MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Social responsibility at The University of Manchester

Identity links and contacts
Downloads - Chorus
Contact - design@manchester.ac.uk
General - socialresponsibilty@manchester.ac.uk

socialresponsibility.manchester.ac.uk

NARRATIVE

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WHAT IS SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY?

Social responsibility describes the way we are making a difference to the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of our communities through our teaching and learning; pioneering research; public and civic engagement and University operations.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

Social responsibility is one of our three core strategic goals, sitting equally alongside our commitments to research and discovery and teaching and learning – as part of our vision and strategic plan.

It captures our unique Manchester spirit and heritage as the country's first civic university. It encapsulates our work around social inclusion, better health, environmental sustainability, cultural engagement, prosperous communities, public engagement, civic engagement, equality, diversity and inclusion, volunteering, and service learning, among other things.

We're first in the world in the 2026 *Times Higher Education* Sustainability Impact Ratings and the only university to feature in the top ten every year since they began in 2019.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

'Making a Difference' is the term we use to communicate the positive impact our staff, students and alumni have on society and the environment. Their work makes a measurable difference to lives in our local communities and wider society through teaching, research, public engagement and our University operations. We're able to demonstrate our commitment to social responsibility by showing how individuals, teams and the University as a whole are making a difference. As a socially responsible institution, we're proud of these contributions.

By communicating this in a compelling way, we can evidence our impact, inspire others to get involved and raise awareness in order to further enhance our work.

IDENTIFYING 'MAKING A DIFFERENCE' STORIES

- Our students, staff and alumni are making a difference in many ways, for example: visiting schools to communicate research and inspire local children to consider higher education;
- helping unemployed people back to work through apprenticeship schemes;
- volunteering with an environmental charity or helping to ensure the survival of endangered species;
- working with prospective students from underrepresented backgrounds;
- conducting research to improve the health and wellbeing of people locally and globally.

STORYTELLING

We use storytelling to demonstrate our impact, inspire others and raise awareness. We communicate our stories internally to staff and current students, and externally to prospective students, potential research collaborators, national and international stakeholders and the general public. Using this guide, our content can be tailored to suit the target audience.

You can communicate the story in one or more of the following ways:

- to staff, through StaffNet, the University Magazine or internal Faculty or School newsletters;
- to students, through student-targeted communications channels and School and Faculty channels, or to prospective students through the University communications and marketing channels and our website;
- to prospective students through the University communications and marketing channels and our website;
- to alumni, through the University Magazine, alumni newsletters and the University website;
- to the public, through the University website news pages, School and Faculty websites and blogs, videos, social media and media campaigns;
- through the specific social responsibility communication channels such as the social responsibility newsletter, website or social media.

A Manchester 'Making a Difference' story should show how our people have improved the world or the lives of others, however big or small the act. It should inspire others to get involved and raise awareness of important work.

We're bringing to life real examples of how our University community is making a difference. Each story should have a compelling narrative that includes:

- the challenge or issue that the activity is aiming to address;
- an explanation of what has happened;
- a people-centered narrative;
- a clear expression of what the impact has been;
- a call-to-action so the audience can learn more or get involved.

Putting people at the centre

Place people at the heart of your content and let them tell the story. While a piece of voluntary work may have improved a process, an audience will identify more with the people who did the work and with those that benefit from it.

What is the challenge or issue being addressed?

Give context to your content and provide an overview of how the person or people are looking to complete an activity or project.

Provide the evidence, explain the benefits

It's not enough to say that somebody has made a difference – you need to prove it. Show how their actions have made a positive impact.

Include a clear call-to-action

Include a concise, clear call-to-action with an imperative verb (find, discover, learn, visit, become, help, give) and provide relevant details for those who want to continue the journey. This could be a website for more information, or sign-up details for an event.

You can also use the term 'make a difference' in your call-to-action.

Tone of voice

Refer to the University's tone of voice guidelines to guide your language and phrasing choices.

