Tone of voice
Writing style and tone

When writing copy for Invest NI, it is important to use a consistent style that is informative, positive, plain-speaking and human.

Keep the person you are talking to in mind at all times. Don’t presume they know what you are talking about. It may be obvious to you, but not to them.

Do’s
- Use everyday language.
- Be business-like, positive and engaging.
- Keep sentences short and to the point.
- Talk to the reader on a one-to-one basis.
- Cut the jargon, acronyms and corporate speak.
- Ensure every word is necessary.
- Keep it simple and conversational.
- Be human i.e. ‘If you need help, contact us’
- Use headings and bullet points to break up text.

Don’ts
- Bore the reader.
- Waffle on and on.
- Confuse people with science and jargon.
- Overload with and facts and figures.
- Be patronizing or pretentious.
Tone of voice

Inspire and inform - the sliding scale

Invest NI should always INSPIRE and INFORM. Every time we speak, across all formats. But the balance will vary from one form of communication to the next – depending on audience and aim.

A sliding scale guide had been created to set the balance of tone for every piece of communication.

The INSPIRE and INFORM scales should always be used together when starting any project.

It is recommended that these scales are filled in by the project owner at the beginning of each brief.

This image shows the sliding scales and the type of tone they cover. See the following pages for examples of the scales marked at different levels.

**Inspire (Inspirational)**
Success stories / feel good / benefits / less complexity, more positivity.

**Inform (Expertise)**
Insight / knowledge / facts / some complexity of terminology, where appropriate.
Tone of voice

Examples of the sliding scale

Here are some examples of how the sliding scale diagrams are used.

For projects that require an inspirational tone, the inspire scale should be marked quite high, while the inform scale should be slightly lower.

For projects that need to provide more information, the inspire scale should be marked low, while the inform scale should be marked high.

The inspire and inform scales can both be marked high if required.

Example for the annual report

**Inspire (Inspirational)**
Success stories / feel good / benefits / Less complexity. More positivity.

**Inform (Expertise)**
Insight / knowledge / facts / Some complexity of terminology, where appropriate.

Example for an exhibition stand

**Inspire (Inspirational)**
Success stories / feel good / benefits / Less complexity. More positivity.

**Inform (Expertise)**
Insight / knowledge / facts / Some complexity of terminology, where appropriate.
Tone of voice

Examples of the sliding scale

Example for the corporate plan

**Inspire (Inspirational)**
Success stories / feel good / benefits / Less complexity. More positivity.

Inform (Expertise)
Insight / knowledge / facts / Some complexity of terminology, where appropriate.

Example for a case study

**Inspire (Inspirational)**
Success stories / feel good / benefits / Less complexity. More positivity.

Inform (Expertise)
Insight / knowledge / facts / Some complexity of terminology, where appropriate.
**Tone of voice**

**Examples of body copy**

Body copy for Invest NI should have a consistent style that is informative, positive, plain-speaking and human.

Here are some examples of copy written for other Invest NI campaigns and projects.

**Technology at Work Conference**

The adoption and application of technology - in its broadest sense - can help to reduce barriers to market entry, accelerate product development, streamline processes, find new customers, tie-in existing customers and increase competitive advantage. Technology at Work 2013 will showcase the importance of using technology, irrespective of your industry sector.

Today, you will find out about the latest innovations and technology solutions developed by local companies that could help your business become more efficient, more competitive and more profitable. You will also get the opportunity to meet, listen and discuss with experts and peers how to use and apply technology within your own business.

**Innovation Vouchers Call for Applications**

Take a small step and make a big change to your business today.

How? With Invest Northern Ireland's Innovation Vouchers Programme.

Simple, straightforward and effective, Innovation Vouchers can help you to access expertise from universities, colleges and research bodies in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

**Design for Business Conference**

Ralph Ardill has worked with Coke, Ford, Guinness, Sky and many more. On 27 Nov he’ll explain why design means better business, not just pretty pictures.

Come along to this FREE event. With a keynote address from leading Brand Consultant Ralph Ardill, and three innovative workshops to choose from, you’ll gain an invaluable insight into the necessity and impact of great design – and how it can transform your business.

**Innovation Masterclass Invitation**

This is Alex Osterwalder. People all over the world pay to hear him talk about business innovation. Next week, you can hear him for free.

**Business Edit Article**

A local seafood company that began life selling fish to workers on the Titanic is now selling its salmon around the world.

Ewing’s Seafoods in Belfast is 100 years old and still going strong. In fact, support from Invest NI in recent years has helped it to build on its local success to become an international success. The small company, Belfast’s oldest fishmonger, turned to Invest NI for help in growing sales, particularly with high-end retail outlets in Britain, for a premium smoked salmon.