



Brand Guidelines

Free AI and technology education for children ages 5–17. Meeting families where they are.

Plio Academy — plio.academy

Version 1.0 · September 2026

Generated from the brand canon registry — [docs/design/canon.json](#)

Plio Academy, Inc. · EIN 42-1910860 · 501(c)(3) determination granted
Questions about this document or a request for an asset: hello@plio.academy



Contents

This document is generated from the files that decide each brand aspect. Where it and a slide, a deck or an older PDF disagree, this document is right — and the file it was generated from is righter still. Section 10 names them.

- 2 **Who we are** The organisation, the entity, the mission, the name
- 3 **Logo system** Three geometries, four treatments, clear space, minimum sizes, misuse
- 4 **Colour** Three brand colours, neutrals, the pairing law, print values and stock
- 5 **Typography** Bricolage display, DM Sans body, the dyslexia override, the scale
- 6 **Lio** Who he is, the canon render, the marks, the pose set, do and don't
- 7 **Voice and copy** How we sound, three rewrites, what we never do
- 8 **Illustration and photography** Style per surface, composition law, print and file specification
- 9 **Applications** Letterhead, card, signature, deck, avatar, Spanish surfaces
- 10 **Files and governance** Where the masters live, the registry, the gates, how to ask

HOW TO READ THIS

A rule stated in a box like this one is **binding**. Everything else is guidance you may adapt with judgement. Where a value is marked *approximate* — every CMYK and Pantone figure in Section 4 is — it is a starting point for a conversation with a printer, not a specification to print against.

Page numbers are omitted from this contents list deliberately: the document is generated, sections grow, and a hand-kept page number is the first thing to go stale. Use the running footer and the section titles.

Who we are

One organisation, one entity, one sentence about what it does. Everything downstream — every mark, colour and line of copy in this book — exists to make that sentence legible.

Free, self-paced AI lessons for ages 5–17. All your child needs is a browser. Meet Lio, their AI learning companion.

Plio Academy is a nonprofit providing free, self-paced AI and technology education to children ages 5–17 nationwide. Delivery is 100% digital on **learn.plio.academy**; in-person events are optional amplifiers, not the core. There is no paid tier a child can be on, no advertising on any page a child uses, and no personal information collected about a child beyond a display name and a chosen avatar. Those are not marketing claims — they are constraints the product is built inside, and Sections 7 and 10 name the documents that hold us to them.

The entity

Use these exactly. They appear on grant applications, contracts, NDAs and filings, and a wrong digit or an invented middle name is a real problem in each of those places.

Legal name	Plio Academy, Inc.
Short name	Plio Academy. Never “Plio” alone in a formal context; never “PLIO” in caps — it is a proper noun, not an acronym
Form	Domestic Nonprofit Corporation (NRS 82), Nevada, formed 14 April 2026
EIN	42-1910860
Tax status	501(c)(3) determination granted. Plio files its own Form 990 and is not fiscally sponsored
Nevada entity no.	E56710592026-6
President	Princess Aguila — spell it exactly; there is no other spelling
Contact	hello@plio.academy · plio.academy

NOT TO BE INVENTED

Plio Academy has **no published mailing address and no published phone number**. Every generated template in Section 9 leaves those as bracketed placeholders on purpose. If a partner form requires one, ask hello@plio.academy — do not fill it with something plausible.

The name, and why the mascot is inside it

The mascot is called **Lio**, and the name lives inside P-**LIO**. That is the one structural idea the whole identity is built on: the badge in the logo carries a **P**, the same **P** that glows on Lio's chest, and the word *lio* beside it assembles the organisation's name out of the mark and the mascot together.

Section 3 and Section 6 both depend on this, which is why **neither may be redrawn without the other**. It is also why the Lio mark may never take the badge's slot: swap the P for a lion head and the name stops assembling.



The badge is a **P**. The word beside it is **lio**.
Read together they say **P-lio** — the organisation, with its mascot inside the name. Everything in Sections 3 and 6 protects that reading.

What we sound like, in one line

Warm, plain and specific. We describe what a child *has done*, never what they *are* or *will be*. Section 7 is the full law; if you only remember one thing from this book, remember that sentence — it is the single rule that most often decides whether a piece of Plio copy is right or wrong.

What the brand is for

Partners, districts, printers, funders and counsel all meet Plio through documents rather than through the product. The identity's job on those surfaces is narrow and unglamorous: **look like one organisation, and be legible**. Every rule in this book is downstream of those two things — which is also why a rule you can justify breaking for a good reason is guidance, and a rule in a bordered box is not.

Logo system

Three geometries. Pick by the shape of the space, not by preference. Every file shown here is the real asset, rendered from the repository — the caption under each tile is the filename to ask for.



Primary horizontal

brand/logo.svg

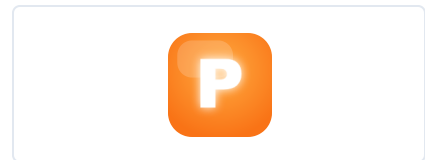
viewBox 0 0 188 56. Default: site header, letterhead, press, partner decks



Stacked

brand/logo-stacked.svg

viewBox 0 0 120 104. Square-ish spaces: social cards, posters, certificate headers



Icon only

brand/logo-icon.svg

viewBox 0 0 56 56. Favicons, app icons, avatars, anything under 120px wide

THE BADGE IS THE MARK

A rounded-square tile carrying a white **P** — the same P that appears on Lio's chest. That echo is the system's one structural idea. **Do not redraw one without the other**, and never use the P alone without its tile.

