Instructions for Designing Your Site

Brainstorm Different Design Ideas

The look and feel of your site is created by a combination of style and layout choices. Take some time to check out what other sites are doing with their design and create a list of what you'd like to try with your site. The SNO Pinterest page at and the SNO Site Excellence Badge list are two great place to look for design inspiration. Consider:

- the layout of content on the homepage
- the layout of staff and category pages
- the number and size of stories shown in each category on the homepage
- the style of the navigation bars
- the color combinations
- the style of individual blocks of content
- the various information shown on the homepage
    - content
    - advertising
    - social media
    - photos and galleries
    - other?

Start with a SNO Preset Style Starter and customize your style choices.

To help get you started, your site came with a preselected style, but you can change this preset style to create a different baseline look. Check out each look and choose the look that's closest to the design you're going for then

Change the fonts, background, general appearance, and even your site's favicon and bullet points by using the tools provided under General Design and Layout on the SNO Design Options Page.

- Need to know what's possible?
    - Check out the various design ideas found on the SNO Pinterest page.
- Need to know how?
    - Check out the SNO Help Site or email us a question if necessary.

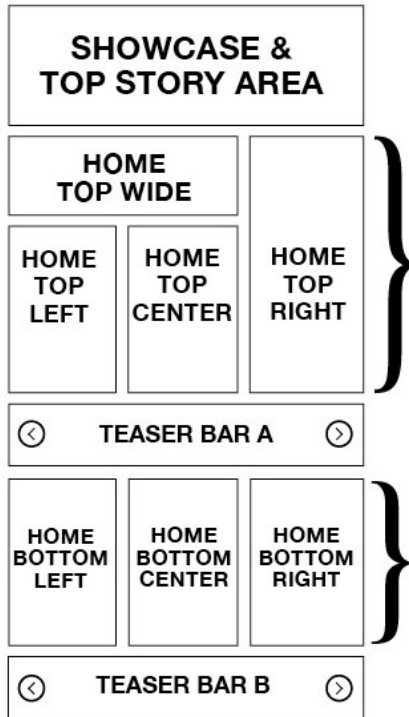### Create a custom header graphic.

Your header graphic should have your logo, organization name, tagline, and any other essential information about your program. Your graphic should be sized to 980px wide, and the height should be between 100px and 250px. You can upload your header graphic in the Custom Header Graphic on the SNO Design Options page. Looking for inspiration? Check out this showcase of header graphics.

Choose a showcase carousel option for your homepage.

There are different top story display options: ones that showcase multiple stories and even one that displays just a single story. These options can be found under the Top Story Display Area and Showcase Carousel on the SNO Design Options page. Try each one to see and see if you like the look.

Understand the structure of your homepage.

Check out the outline of a site shown to the left. You may not be using all of these areas now, so take a moment to compare this wireframe to your site.

- Which areas are being used?
- What content is in each area?
- Do you want to make use of the other areas on your site?
- Where do you want content to be located?

Also consider the Home Top areas and how you'd like them to look. You have six different options, as shown on the right. Pick which of these you'd like to use on the on the Widget Area Configuration section of the SNO Design Options page.

Arrange and customize the widgets on your homepage.

Your homepage is constructed of individual blocks of content called widgets. These widgets are displayed in widget areas that are shown in the graphics above. By going to your Edit Widgets page (found under the Appearance tab), you can drag and drop individual widgets into the widget areas of your site.

Each widget on your site can be assigned to one of five widget styles that you can customize in the Widget Styles section on the SNO Design Options page. In addition, SNO widgets can each be assigned custom colors and styles in the controls for the individual widget on the Edit Widgets page.

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