



BRANDING, DESIGN and COPY MANUAL

VERSION 1.0 | CREATED 2025

NORTHERN STAGE AWARDS



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FOREWORD

Welcome to the Northern Stage Awards Brand Guidelines

– your comprehensive guide to the visual identity and voice of our organisation dedicated to celebrating excellence in Amateur Theatre across the North-West region.

The Northern Stage Awards (NSA) brings together professional adjudicators and reviewers to honour outstanding performances and artistic contributions – both onstage and behind the scenes – in plays, revues, musicals, pantomimes, and more.

With a focus on transparency, fairness, and constructive feedback, the NSA not only recognises cast and crew achievements, but also elevates the broader theatrical community by offering insightful show reports and adjudication services.

Founded in 2025, the Northern Stage Awards embodies a commitment to acknowledging talent, passion, and creativity on the amateur stage.

Through these guidelines, you'll gain a clear understanding of how to present the NSA brand with consistency and confidence – ensuring every interaction reflects the integrity, flair, and theatrical spirit of the company.





OUR BRAND VALUES

The Northern Stage Awards is built on a foundation of **excellence, integrity, and community**. We believe that every performance, whether in the spotlight or behind the scenes, deserves recognition when it embodies creativity, skill, and passion.

By maintaining professional adjudication standards and offering constructive feedback, we champion continuous growth in the amateur theatre community. Our commitment to fairness ensures that every award is **earned through merit, judged with transparency, and celebrated with sincerity**.

Beyond recognition, we value the spirit of collaboration and inclusivity. Theatre thrives when diverse voices and talents come together, and the NSA seeks to foster that unity.

We honour the dedication of those who invest their time, energy, and imagination into local productions, while inspiring future generations to embrace the performing arts.

Through our events, reports, and community engagement, we aim to cultivate not just a stage for competition, but a shared space for artistry, learning, and celebration.

BRANDMARK GUIDANCE

The Northern Stage Awards brandmark is a carefully crafted emblem and must be used with consistency to preserve its impact and recognisability.

All posters, flyers and paper-based communications **MUST** feature the brandmark.

All external publications and marketing materials such as road banners **MUST** feature the brandmark.

BRANDMARK QUICK GUIDE

Please follow these guidelines when using the brandmark.

- Scale it uniformly; never stretch the brandmark horizontally or vertically
- Don't rotate it beyond its existing slight angle
- Don't place it too close to other objects (see White Space/Exclusion)
- Never change or recreate it
- Always use our brand colours
- Always use the brandmark in its entirety with clear space around it to ensure clarity.

SECTION B

HOW TO USE OUR BRANDMARK

02 | NORTHERN STAGE AWARDS BRANDMARK

NORTHERN STAGE AWARDS BRANDMARK

The Northern Stage Awards logo is a bold and elegant emblem that captures the essence of theatrical celebration. Designed in a circular badge format, it pairs a deep navy background with rich gold detailing to evoke prestige, tradition, and sophistication.

At its core, two stylised stage spotlights rise upward, forming a dynamic star-like composition – a symbol of ambition, recognition, and artistic excellence. The wings of the star convey movement and energy, reflecting the vibrancy of the performing arts, while the central peak represents the pinnacle of achievement.

The typography blends a bold continuous script font for “NORTHERN STAGE” with an elegant serif font for “AWARDS,” balancing theatrical flair with clarity and authority.

Small, twinkling gold stars accent the design, reinforcing the celebratory and magical atmosphere of a live performance.

Altogether, the logo communicates excellence, aspiration, and community, encapsulating the Northern Stage Awards’ mission to honour and inspire the best in amateur theatre.



SECTION B

HOW TO USE OUR BRANDMARK

03 | BRANDMARK COLOURS

THE BRANDMARK COLOURS

Our brandmark can only be printed/shown in blue and gold, just gold, black and white. These colours must be in the shades illustrated.

The Pantone® colours are used when printing with one or two colours. Blue and Gold is used when printing with four colours. The four colour break down for blue is: C: 100%; M: 88%; Y: 0%; K: 60%. The four colour break down for gold is: C: 25%; M: 35%; Y: 80%; K: 30%

USE WHEREVER POSSIBLE



USE WHEN FULL COLOUR PRODUCTION IS NOT POSSIBLE



THE BRANDMARK COLOURS

When reproducing the brandmark on a dark background, the **gold version** should be used as the primary choice to maintain its premium, distinctive appearance.