Colour treatments

Four per geometry, all built from the same four outlined masters. The wordmark contains no live text: every glyph is path data, so the mark is the same shape on a Mac, a Windows box, a CI runner and a print RIP.



Full colour, light ground

logo.svg

Badge ember gradient · "lio" teal · "ACADEMY" navy-800



Full colour, dark ground

logo-dark.svg

"lio" lifts to teal-400 · "ACADEMY" white



Mono (navy-800)

logo-mono-navy.svg

One ink. Flat badge, no gradient, no glow; P knocked out white. Also - **black** and a **currentColor** variant



Reverse (knockout)

logo-reverse.svg

Every shape solid white. Intentionally invisible on a light ground — that is what a knockout is



Reverse colour

logo-reverse-colour.svg

Badge keeps its gradient; only the wordmark is recoloured. The "badge stays branded" option



Stacked, mono

logo-stacked-mono-navy.svg

Same treatments exist for all three geometries



Icon, mono

logo-icon-mono-navy.svg

For embossing, engraving, single-plate print



Icon, reverse

logo-icon-reverse.svg

No icon reverse-colour file exists — the badge already reads on any ground

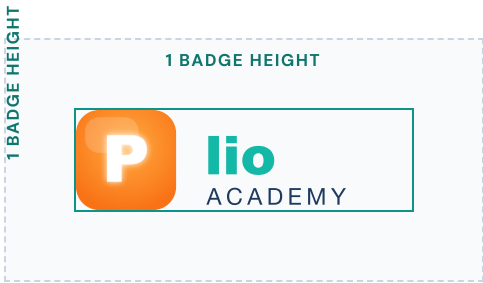
Every SVG above ships a matching PNG at 1× and 2×, except the **currentColor** files — a CSS-driven fill has no meaning rendered standalone. Use the CSS variant only where you control the surrounding stylesheet; use the navy or black files everywhere else.

MONO IS GROUND-SPECIFIC, NOT UNIVERSAL

A flat single-colour badge on a same-hue ground is invisible *by construction* — **logo-mono-navy** on navy, **logo-mono-black** on black. This is not a defect in the artwork and no artwork can fix it. Choose the mono colour against the actual ground.

Clear space

Clear space equals **the height of the P badge**, on all four sides. For the primary horizontal the badge is 56 units of a 56-unit-tall viewBox, so the exclusion zone is a third again as wide as the lockup itself on each side. No text, image, rule or graphic may enter it, and **the page edge counts as an element** — the lockup never sits closer to a trim edge than one badge height.



The dashed rectangle is the exclusion zone; the teal outline is the lockup's own bounding box. Drawn to scale from the master's viewBox, not eyeballed.

An older guidebook passage specified clear space as the cap-height of the “P” in “Plio”. **Where the two differ, use the badge height** — it is measurable from the artwork without rendering a font, and it is larger, therefore safer.

Minimum sizes

MEDIUM	PRIMARY HORIZONTAL	STACKED	ICON ONLY
Screen	120 px wide	90 px wide	32 px
Print	30 mm wide	24 mm wide	8 mm
Social avatar	—	—	48 px



120 px

Primary horizontal at its floor. The badge and “lio” read clearly; “ACADEMY” is legible but at the edge



32 px

Icon at its floor. Badge shape and P both clear



16 px

Below the documented floor. The P softens. Shown to justify the 32 px minimum, not to license this size

Below the minimum, switch — do not scale. Under 120 px wide the “ACADEMY” line falls below 8 px effective and stops being a wordmark. Use the icon instead; scaling further does not make a small logo, it makes visual noise.

Six ways the lockup breaks. Each panel below is the real master file, put through the exact abuse named — not an illustration of it.



■ Stretched

Non-uniform scale, 145% horizontal
Scale proportionally or not at all. This applies to skew and squash equally



■ Recoloured

Hue rotated off the approved variants
Only the treatments on the previous spread are approved. There is no fifth colourway



■ Low-contrast ground

Full-colour lockup on ember-500
The badge is itself ember. Never use ember as a logo background; never place a lockup on busy photography without a solid backing plate



■ Rotated

-13°
The lockup sits square to the page. Always



■ Wordmark retyped

Badge + wordmark reset in another face
Never recreate the wordmark in another typeface — including by opening a master and letting a font substitute. There is no live text left in the masters; if you see any, that is a regression



■ Drop shadow added

External shadow on the lockup
The badge's own internal glow is part of the mark. Adding shadows, glows or outlines on top of it is not

The rest of the list

- **Do not crop the badge**, or use the “P” alone without its tile.
- **Do not replace the P badge with the Lio mark**, or put the mark in the badge's slot. This was tested and it fails structurally — Section 6 explains why.
- **Do not put the mascot and the wordmark together as an ad-hoc composite**. Two pairings are allowed; both are specified in Section 6.
- **Do not reconstruct a lockup** by placing the mark and wordmark by eye. Use the built file.
- **Do not hand-build a co-brand or programme lockup**. Both have written specs — order, optical balance, divider, separator glyph — and neither exists as a pre-built file yet. Ask before you compose one.

Co-branding and programme names, in brief

Partner lockups run **Plio left, partner right**, matched on the **x-height of the wordmarks** rather than bounding box, separated by a 1 px rule with one badge height of gap either side. Sub-programmes are **typographic only** — **Plio Academy · Skill Labs**, set in DM Sans medium with a middle dot, never a new mark and never a new mascot. Request the full spec before building either.

SECTION 4

Colour

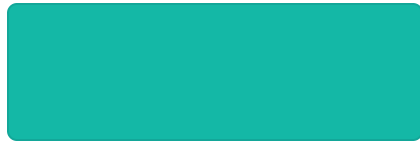
Three brand colours and a slate neutral ramp. The hue is the brand; the shade is chosen per surface so that every text pairing meets WCAG AA. That sentence is the whole law — the tables on the next page are it, applied.



