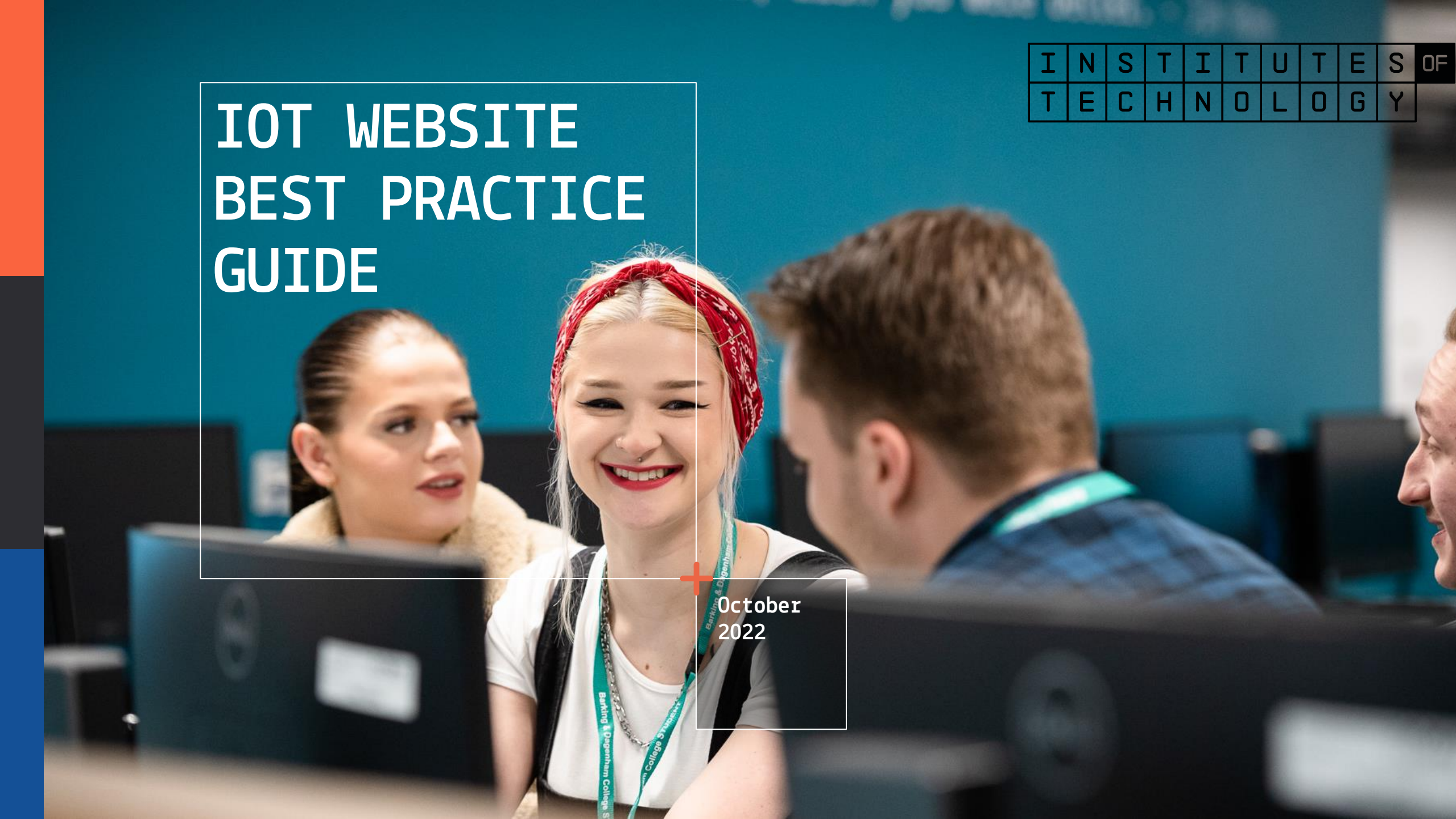


# IOT WEBSITE BEST PRACTICE GUIDE



October  
2022

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