Terminology

Social responsibility is an increasingly used term. Using alongside 'Making a Difference' can help audiences make the connection between the two. Ensure that you talk about the benefits it brings – such as how the person/activity is making a difference to society, the economy or environment.

VISUAL IDENTITY

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THE IDENTIFIER

Here are a few key-points about the identifier:

- This visual device ensures an integrated and consistent visual identity for social responsibility.
- It can be used on all communications that are referring to social responsibility activities, projects or events.
- The text within the identifier must always be in Effra.
- The University tab logo must always appear top left (unless on merchandise, the device can be placed within the best area of the design. See examples on following pages).
- No new logos, marques or brand signifiers are to be developed.
- This version of the identifier supercedes any previous versions.

All versions of the identifier are available to download on Chorus, the University's asset management system, here.

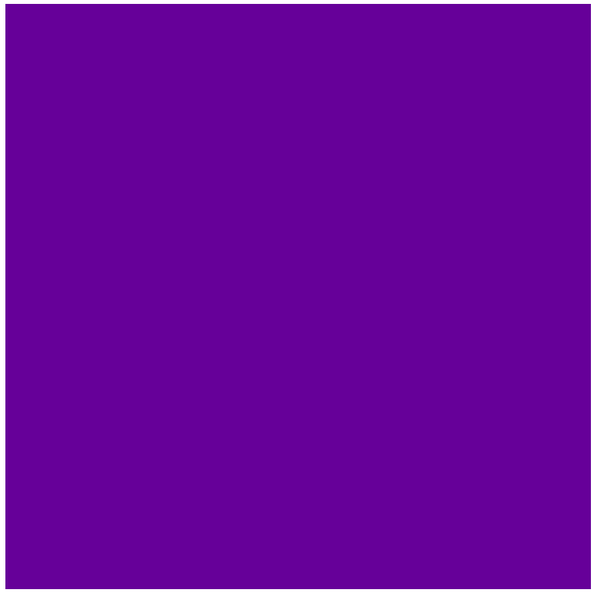
To request access to Chorus, please fill in this form.

COLOUR

The ‘Making a Difference’ identifier is in The University of Manchester’s signature colour, purple.

Please use the colour swatch on this page to ensure consistency with the University brand.

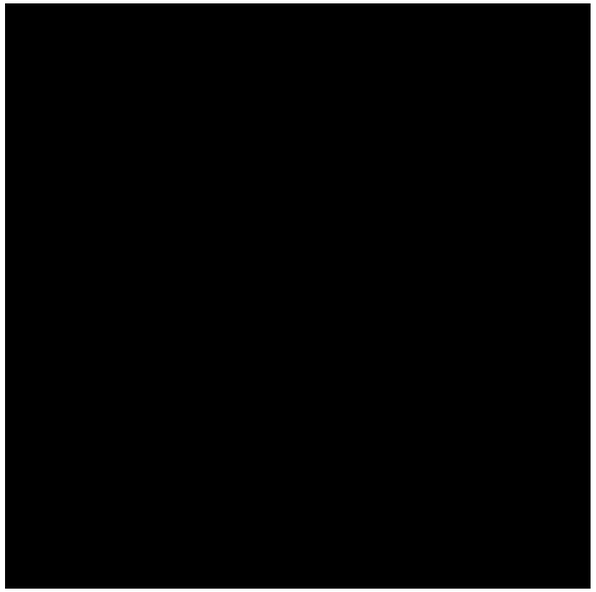
UoM Purple



C	72	R	109
M	100	G	0
Y	0	B	157
K	0	#	660099

White

Black



TYPEFACE

To retain consistency we recommend using the typeface Effra across all designed assets.

Please note: designed assets refers to artwork created by those using the Adobe Creative Suite.

Access to fonts: Adobe Fonts

Effra

Effra is a sans-serif suite of fonts that offers a clean, practical and contemporary feel. It can be used for both headings and body copy.