Navy

navy-800 · Brand primary. Headings, dark surfaces, the wordmark's ACADEMY line

HEX #1e3a5f
RGB 30, 58, 95
CMYK 68, 39, 0, 63 approx
PMS PMS 2965 C approx



Teal

teal-500 · The action colour. CTAs, focus rings, links, Lio highlights

HEX #14b8a6
RGB 20, 184, 166
CMYK 89, 0, 10, 28 approx
PMS PMS 3272 C approx



Ember

ember-500 · Warm accent. Energy and celebration — one element per section, never the primary interactive colour

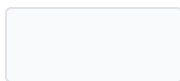
HEX #f97316
RGB 249, 115, 22
CMYK 0, 54, 91, 2 approx
PMS PMS 1585 C approx

EVERY CMYK AND PANTONE VALUE IN THIS DOCUMENT IS APPROXIMATE

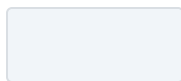
They are naive arithmetic conversions from the sRGB hex — no ICC profile, no paper stock, no ink limit, no rendering intent. **None has been proofed on a press.** Send a printer the hex values and the intended stock, ask for a proof on that stock, then use the build the printer gives back. The RGB values are canonical; these derived ones are not.

Neutrals

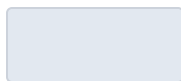
Tailwind slate. All text, borders and neutral surfaces.



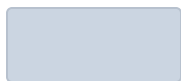
50
#f8fadc



100
#f1f5f9



200
#e2e8f0



300
#cbd5e1



500
#64748b



700
#334155



800
#1e293b

Body text sits at neutral-800; captions and metadata at neutral-500. Section 4's second page carries the pairing law that decides which shade a given surface may use, and the print page that follows it carries the two rules that decide how these neutrals are actually put on paper.

The brand is defined in RGB. Everything on this page is what happens when it is converted to ink, and every number here is an approximation nobody has proofed.

NEUTRAL	HEX	CMYK (APPROX)	PRINT USE
neutral-50	#f8fafc	2, 1, 0, 1	Do not print. A 1–2% tint is below most presses' reliable minimum and will drop out or mottle. Use the paper
neutral-200	#e2e8f0	6, 3, 0, 6	Light rules, table zebra striping. Near the low limit
neutral-500	#64748b	28, 17, 0, 45	Captions and metadata. Check contrast on the stock before using at small sizes
neutral-800	#1e293b	49, 31, 0, 77	Body text — but see the K-only rule below

TWO RULES THAT WILL SAVE A PRINT RUN

Body text prints K-only — 0, 0, 0, 100. The screen neutral converts to a four-colour build, and four-colour body text shows colour fringing on every letter at the slightest misregistration. Accept a slightly different black; sharpness matters more at 10 pt.

Rich black for large dark fields only — a cover, a section divider. Confirm the build with the printer; ink limits vary and exceeding them causes offsetting. **Never behind small text:** the two rules conflict at small sizes and the first one wins.

Print-safe darker steps

The darker steps the pairing law already requires on screen convert *better* to CMYK, being less saturated. Prefer them in print.

TOKEN	HEX	CMYK (APPROX)	NOTE
teal-700	#0f766e	87, 0, 7, 54	Text-safe on screen (5.47:1 on white) and better behaved in CMYK
ember-700	#ba4209	0, 65, 95, 27	Same on both counts (5.42:1 on white)
navy-950	#080e1a	69, 46, 0, 90	Near-black. Do not print as a four-colour build

Stock — starting points, not specifications

Nothing below has been costed or agreed with a vendor. Take it to a quote, not to a press.

Letterhead: 90–120 gsm uncoated white, no finish — it must accept ballpoint and laser overprint, and coated stock rejects both. **Business card:** 300–400 gsm, matte or soft-touch laminate — gloss makes deep navy show fingerprints. **Workbook interior:** 80–100 gsm uncoated — children write in it, and coated stock smudges graphite.

Uncoated stock shifts colour — ink soaks in, so everything prints darker and duller than the same build on coated, and a Pantone specified as **C** will not match on an uncoated sheet. State the stock when asking for a proof.

The brand teal and the brand ember **cannot carry text**. Teal-500 on white measures 2.49:1 and ember-500 measures 2.80:1, against a 4.5:1 floor. This is not a reason to change the brand colours — it is the reason the shade is chosen per surface.

ON LIGHT GROUNDS — WHITE, SLATE-50, NAVY-50

USE	WRONG	RIGHT
Teal text, links, icons	teal-500 2.49 teal-400 1.69	teal-700 5.47 on white, 4.91 on navy-50
Ember text, accents	ember-500 2.80	ember-700 5.42 on white, 4.87 on navy-50
Primary button	teal-500 + white 2.49	teal-700 + white 5.47, hover teal-800 7.58
Ember button or badge	ember-500 + white 2.80	ember-700 + white 5.42, hover ember-800 7.57
Muted body, captions	slate-400 2.63	slate-600 7.58. slate-500 (4.76) for short captions on white only — it fails on navy-50 at 4.28
Vibrant pill or badge	white on teal-500	teal-300 + navy-800 8.46

ON DARK GROUNDS — NAVY-800, 900, 950

The ramp inverts and the light teals become correct: **teal-300** (8.46 on navy-800) and **teal-400** (6.80) both pass and must *not* be darkened.

