

Voice and tone guide

Communicating on behalf of your program, AAD, and Cornell

We are one division with many thriving programs, reaching out to a general audience as well as to specific groups of Cornellians.

While keeping in mind our shared identity as a division and as a part of Cornell University, you and your program can communicate with a unique “voice” to show your program’s distinct personality and to connect with your target audience.

Depending on your purpose and the occasion, the tone of your voice often shifts—enthusiastic when enticing people to attend a fun event or serious when sharing sad news, for example.

Your voice and your tone also have to adjust to fit your medium—especially when it comes to digital channels: web, email, and social media.

When it comes to your digital channels, think of having a good conversation with your audience members that leads them to recognize, trust, and interact with you.

To communicate effectively across our digital channels be ...

clear

~~This giving website is a one-stop shop for choosing the best way to direct your generosity and make many things possible for Cornell.~~

Discover how you can make gifts that make a difference for Cornell.

Plain language

Simple and direct

More literal, less figurative

concise

~~With great excitement, Cornell University is pleased to announce an opportunity to learn about the many career options and avenues the university offers, at a special event on campus, on Friday, January 13, 2017, at Bailey Hall.~~

Curious about a career at Cornell? Join us at the career fair on January 13 at Bailey Hall!

Straight to the point

Shorter sentences

No unnecessary words

accurate

~~Cornell has a myriad of academic institutions and resources to ensure undergraduate students succeed and receive a world-class education.~~

More than 100 fields of study. Fourteen colleges and schools. Cornell offers you many intellectual paths to pursue.

Supported by facts

Having adequate information

No exaggeration

action-oriented

~~A celebration for Cornell alumni, parents, and friends will be held at the Radio City Music Hall in New York City, featuring the university's new president, Martha E. Pollack, on Saturday, March 18. It's going to be a rare opportunity not to be missed! Registration is open.~~

Let's celebrate with Cornell's new president, Martha E. Pollack, on March 18, at Radio City Music Hall. Don't miss out!

REGISTER TODAY

Active voice

Verb forms over noun forms

Clear call to action

and, most especially, conversational:

friendly

Summer classes for alumni are starting soon! Continue to learn from top-notch faculty while enjoying Cornell's beautiful campus at its greenest.

but not fawning

We know Cornellians like you are smart, talented, and always hungry to learn. And we know you ache for Cornell, especially in the summertime when campus is in full bloom—just how you love to remember it. Let us take you back with our summer classes for ever-inquisitive alumni like you!

down to earth

Grow your volunteer group with this [toolbox of resources](#).

but not dumbed down

Click this link to see the volunteer toolbox. In it, you will find resources that will help you build your group of alumni who want to raise their hands for the university. Your group will be up and running in no time. Growing your community is quick and easy.

enthusiastic

We miss you on the Hill. See how the university has grown, and how it's remained your Cornell.

but not gushing

We missed you so much. So many things have changed and campus just isn't the same without you. Relive your glory days!

informative

Cornell has a strong presence in New York, with campuses in Ithaca and New York City, an agricultural experiment station in Geneva, and extension programs across the state.

but not dull, stiff, or braggy

Cornell University's formidable educational reach in New York State is wide and profound. Firstly, Cornell has three world-class campuses: the main campus in Ithaca, New York; and Weill Cornell Medicine and Cornell Tech in New York City. In addition, Cornell conducts a cutting-edge agricultural experiment station in Geneva, New York. Moreover, Cornell's innovative extension programs are at work in different counties across the state.