Adobe recently released the Effra CC typeface, which can also be used, giving some additional weights.

SECONDARY IDENTIFIER

There is a secondary version of the identifier, for when it needs to be used on a dark background.

Primary identifier

The purple identifier must be used on pale background colours, for example white.

Secondary identifier

The white identifier must be used on dark background colours, for example purple.

SIZE AND SPACE

The identifier needs to be seen clearly in order to have the appropriate impact.

The exclusion zone refers to the minimum space we recommend around the identifier. The exclusion zone is measured by taking the ‘x’ as a guide to mark out the area around the identifiers.

To ensure the identifiers reproduce clearly when used at smaller sizes, we have outlined minimum size guides so it retains legibility.

Minimum size
Print: 35mm square
Digital: 120pixels square

PARENT BRAND

The ‘Making a Difference’ identifier should always be used in conjunction with The University of Manchester logo. The main version of the logo is featured on this page. It’s also available in other colour variations.

More information on the University logo can be found on our brand pages. There is also the option to download the logo files.

USE OF LOGO AND IDENTIFIER

The University of Manchester logo must always be placed in the top left corner of a composition. The ‘Making a Difference’ identifier can be used more freely around the composition, as long as it isn’t too close to the University logo.

These examples show the identifier can be anchored to a corner or used centrally.

Portrait

Landscape

IDENTIFIER RULES

The identifier is most effective when used correctly. Please follow the guidance on this page to ensure consistency is maintained across all collateral.

Do not recreate the identifier in the ways illustrated on this page.

Do not add an effect

Do not change the fonts

Do not add a gradient

Do not add an outline

Do not change the composition

Do not rotate it

Do not crop it

Do not change the colours

Do not stretch or warp it

ACCESSIBILITY

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KEY PRINCIPLES

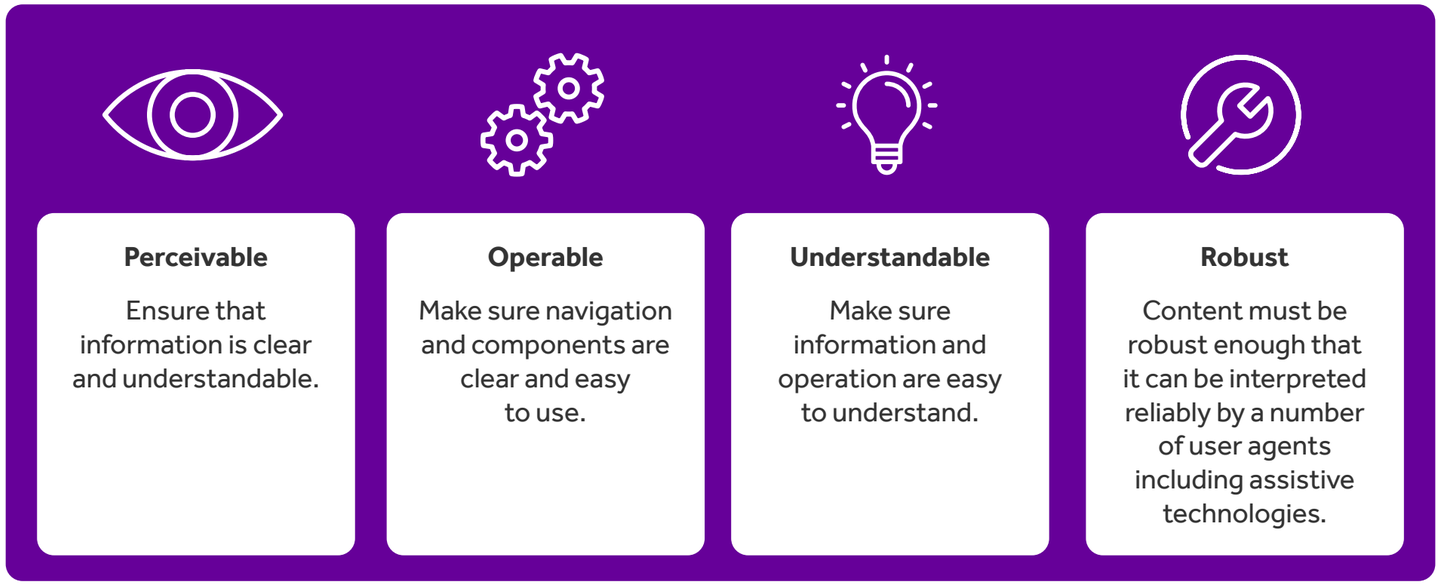
Accessibility, equality and inclusion needs to be at the heart of our communications, it's an essential value of our university.