A HOVER DARKENS A FILLED BUTTON. IT NEVER LIGHTENS IT

Lightening reduces the contrast of the label at the exact moment the user is aiming at it. Both filled recipes step *up* a shade on hover. This line was once written the other way round and the error propagated to 51 elements across 41 files — one wrong law, not 51 mistakes.

Ember, sparingly

Maximum one ember element per section. Ember is never the primary interactive colour — teal owns that role, and a page with two competing accents has none. This document follows its own rule: the only ember on a spread is the short rule under the section title.

Decorative use is unconstrained. Gradients, background shapes, borders and illustration may take any brand shade — the 3:1 floor applies to glyphs and borders that *convey meaning*, not to decoration. Gradient text is for display headings at 24 px and above only, never for body copy, links, or anything that must carry a focus ring.

Ratios above were measured against the project tokens. A ratio is a measurement of a moment, not a property of the brand — the neutral ramp shifted underneath these numbers once already when the framework changed its colour space. Re-measure after any framework bump rather than trusting the printed figure.

Typography

Two faces and one accessibility override. All three are self-hosted — no Google Fonts, no third-party request. That is a COPPA decision, not a performance one, and it applies to printed documents too: this PDF embeds its fonts and reproduces with no network call.

BRICOLAGE GROTESQUE · DISPLAY · WEIGHTS 200–800, OPTICAL-SIZE AXIS

Every child, a first step

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789

h1 and h2 only — plus hero taglines and pull quotes. Never body copy, buttons or labels: it is too expressive at small sizes. In this document Bricolage sets the cover title and the section titles, and nothing else.

DM SANS · BODY AND UI · VARIABLE, WEIGHTS 100–900

Lio noticed you rewrote that loop three times. That persistence is how real engineers work — and it is the kind of thing worth saying out loud, because it is specific and it is true.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 0123456789 &@#\$\$%

Everything that is not an h1 or h2: body, h3 and below, UI labels, buttons, captions, tables. Weights in use are 400 body, 500 UI labels, 600 buttons and strong emphasis, 700 heavy emphasis.

OPENDYSLEXIC · ACCESSIBILITY OVERRIDE · WEIGHTS 400 AND 700

Lio noticed you rewrote that loop three times. That persistence is how real engineers work.

NEVER APPLY OPENDYSLEXIC BY HAND

It is a **user setting**, applied globally by the platform when a reader turns it on. Setting it manually in a component, a slide or a document overrides a choice that is not yours to make — and takes it away from the readers who did choose it.

Weights in use: 400 body, 500 UI labels, 600 buttons and strong emphasis, 700 heavy emphasis. The scale and the setting rules are overleaf.

The scale

TOKEN	REM	PIX	USE
text-7xl	4.5rem	72	Splash and brand moments
text-5xl	3rem	48	Page heroes (h1, mobile)
text-4xl	2.25rem	36	Section headings (h2, desktop)
text-2xl	1.5rem	24	Sub-section headings (h3)
text-lg	1.125rem	18	Lead paragraphs, card descriptions
text-base	1rem	16	Body copy — the WCAG floor
text-sm	0.875rem	14	Secondary labels, nav, footer
text-xs	0.75rem	12	Legal fine print and metadata only

The full ramp runs xs (12 px) through 9xl (128 px); the eight steps above are the ones in regular use.

Setting text

- **Measure:** 60–75 characters per line. This document is set at 66.
- **Line height:** 1.625 for multi-line body copy.
- **Body minimum 16 px.** Never below 12 px for anything, and never at 12 px for anything a reader has to act on.
- **Never skip a heading level.** Screen readers navigate by hierarchy, and a jump from h2 to h4 removes a rung from the ladder.

Lio

Lio is a lion cub. He is the mascot and the AI learning companion, and the reason the badge says P — the name lives inside P-LIO.

Who he is

A brilliant older sibling who wants the learner to succeed. Not a teacher, not a pet, and never “the robot”, “the bot” or “the AI” — he is a **companion**.

The species word in copy is “lion cub” and nothing else. Never fox, never owl. The name is always **Lio** — capitalised, never LIO.

THE KIT, AND NONE OF IT IS OPTIONAL

- Golden-tan fur, short fluffy mane, big warm eyes
- Aviator goggles **pushed up on the forehead** — never over the eyes, because the eyes carry every expression
- **Grey** over-ear headphones, worn always, even when sleeping
- Gunmetal armour on chest, arms and lower legs
- A glowing cyan **P** in a hexagon on the chest — P for **Plio**, not L for Lio
- **Organic lion paws**, not robotic feet
- Short tail with a darker tuft

Head including mane is about 1:3 of total height. That single proportion is what makes him read as a cub rather than a small adult lion — it is the first thing to check on any new art.

The marks, the companion-mark rule, the pose set and the do/don't list follow over the next three pages.

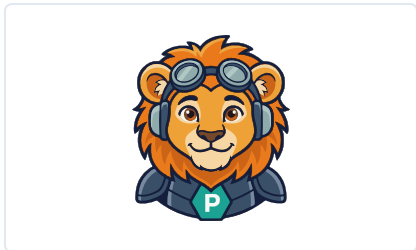


The ratified canon render

images/lío/canon/hero.png

392×476, transparent, no floor shadow. Pixar-style 3D, soft key light, subtle rim light. Every other pose derives from this character

Lio also exists as a vector mark, for the places a full character render cannot go: an avatar, an app icon, an embroidered patch, a stamp.