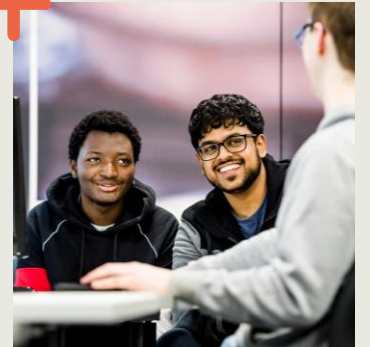
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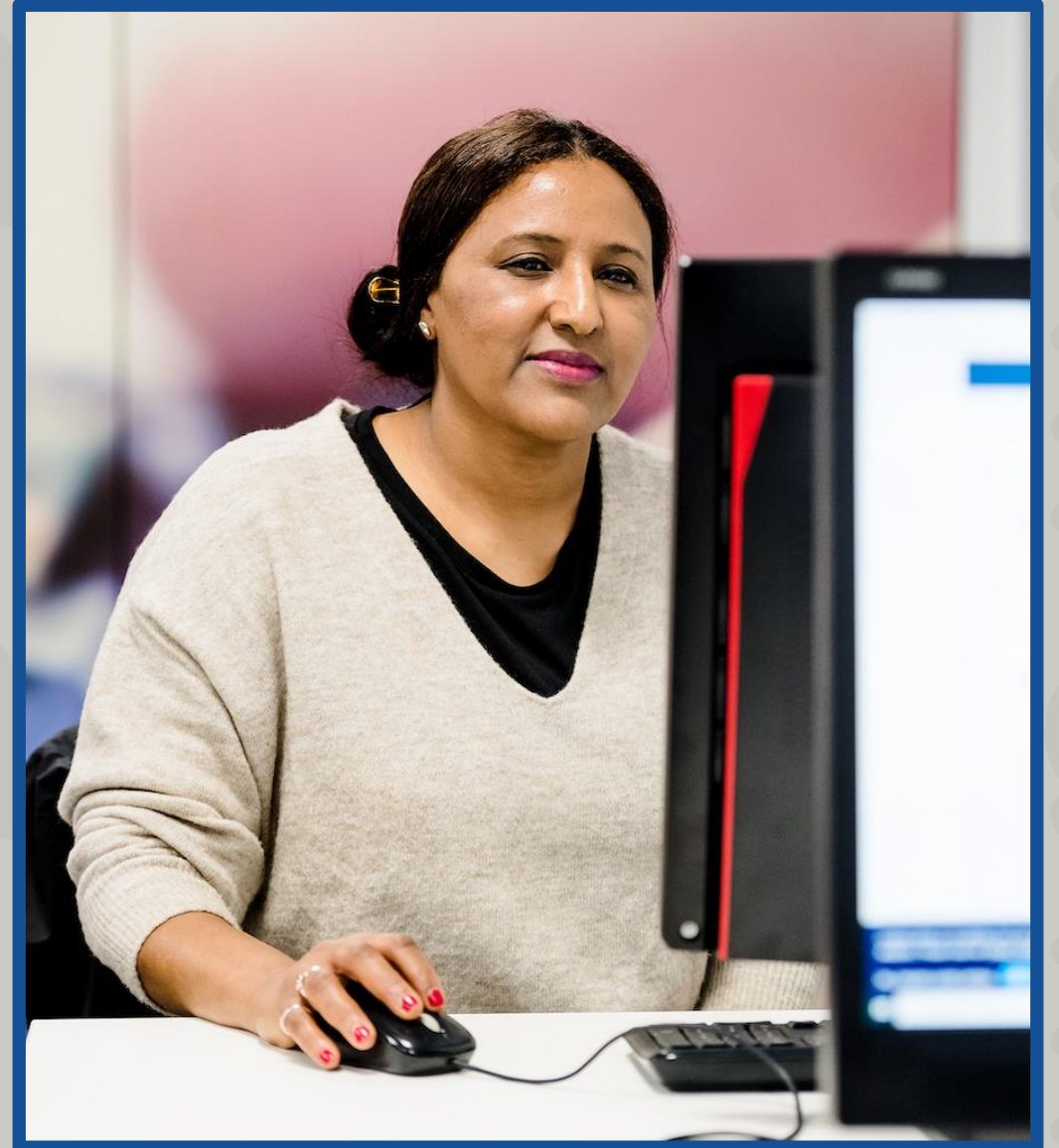