Accessibility is the practice of making information, activities, and environments usable for as many people as possible.

In design, this includes making content and visuals clear and simple.

Here are some of the key principles we refer to when considering accessibility.

Accessibility key principles



Aspects to consider when creating an accessible design:

Fonts

- Clear
- Legible size
- Legible on background

Colours

- Legible contrast
- Check contrast with a colour tool

People

- Include people from under represented groups
- Avoid tokenism
- Be mindful of stereotypes
- Review your photos
- Consider the topic

Images

- Label images with alt text
- Use text rather than image of text

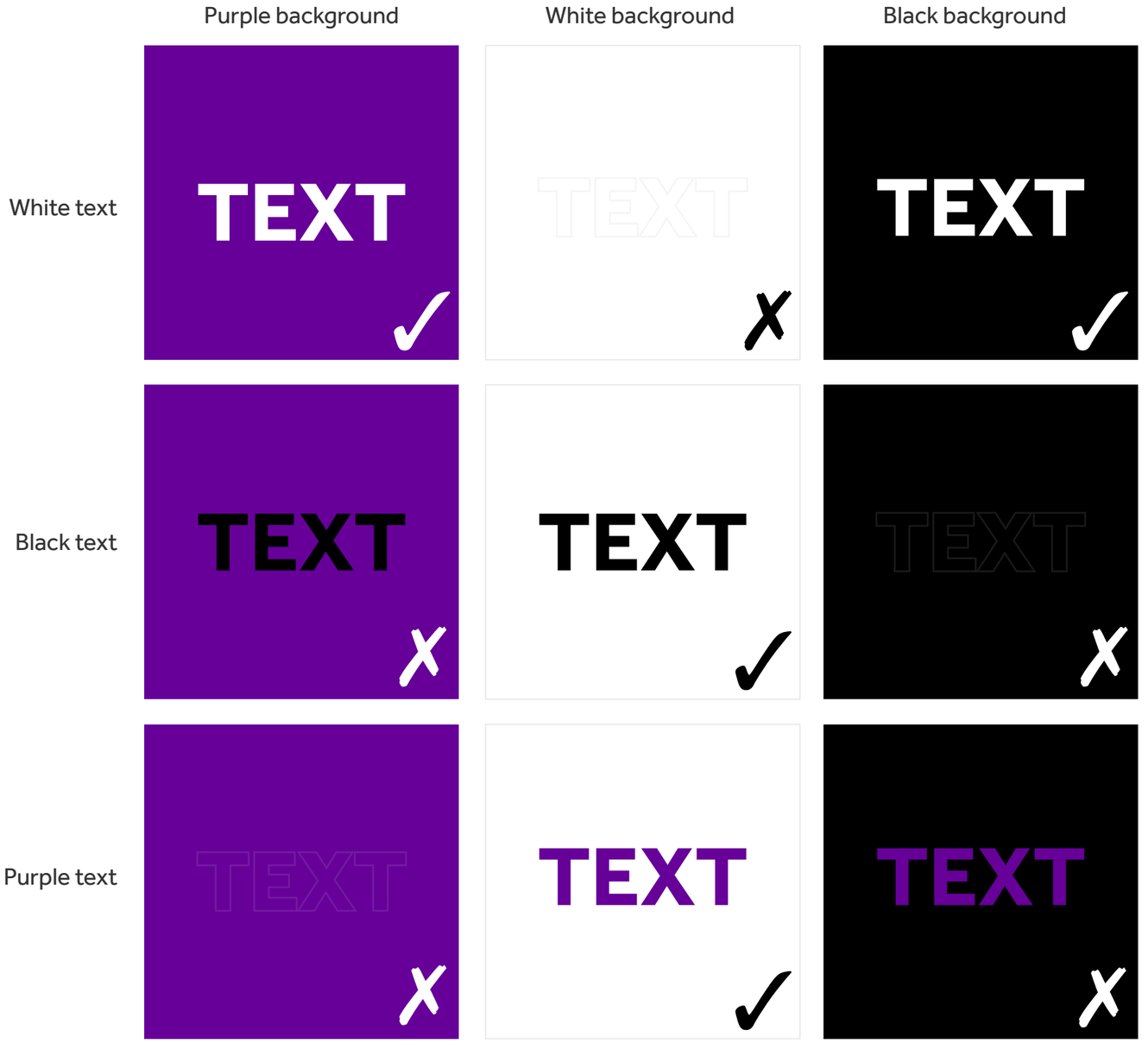
Layout

- Designed for user experience
- Clear readability