Flat mark — colour
images/lio/vector/lio-mark.svg
The vector master. Default anywhere colour is available, including small sizes



One-ink mark — navy
images/lio/vector/lio-mark-mono.svg
A designed single-ink drawing with real knockout holes, not a flattened colour mark. Print, embroidery, stamps, engraving — 64 px and up



One-ink mark — reverse
images/lio/vector/lio-mark-reverse.svg
Same geometry, white. For navy and photographic grounds

THE COMPANION-MARK RULE

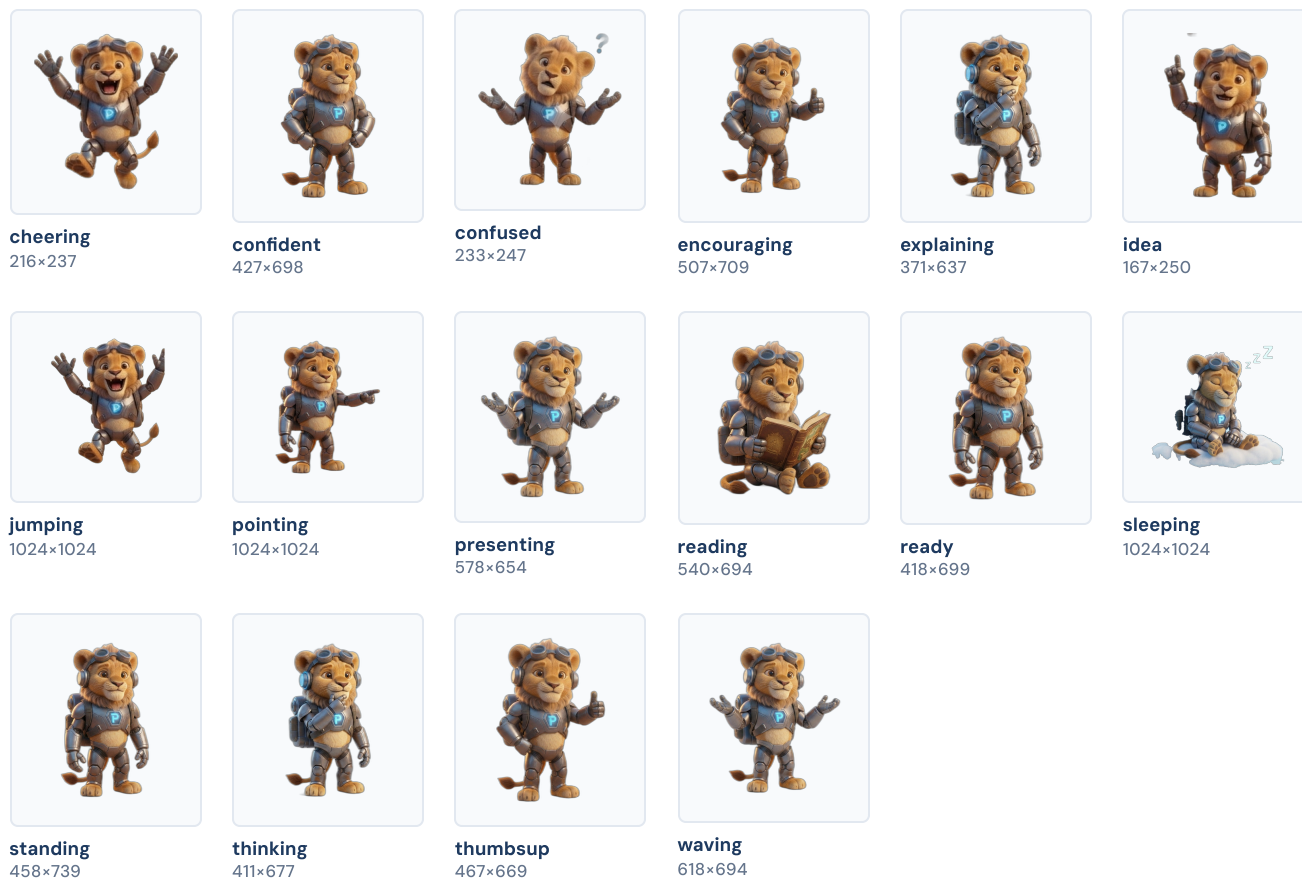
The Lio mark never replaces the P badge and never takes the badge's slot. This was tested. The lockup works because the orange P plus the word *lio* spells **P-lio** — swap the P for a lion head and the wordmark degrades to a bare “lio ACADEMY”: the pun stops working and the name stops assembling. The mark may sit *beside*, *above*, or entirely *apart* from the lockup with normal clear space, or stand alone on an avatar or app icon. Those two pairings are the whole permitted set.

One measured limit, stated rather than hidden: at 32 px the one-ink mark reads as a lion, but the chest P specifically does not — the badge is roughly the bottom 18% of the mark, so at that size it is a ~6 px letterform. This is the source composition, not a trace setting, and no parameter fixes it. Below 32 px use the colour mark, or the P badge from the logo.

Which file, by surface

SURFACE	USE
Favicon or app icon, 64 px and up	The Lio mark, colour
Favicon or app icon, 16–32 px	The P badge from the logo , not the mark — below about 24 px the mark is a coloured silhouette
Avatars — chat, dashboard, certificates	The Lio mark alone, colour or reverse per the ground
Single-colour print, embroidery, stamps	The one-ink mark, navy on light or reverse on dark
Large-format print keeping the 3D look	Ask — a separate print derivative exists for this and it is not the flat mark

Every shipped pose, generated from the pose manifest. Each is registered with its file, its SHA-256 and its pixel dimensions, so “is this the current art?” is a checkable question rather than a visual one.



Poses map to interface states, not to moods. Requesting “a happy Lio” is not a brief; requesting the pose for a given state is. The full mapping is overleaf.