# INTRODUCTION

This document serves as best practice guidance for the creation of Institute of Technology (IoT) websites.

The guide is designed to help you think about design, structure, content creation, the experience and website optimisation, and works well when used alongside the [IoT website template and guidance document](#), available on the [IoT content hub](#).

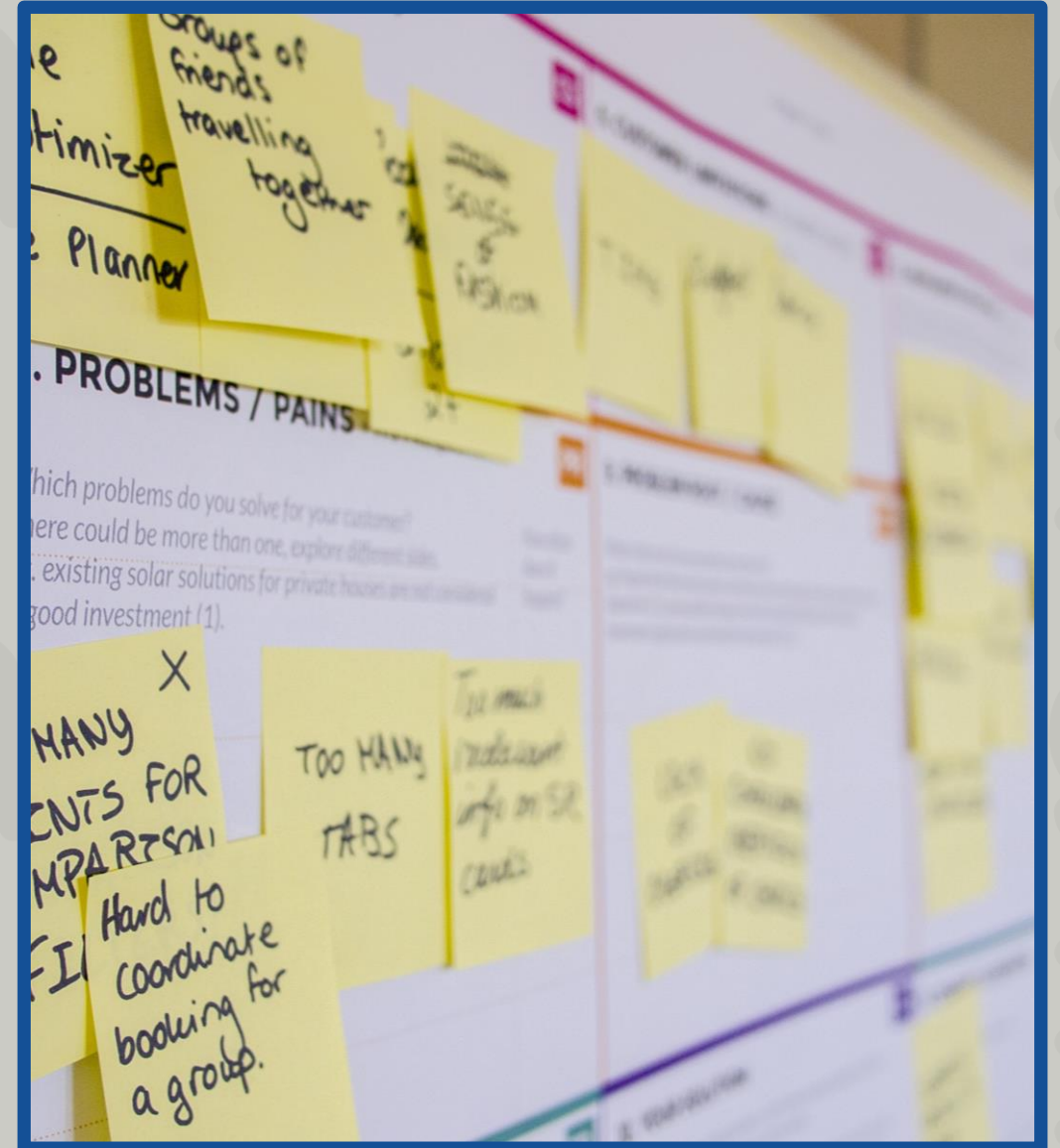
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# #1 THINK ABOUT THE AUDIENCE