- PDFs passed through an accessibility checker (Adobe)

COLOUR CONTRAST

When applying colour to a design, it is essential to consider how it is used. High levels of contrast between text and background make it easier to read.

Our colour palette has been tested for accessibility. This page shows the results. The colour combinations with high levels of legibility have been highlighted with a tick. Those that did not pass testing have been marked with a cross.



IDENTIFIER OPACITY

When using the identifier over an image, always make sure the opacity is 100% to ensure it is clear and legible.

Purple identifier, 100% opacity

Purple identifier, 50% opacity

White identifier, 100% opacity

White identifier, 50% opacity

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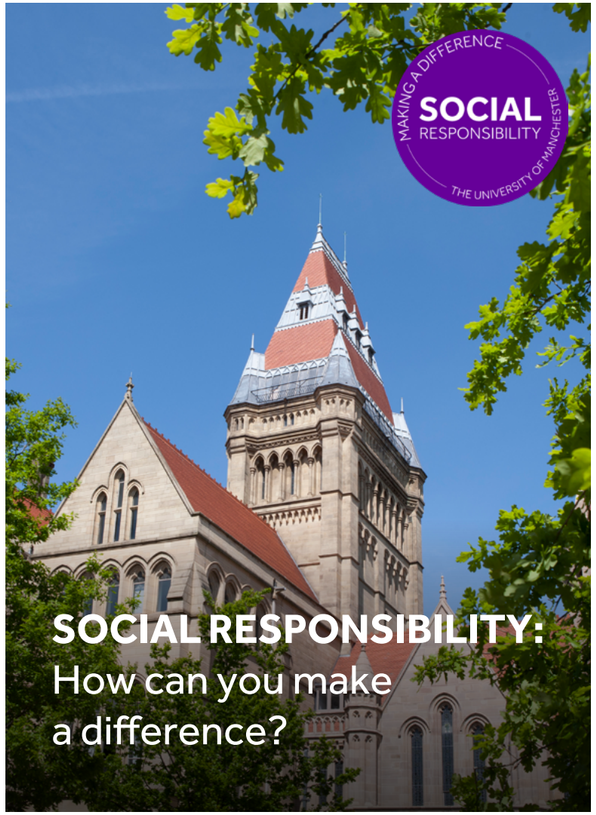
SOCIAL MEDIA COMPOSITIONS