Expression range

Approved: curious, encouraging, thinking, celebrating, proud, welcoming, sleepy, puzzled.

Forbidden: angry, stern, sad, disappointed, punishing. Lio never expresses displeasure at a learner. Puzzled is not sad — the confused pose is a shrug that means *this is interesting*, never *you failed*. This follows directly from the copy law in Section 7: a mascot who looks disappointed does the thing the words are forbidden from doing.

Known limitation, recorded rather than glossed: the poses were preserved at their source pixel sizes rather than regenerated, so most differ in both dimensions and aspect ratio — three later renders are square at 1024 px and the rest are not. They therefore cannot be swapped at a shared box size without layout shift: constrain by height with width auto. **Never upscale a pose for print** — at 300 dpi most of them are about an inch and a half wide, and anything larger is interpolation.

Each pose carries one interface state. A brief that names the state picks the file; a brief that names a feeling does not.

POSE	STATE IT CARRIES	POSE	STATE IT CARRIES
standing	Default, no interaction	explaining	Lio is speaking
presenting	Lesson instruction	cheering	Lesson complete, mastery
thinking	Quiz moment, loading, hint	encouraging	Wrong answer, retry
pointing	Call to action, next step	waving	Greeting, onboarding
confident	Assertive, senior tier	confused	Error states
idea	"Look here", a new idea	reading	Lesson catalogue, literacy
ready	Proud standing, pre-lesson	thumbsup	Correct answer, approval
sleeping	Rest, screen-time limits	jumping	High-energy celebration

Sleeping is wired to rest and screen-time states; jumping is the high-energy celebration, distinct from the static cheering pose. A state with no pose gets no mascot rather than a borrowed one.

DO

- Call him a **lion cub**, and call him **Lio**.
- Keep the goggles up, the headphones on, the badge lit and the paws organic.
- Place him on a transparent ground — the sprites are cut out with no floor shadow so they composite onto any surface.
- Let the surface change around him. **Lio's colours come from the render; the brand tokens govern what goes around him.**
- Use the pose the state calls for.

DON'T

- **No owl.** Lio was once described as a teal robot owl. That description is superseded and must never be presented as current.
- **No other species word.** Not fox, not cub-bot.
- **No mirrored, rotated or re-lettered badge.** The chest P is the only glyph on the character and a wrong-facing P is a wrong brand mark.
- **No text baked into Lio art** — the corpus is bilingual and baked English cannot be translated.
- **No recolouring, stretching, skewing or rotating.**
- **No compositing Lio onto a photograph of a real person**, and never a human face. This is the child-safety posture, not a style rule.
- **No Lio on legal or adult-only surfaces** — privacy policy, terms, DPAs, donation receipts, governance pages. His job is to address children; putting him on an instrument written for adults implies a child is its audience. He may appear in the site header there as ordinary navigation chrome.
- **No Lio endorsing a purchase or a donation ask aimed at a child.** A trusted companion asking a child for money is the definition of a dark pattern at this age.

The rest of the cast

Thirty-three non-Lio characters exist in the learning corpus — Bear, Twig, Benny, Rusty, Pip and the rest. **The cast is closed at the registry.** A thirty-fourth is a decision, not an authoring convenience, and no character enters a scene before it has a record.

COMPANIONS ARE NOT SMALL LIOS

No armour, no goggles, no headphones, no chest badge on any companion. Those are Lio's alone — a squirrel in goggles reads as a second Lio and the cast stops having a lead. Companions are peer-sized to Lio or smaller, in the same Pixar-3D style: same world, same film.

Voice and copy

Warm, plain and specific. We describe what a child has done — never what they are, and never what they will be. Everything below is that sentence, made checkable.

THE FOUR ATTRIBUTES

- **Playful-factual** — an adventure, never dumbed down. Real concepts, real words.
- **Curious, not performative** — genuine questions. “What do you think would happen if...” rather than “Great job! Now let’s...”
- **Encouraging without empty praise** — acknowledge effort *specifically*.
- **Honest about uncertainty** — observational language about a child’s learning, never definitive.

NEVER SAY

- “You’re so smart!” — fixed-mindset praise
- “That was easy!” — invalidates the struggle
- “Don’t worry, it’s not hard.” — dismisses the learner’s experience
- Clinical or diagnostic language about a child
- Marketing language about the platform

Forbidden vocabulary, parent-facing included: ADHD, dyslexia, autism, gifted, delayed, deficit, disorder — and any future-tense outcome claim.

Three worked rewrites follow, then the behavioural twin of these rules — the list of things this platform does not do to a reader.

Each pair below is a real move the rules forbid, and the sentence that replaces it. The note under each pair says which rule is doing the work.

BEFORE

"Maya is gifted at pattern recognition and will excel at computer science."

AFTER

"Maya has been exploring pattern puzzles and seems to light up when a sequence clicks."

Two forbidden moves in one sentence: a label about what a child *is*, and a future-tense claim about what they *will be*. The rewrite reports the observation and stops there. This is the register for every guardian digest and every progress note.

BEFORE

"Have you ever helped sort laundry? Or grouped your toys by colour? Sorting is everywhere! Anyway — put these buttons into three piles."

AFTER

"Sort these buttons into three piles by colour."

Lead with the verb. Executive-function load is heaviest at the *start* of a new instruction — bury the action behind three clauses and some learners act on the first clause they finish parsing, or stop before reaching the verb. A hook slide is allowed one wondering beat before the ask; every slide after it is not.

BEFORE

"Oops! So sorry, that's not quite right! Don't worry though, try again in a moment!"

AFTER

"Not quite. Take another look at the second step."

