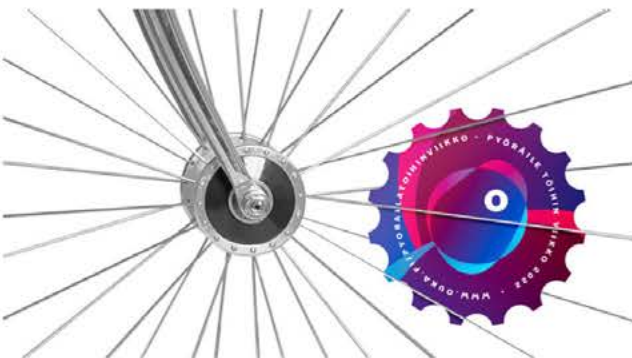




# Documents and announcement templates



## Inspiration: products



## Inspiration: graphics, surfaces etc.



# The Oulu brand was made by the people of Oulu

A brand is not born from nothing, but from the city and all its inhabitants. The residents of Oulu must recognize Oulu's brand as their own and be able to relate to it. That's why we created it together with the people. We've combined the familiar and the recognized with new things like a fresh attitude and a more sharply defined personality. The brand reaches towards the future while coming to life on the level of discernible actions.

Oulu's new brand was created together with the people of Oulu, formed through questionnaires, interviews, and polls. Every idea, thought, and comment was significant and used as a building block for the brand. Here are a few examples of how people from Oulu have described our city:

*"Oulu is the city of contrasts, filled with a good kind of strangeness, amiability and then also a bit of edge. Oulu on vastakohtien kaupunki, täynnä hyvää omituisuutta, leppoisuutta ja toisaalta särmää."*

*"Weird, idiosyncratic, self-sufficient, participatory. Got everything from reindeer husbandry to hi-tech!"*

*"Clear and reachable, crazy and fun, it's better to overdo it!"*

*"The pulse of the city meets the peace of the country, people's smiles and boldness, attitude, gentleness. That's what Oulu is to me."*

*"For me, Oulu reflects contrasts. City and nature, development and historical, relaxed and vibrant."*

*The wind. It brings otherwise silent people together when they say to a stranger 'it's very windy'."*

# Contact information

In all matters related to Oulu's brand, you'll be helped by:

**Sari Valppu, Communications Manager**  
sari.valppu@ouka.fi

**Niina Teräslahti, AD**  
niina.teraslahti@ouka.fi