There are only two exceptions to this rule:

- 1 If the background colour or texture does not provide sufficient contrast for the gold to remain clear and legible.
- 2 If full-colour printing is not possible due to production limitations.

In either of these cases, the **white version** of the brandmark should be used to ensure maximum visibility and brand integrity.

USE WHEREVER POSSIBLE



GOLD
Pantone® 872C
CMYK: C:25 | M:35 | Y:80 | K:30
RGB: 164 | 131 | 56

USE WHEN FULL COLOUR PRODUCTION IS NOT POSSIBLE



WHITE
CMYK: C:0 | M:0 | Y:0 | K:0
RGB: 255 | 255 | 255

SECTION B

HOW TO USE OUR BRANDMARK

04 | CLEAR SPACE AROUND THE BRANDMARK

CLEAR SPACE AROUND the BRANDMARK

To ensure the brandmark stands out, it must be positioned within a minimum amount of clear space.

The only text allowed within this clear space is the venue indicator.

The amount of clear space required is directly proportional to the size of the brandmark. The width of this space is equivalent to the height of the letter N from the word 'NORTHERN' in the wordmark.

The space is required on all four sides of the brandmark, as illustrated.

When the brandmark is used on such formats as books and programmes, which – once opened – have a 'crease-line' close to their left-hand edge, the clear space should not include the space to the left of the crease-line, but should be measured from the crease-line.



SECTION B

HOW TO USE OUR BRANDMARK

05 | PREFERRED SIZE OF THE BRANDMARK

PREFERRED SIZE of the BRANDMARK

The table below shows the preferred sizes of the NORTHERN STAGE AWARDS brandmark in print applications.

For each paper size, the height of the brandmark must never be smaller than that specified.

BRANDMARK HEIGHT	PAPER SIZE
15mm Diameter	A5
20mm Diameter	A4
30mm Diameter	A3
50mm Diameter	A2
80mm Diameter	A1
100mm Diameter	A0

NOTE

The above sizes are the minimum sizes that the brandmark **MUST** appear. It can be used at larger sizes if necessary..



100mm Diameter

A0

MINIMUM SIZE of the BRANDMARK

The brandmark must have a minimum diameter of 15mm whenever it is used in small environments (e.g. business cards or A5 show leaflets).

MINIMUM BRANDMARK SIZE



15mm Diameter



15mm Diameter

NOTE
The black box surrounding the white brandmarks are not part of the brandmarks; they are used here to illustrate dark backgrounds.

BACKGROUND CONTROL

Whenever the brandmark is used on a photographic or other varying background, there must be sufficient contrast between the background and the brandmark to ensure that the brandmark has a high level of standout.

Ensure that the correct version, **positive** or **negative**, is used.



CORRECT PLACEMENT



INCORRECT PLACEMENT



SECTION B

HOW TO USE OUR BRANDMARK

08 | INCORRECT USE OF THE BRANDMARK

INCORRECT USE of the BRANDMARK

The brandmark must always be used correctly. These examples illustrate how the brandmark **MUST NOT** be used.



DO NOT alter the weight of the letters in the NORTHERN STAGE AWARDS wordmark.



DO NOT alter the spacing between the words in the wordmark.



DO NOT use the brandmark in any other colours than those specified in the guidelines.



DO NOT replace NORTHERN STAGE AWARDS with an alternative typeface.



DO NOT alter the proportions of the elements that make up the brandmark.



DO NOT use the brandmark at an angle.



DO NOT stretch the brandmark.



DO NOT squash the brandmark.



SECTION B

HOW TO USE OUR BRANDMARK

09 | USING THE BRANDMARK IN DESIGN

USING THE BRANDMARK IN DESIGN

The brandmark should always be treated as a focal point within any design, ensuring it remains prominent, clear, and instantly recognisable. It should be positioned in a way that provides balance and harmony with other design elements, whether used in print materials, digital assets, signage, or promotional items. The mark must never be overcrowded – ample clear space ensures it retains its visual authority and stands out as the symbol of the organisation's identity.