Over-apologising reads as performative to older learners and infantilising to everyone. State what happened plainly and point at the next move. "In a moment" also breaks a separate rule: name a duration in real units, or drop the wait framing entirely.

The copy rules have a behavioural twin: a list of things this platform does not do to a reader, published so a guardian can check them rather than take them on trust.

- **No competitive feature is on by default.** Leagues are opt-in, guardian-controlled, and show a display name and an avatar and nothing else.
- **No push notification of any kind reaches a child.** Re-engagement goes to a guardian's email, at most once every thirty days.
- **No countdown timers, no “hurry” language, no auto-advance** — not in a lesson, not at any age band. Self-paced means self-paced.
- **No purchase prompt inside a lesson, and no paid tier a child can be on.**
- **No third-party advertising or behavioural tracking on any page a child uses.**
- **No streak-loss guilt.** A missed day is protected by a token, not dramatised.
- **No fabricated progress.** Where something is not measured, the interface says “Not tracked” rather than filling the space with a plausible number.

THIS APPLIES TO MARKETING TOO

A campaign, a landing page, a partner deck or a donor email written in Plio's name is bound by the same list. Urgency framing, guilt framing, competition framing between children, and any before/after improvement claim about a named child are all out — regardless of how well they convert.

Illustration and photography

Two lanes, chosen by subject rather than by medium: a character is rendered, a diagram is drawn flat.

SURFACE	STYLE	WHY
Lesson screens	Pixar-3D raster	What exists, and children see it at fixed screen sizes where the scaling weakness never bites
Storybook	Pixar-3D raster	A picture book is the rendered warmth. Regenerate at 300 dpi trim rather than upscaling
Workbook print	Flat vector	Practice diagrams must survive greyscale print-on-demand and regenerate per language. A rendered 3D scene is the wrong tool for a fraction bar
UI marks and icons	Flat vector	Non-negotiable
Marketing and social	Pixar-3D raster	Character-led, fixed output sizes, warmth is the point

The dividing line is not screen versus print. It is **“is a character the subject?”**

Composition — these are pedagogical constraints, not taste

NO TEXT IN IMAGES. ABSOLUTE

Two independent reasons, either one sufficient. **Pedagogical:** the screens teach counting and numeral writing — a numeral in the background either gives the answer away or contradicts it. **Localisation:** the corpus is English and Spanish, and baked English cannot be translated. This includes incidental background text: shop signs, book spines, labels on props. The only glyph anywhere in the system is the P on Lio's chest.

- **A pose never carries the answer** to the question it accompanies — a child who cannot read yet is reading the picture, and a picture that answers the item measures nothing. Three characters are flagged exceptions where the pose *is* the data; for those the placement must be generated from the row data, never chosen for composition.
- **Never colour alone.** If two elements differ only by hue, a colour-blind child and a greyscale printout both lose the distinction. Add shape, position, label or fill pattern.
- **Alt text on every image**, empty for decorative. It describes *what is shown*, never what it means — describing the meaning of an assessment image gives the answer to exactly the children who need the item most.
- **Keep the load-bearing element clear of the outer 10%** so a crop or a print trim never removes it.

Photography

Real children in authentic learning, diverse across age, ethnicity, gender and ability, candid rather than posed, natural light where possible. **Not** generic stock with no educational context, **not** competition or ranking framing, **not** before/after improvement framing.

THE BINDING CONSTRAINT IS CHILD SAFETY, NOT AESTHETICS

No image may identify a minor by surname, school name or jersey, and any identifiable minor requires **written guardian consent on file before publication**. No photography of real children currently ships anywhere — this is a rule waiting for a use, which is the right order to have them in.

Print and file specification

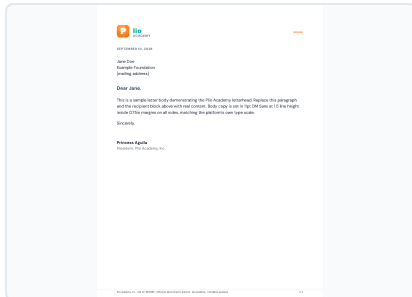
USE	FORMAT	SPECIFICATION
Marks, icons, logos	SVG	No embedded raster, strokes converted or explicitly sized, viewBox present
Flat diagrams	SVG	Regenerate per language if any label exists
Character sprites	PNG	Transparent, no floor shadow, full body, centred
Print raster	PNG, 300 dpi at final trim	Generate at print size — never upscale a screen asset. A 458 px sprite at 300 dpi is 1.5 inches wide; anything larger is interpolation
Bleed	—	0.125 in where a piece bleeds. The business card template already carries it with crop marks
Photography	JPG	Guardian consent on file for any identifiable minor

TRIM, SPINE AND VENDOR BLEED ARE NOT SPECIFIED — ASK, DO NOT GUESS

The stationery in Section 9 renders at fixed page sizes with CSS margins and no printer's marks: correct for office printing, insufficient for print-on-demand. A full trim/bleed/safe-margin specification must come from the chosen vendor's own template, and **spine width is a function of page count and paper caliper**, computed from the vendor's formula. A guessed spine destroys a print run — every copy wraps the cover art to the wrong place.

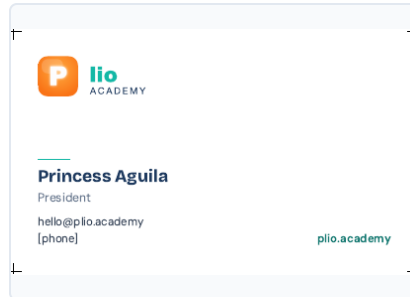
Applications

Every piece below is generated by the same pipeline as this document, from the same tokens and the same entity facts. Ask for the template rather than rebuilding one — that is what stops the identity drifting one deck at a time.