Young people, adult learners, employers...there will be a number of different groups that come to your website so think about a structure and content that best serves your different audiences.

- What do they want from your site?
- What will improve their experience?
- What information is most important to help them take the next step?



## #2 CAREFULLY CONSIDER WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY

Good content is a marriage of reader-friendly and search-engine-friendly content: it should be easy to find organically online while also appealing to the emotions, intellect and values of your audience(s). Consider the following when developing the content for your site:

1. **Value** – Ensure all your content adds value – keeping it short and sweet! It should provide your audience with the information they need to decide whether they should work with / study at your IoT.
2. **Avoid comparisons** – Try to avoid comparing yourself to a single university or FE college. Instead, focus on what makes your IoT different – why should a learner or an employer connect with you over a single institution?
3. **How & why?** – Don't just focus on how an employer/organisation/learner can work with you – remember 'the why'! Sell your IoT & adapt your offer depending on the audience you are trying to engage. The IoT messaging document should give you some tips to get started.
4. **Inverted pyramid method** – consider using the inverted pyramid method when developing your website content. Ensure you have the most critical pieces of information at the top of each page, and then slowly decline your content in the order of priority. This will make sure that if you have lazy scrollers, they will still have the most important information about your IoT.
5. **Spell out the entire word before using acronyms**– remember that your audience is unlikely to know what the acronyms mean. Each webpage should use the whole word before introducing its acronym.

## #3 CREATE INSIGHTFUL NAVIGATION

If your users can't find the information they want – and quickly – they're likely to leave your site. When developing your navigation it should be intuitive and functional.

We have suggested a simple navigation structure in our web template document as a starting point but you should think about your audience and your offering when developing your site navigation.



## #4 ESTABLISH YOUR STYLE AND LAYOUT

Working within the [IoT brand guidelines](#), think about how you can make your website style consistent with the rest of your IoTs branding and communications activity. Practicality is key. Think about how you can create an effective layout for each page that maximises the user experience and is appropriate for the content on the page.

Creating a style guide will help to ensure that no matter who is working on your site, its clear which layouts are most appropriate for different pages and how different design elements can be used on the page.



## #5 UTILISE WHITE SPACE

Website pages crowded with text and visuals can leave your audience feeling overwhelmed.

Utilising white space will make your site appear clean and make it easier to browse.