Portrait

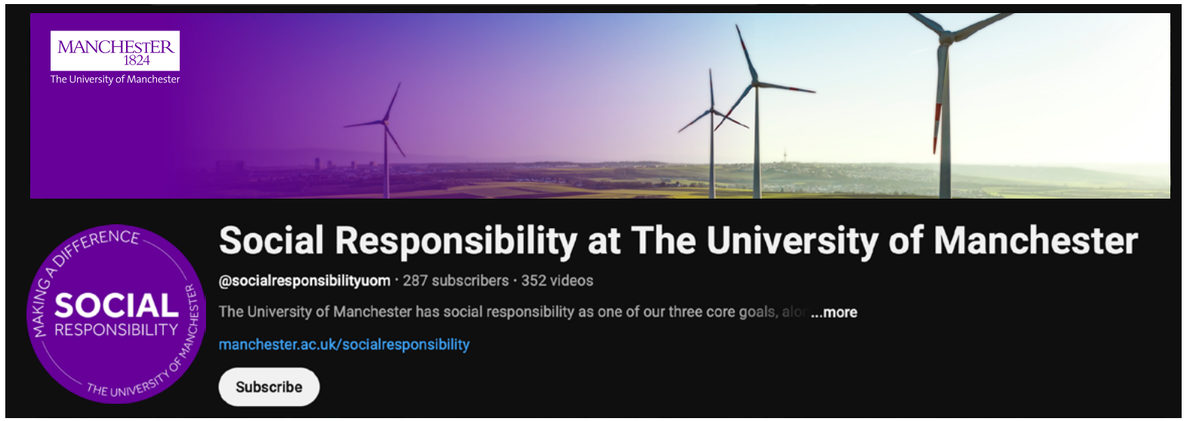


Square

Landscape

DIGITAL ASSETS

Youtube/video



DIGITAL ASSETS

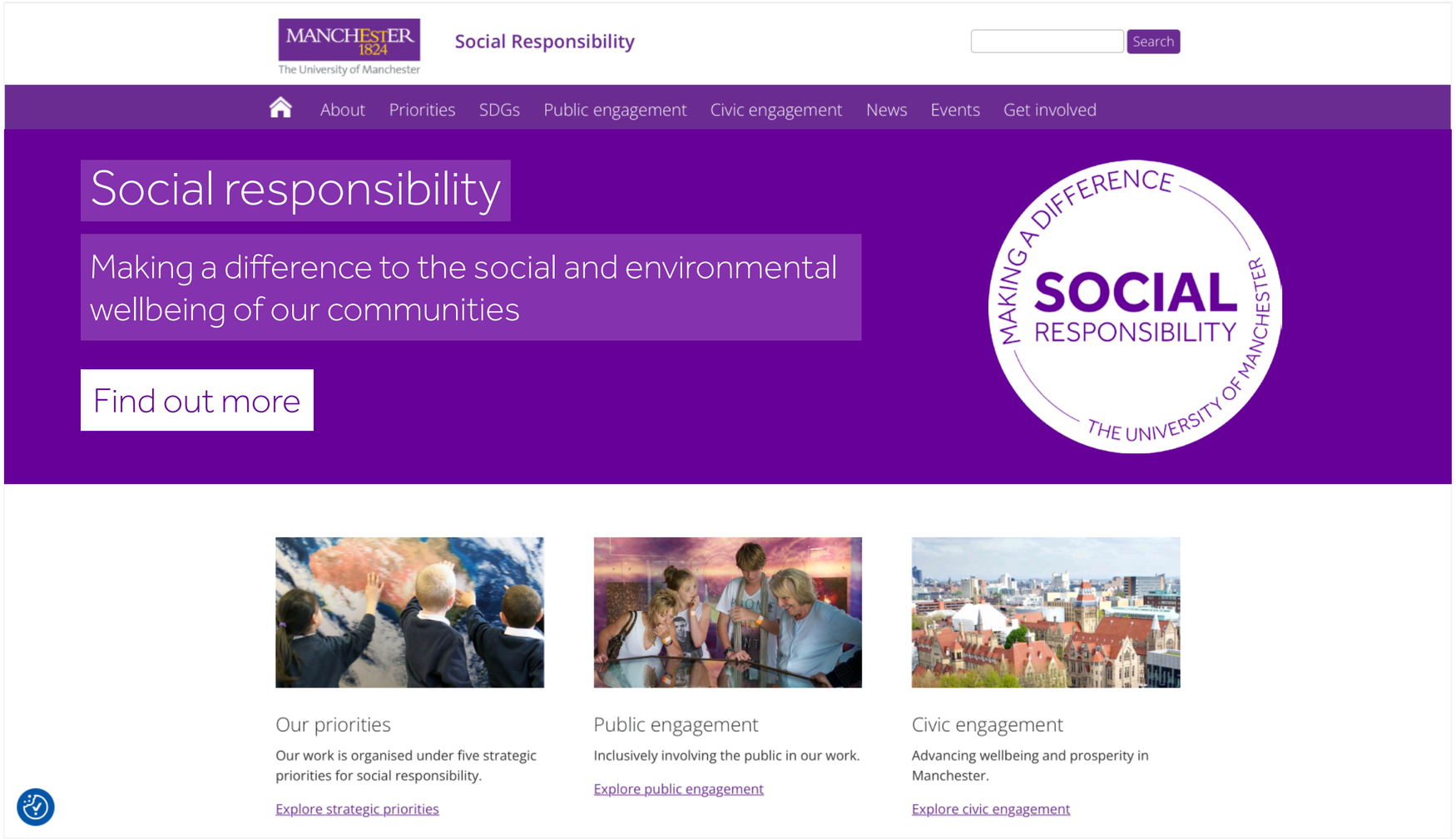
The ‘Making a Difference’ animation highlights the different facets of social responsibility at the University.