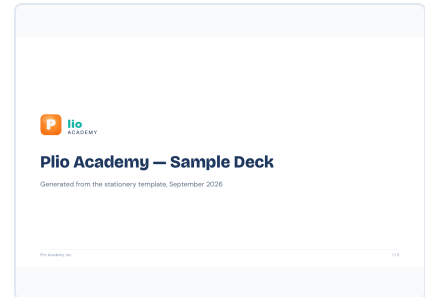
Letterhead

US Letter and A4. Wordmark top left, ember rule, 0.75 in margins, entity and EIN in the footer. A fillable HTML source ships beside it
[brand/stationery/letterhead-{letter,a4}.pdf](#)



Business card

3.5 × 2 in plus 0.125 in bleed, with crop marks. Front carries the person; the navy back carries the tagline
[brand/stationery/business-card.pdf](#)



Deck

16:9. Title, section, content, two-column and closing layouts, with a filled five-page sample as proof the template survives real content
[brand/stationery/deck.html](#)



Email signature

Table-based, inline styles, 600 px maximum, no tracking pixel — and none may be added. A plain-text fallback ships alongside
[brand/stationery/email-signature.{html,txt}](#)



Social avatar

Icon only, 48 px minimum, centred with clear space inside the crop circle. Never crop the wordmark to fit a square
[brand/logo-icon.svg](#)



Spanish-language surfaces

The mark and the system do not change; only the copy does. The tagline shown is the live Spanish string from the site, not a translation made for this page
[apps/web/messages/es.json : footer.tagline](#)

PLACEHOLDERS ARE DELIBERATE

Every template leaves the mailing address and phone number as bracketed placeholders, in the sample renders too. There is no published address or phone. Filling one with something plausible is worse than leaving the bracket in — a bracket is obviously unfinished; a wrong address is not.

These PDFs render through Chromium from HTML and CSS, which has no CMYK path — they are RGB. Correct for office and digital use, and a real limitation for commercial printing: a print shop will convert them with its own profile, to a result nobody here has seen. Get a proof.

Files and governance

Where the masters live, what decides a disagreement, and how to ask for something. This section is why the rest of the document can be trusted.

The registry decides

Every brand aspect has exactly one file that decides it. That mapping lives in a machine-readable registry — `docs/design/canon.json` — currently holding **26 aspects** (19 canonical, 2 conflicting, 4 working, 1 missing). Three ideas, in order of importance:

1. **One source per aspect.** When two files describe the same brand thing and disagree, the registry names the winner.
2. **Derived means generated.** Anything listed as derived is build output; editing it by hand is a defect, because the next build silently discards the change.
3. **A note is a measurement, not a fact.** Every entry carries the date it was last checked. An entry verified in June is a claim about June.

Where the masters live

WHAT	MASTER	DISTRIBUTION COPIES
Logo	<code>apps/web/public/images/logo*.svg</code>	<code>apps/web/public/brand/</code>
Colour and type tokens	<code>apps/web/src/app/globals.css</code>	<code>packages/ui/tokens.json</code>
Lio poses	<code>apps/web/public/images/lio/canon/</code>	Mirrored into the learning platform and CRM
Lio vector marks	<code>apps/web/public/images/lio/vector/</code>	<code>canon/mark.png</code>
Stationery	<code>scripts/brand/templates/</code>	<code>apps/web/public/brand/stationery/</code>
This document	<code>scripts/brand/build-brand-guidelines.mjs</code>	<code>docs/design/plio-brand-guidelines-2026.pdf</code>

The gates

Three of these run as commands, so “is the brand consistent?” is answerable rather than argued.

COMMAND	WHAT IT CATCHES
<code>pnpm brand:canon</code>	A canonical file that vanished, two aspects claiming one section, a stale conflict, a superseded description of Lio surviving as a live claim
<code>pnpm brand:lio-sync --check</code>	A Lio pose that drifted between the three applications — compares hashes, not appearance
<code>pnpm brand:lio-paths</code>	Any new code reference to a Lio image outside the canonical pose directory. Wired into continuous integration
<code>pnpm --filter @plio/ui test</code>	The token mirror drifting from the stylesheet that defines it

Requesting an asset

Write to **hello@plio.academy**. Say what surface it is for, what size, whether it prints, and what ground it sits on — those four answers pick the file. Requests that need a decision rather than a file, and therefore take longer:

- A **co-brand lockup** with a partner logo, or a **programme lockup**. Both are specified but neither is pre-built.
- Any use of a **proofed CMYK or Pantone build** — the values in Section 4 are approximations and no printer has proofed them.
- Anything requiring **print-on-demand trim, bleed or spine** figures.
- A **new Lio pose**, or any new companion character.
- Use of the marks in a **trademark filing or a contract exhibit** — the wordmark’s outlined letterforms derive from a licensed typeface and that position has not been reviewed by counsel.

WHAT THIS DOCUMENT DOES NOT CLAIM

It is generated from the repository and is accurate to the day it was built. It has not been reviewed by counsel, no printer has proofed a colour in it, and no third party has audited the child-safety claims in Section 7 — those were verified against our own source, by the people who wrote it. Treat every dated statement here as a measurement with a timestamp, not a standing fact.

Plio Academy, Inc. · EIN 42-1910860 · 501(c)(3) determination granted · Domestic Nonprofit Corporation (NRS 82), Nevada
 Brand Guidelines v1.0 · September 2026 · generated by `pnpm brand:guidelines` from `docs/design/canon.json` and the files it names.