

Key Messaging

OUR BRAND PROMISE

Through tradition and heart, Bison bring the frontiers of new knowledge into focus.

OUR PILLARS

Showcasing what makes NDSU exceptional:

PILLAR 1

Place – One NDSU

Bison stand stronger together. We thrive through collaboration and creativity, grounded in a place that inspires ambition and connection. Fargo is a vibrant and growing community, with a strong job market, an active downtown near campus and a culture that blends belonging with entrepreneurship. At NDSU, you will find a place to learn, build relationships and discover a new horizon ahead of you.

PILLAR 2

Purpose – Access and Opportunity

Our teaching, research and outreach drives meaningful change. We shape the future through the combined strengths of expert faculty, dedicated staff, talented students and innovative industry partnerships. Together, we're breaking new ground and reaching new horizons to expand what's possible as the people's university.

PILLAR 3

Tradition – Rooted

Tradition celebrates our history, honoring the enduring values of the land-grant mission and the Bison grit that has shaped our identity for generations. We are driven by an entrepreneurial spirit and a legacy of excellence in athletic competition, classroom learning and hands-on experiences. From the achievements of our faculty, staff, students and alumni, locally and globally, our strength thunders through generations.

PILLAR 4

Progress – Ready

We don't just educate; we transform. Every member of the NDSU community contributes to meaningful impact through real-world experience, innovative research, strong industry partnerships and a powerful alumni network. Rooted in tradition, ready for tomorrow, the Bison community is prepared to make a difference.

OUR PERSONALITY

Our voice and tone are shaped by traits that describe who we are and what we value.

PERSONALITY TRAIT 1

Inspired

Sparked by bold exploration and motivated by limitless innovation.

PERSONALITY TRAIT 2

Grounded

Rooted in a community that thrives on collaboration, perseverance and a shared sense of purpose.

PERSONALITY TRAIT 3

Forward-Thinking

Bison are empowered to drive progress with a trailblazing spirit, while keeping our eyes on the horizon as we lead the way forward.

PERSONALITY TRAIT 4

Authentic

As Bison, we stay true to our mission and values, showing up with grit and determination to make a meaningful impact that endures while facing any storm head-on.

BRAND LANGUAGE – CORE MOTIFS

Our brand language is inspired by four core motifs drawn from our brand insights. Each motif is kept broad, in order to be relevant across all audiences and topics.

MOTIF	WHAT IT SHOWS	EXAMPLE
HORIZON	Forward momentum and bright futures	“New horizons in sight”
NOW	Purpose and place	“This is your moment”
FAR	Innovation and impact	“From here, reach anywhere”
HEART	Community and tradition	“The Herd moves forward as one”

BECAUSE WE ARE	WE SOUND	EXAMPLE
STUDENT FOCUSED	Supportive and engaged	“Every Bison’s story begins with one bold step.”
AMBITIOUS	Grounded and curious	“Rooted in tradition, ready for tomorrow.”
OPTIMISTIC	Welcoming and hopeful	“The horizon is wide open”
RESILIENT	Prepared and determined	“Bison face the storm head-on”

SHORTCUT PHRASE BANK	
The frontiers of new knowledge	Now is your moment
Rooted and Ready	Your path to new horizons starts here
One NDSU	Bison pride
Opening doors, preparing for bright futures	Once a Bison, always a Bison
Advancing knowledge, improving lives	Find your Herd
For the land and its people	

AP STYLE GUIDELINES

NDSU follows the Associated Press (AP) writing style. For questions or writing assistance please contact Meghan Arbegast at meghan.arbegast@ndsu.edu.

» To download a full copy of the NDSU Branding Guidelines, please visit:
ndsu.edu/marketing-communications/brand-center/brand-guidelines