When incorporating into layouts, consider the hierarchy of elements. The brandmark should not compete with text, imagery, or decorative graphics but rather work in tandem with them to create a cohesive composition.

Whether centred on a programme cover, anchored in a website header, or applied subtly to event materials, the brandmark should always reflect the prestige, professionalism, and theatrical flair of the NORTHERN STAGE AWARDS.





SECTION C

OTHER CORE DESIGN ELEMENTS

01 | MASTER TYPEFACE

MASTER TYPEFACE

Poppins

TYPE WEIGHT USAGE

Poppins is our master typeface. It is a contemporary and elegant, sans serif typeface. It reproduces well at small font sizes.

Known for its clean, modern look and multilingual support. It's characterized by its nearly monolinear strokes and optical corrections at stroke joints to maintain evenness. The "Light" weight provides a delicate and airy appearance, making it suitable for headings, logos, and body text where a subtle, refined aesthetic is desired.

It should be used for all display text (e.g. poster titles and text, brochures headings); it can also be used for body-copy.

POPPINS LIGHT

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890£&?!%

Poppins Light

is our preferred typeface for copy and all instances where the brand prefix lock-up is used. It is also recommended as an ideal weight for body copy. Poppins Light offers the safest option for legibility in print.

It will hold colour in both the heavy and mid contrast ranges.

POPPINS SEMIBOLD

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890£&?!%

Poppins SemiBold

is our preferred headline typeface where scale will improve its legibility.

As with the light version of the font we recommend high contrast colours at lighter weights to ensure that legibility is maintained.

POPPINS REGULAR

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890£&?!%

Poppins Regular
is only recommended as headline typeface where the headline may be reproduced at a small scale or in soft contrast colourways to avoid weak representation in print. It is a safe alternative to Poppins Light.

Will perform when there is a high contrast between the letter colour and the background it sits upon.

POPPINS BOLD

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890£&?!%

Poppins Bold
is restricted for use where enhanced type weight will help in differentiation and clarity particularly at small sizes e.g. paragraph headings within text and some signage applications.

The increased thickness of the bold font will hold pale colours better than the finer weights in this font.

The Northern Stage Awards is built on a foundation of **excellence, integrity, and community**. We believe that every performer deserves to be in the spotlight.

SECONDARY TYPEFACE

Playfair Display

Playfair Display is our secondary typeface.

We have chosen this as it is a tasteful, understated and timeless serif font with beautiful curves and confident straight lines.

This typeface family includes a full range of weights, italics, an extended character set, OpenType features, and optical sizes.

It can be used for body-copy and headings.

PLAYFAIR DISPLAY REGULAR

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890£&?!%

PLAYFAIR DISPLAY SEMIBOLD

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890£&?!%

PLAYFAIR DISPLAY SEMIBOLD ITALIC

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890£&?!%

PLAYFAIR DISPLAY BOLD

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890£&?!%





ALTERNATIVE TYPEFACES

Verdana

POPPINS

Times New Roman

PLAYFAIR DISPLAY

When Poppins is unavailable, Verdana can be used. When Playfair Display is unavailable, Times New Roman can be used.

If both the master typeface and secondary typeface are required, but only one of Poppins and Playfair Display is available, replace only the unavailable typeface with its alternative. Do not replace the available typeface with its alternative.

Both Verdana and Times New Roman are widely available, electronic fonts.

VERDANA

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890£&?!%

VERDANA BOLD

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890£&?!%

TIMES NEW ROMAN

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890£&?!%

TIMES NEW ROMAN BOLD

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890£&?!%

COMPLIANCE

NORTHERN STAGE AWARDS is responsible for ensuring that these guidelines are applied correctly.

All NORTHERN STAGE AWARDS branded materials must be approved by an NSA Marketing Officer or another senior officer within the Theatre Management Team.

CONTACT DETAILS

AS AT AUGUST 2025

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A copy of these guidelines and all relevant material contained within
are available online at www.northernstageawards.co.uk

northernstageawards.co.uk@gmail.com
www.northernstageawards.co.uk

NORTHERN STAGE AWARDS LTD

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