It is available to download here in both square and landscape formats.

Animation

DIGITAL ASSETS

Web banner



DIGITAL ASSETS

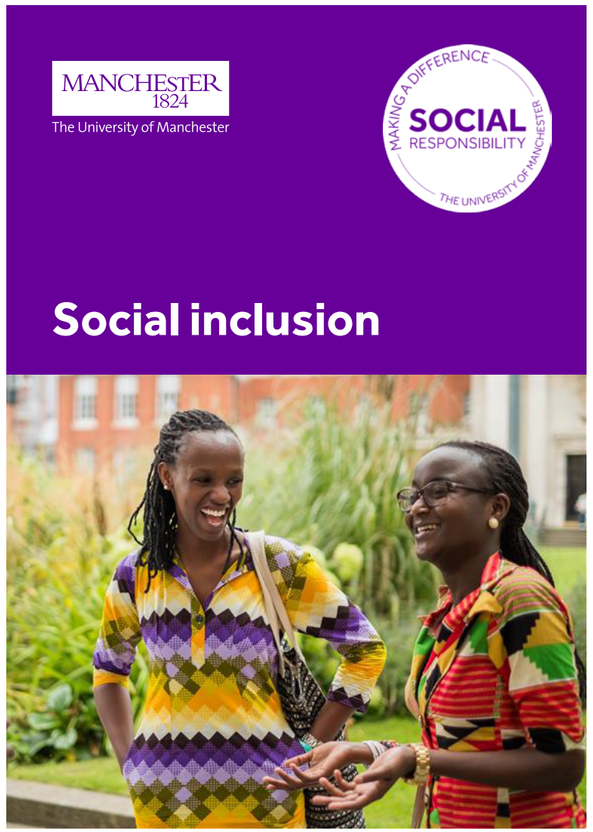
Powerpoint presentation

PRINTED ASSETS

Pull-up banner

PRINTED ASSETS

A5 leaflet



A4 poster

PRINTED ASSETS

Newsletter or brochure

MERCHANDISE

The University logo will need to appear alongside the ‘Making a Difference’ identifier on all merchandise.

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