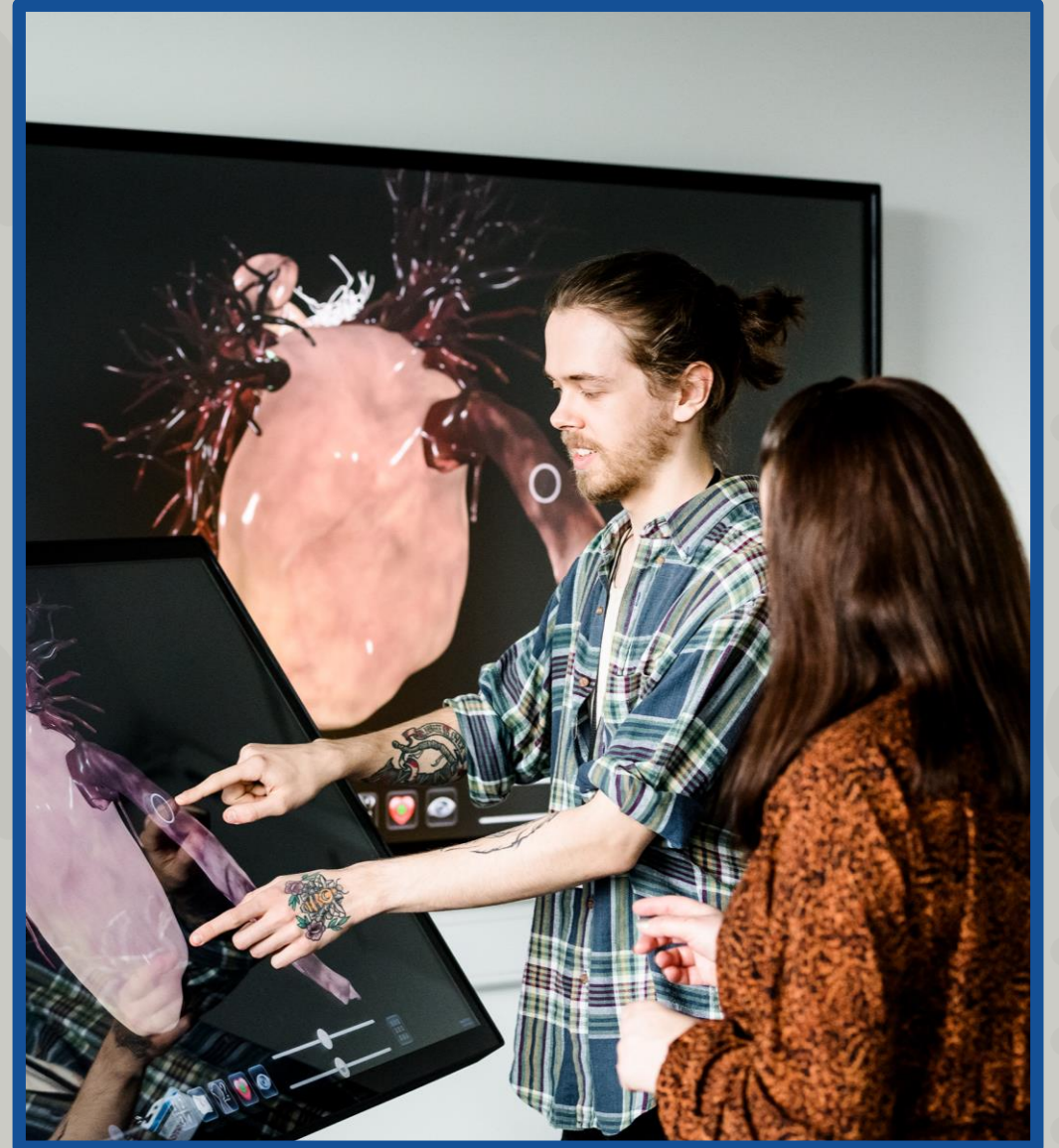


## #6 COMPRESS YOUR IMAGES

Images are a great way to create interest on your site and break up text, but you need to strike a balance between image quality and load time. If your images are too low-res, they will appear grainy, but if they are too large it will affect the load time.

You can compress files using your computer's image previewer, or a design tool such as Canva or Adobe.

For videos, you should think about hosting on a third party platform, like YouTube, and embed the code on your site.



## #7 MAKE YOUR CALL-TO-ACTION BUTTONS POP OFF THE PAGE

Help your audience take the next step in their journey with your IoT by making your call-to-action (CTA) buttons stand out on the page.

Whether it's downloading a brochure, signing up for an event, or applying for a course, the CTA should be visible and prominent on the page.

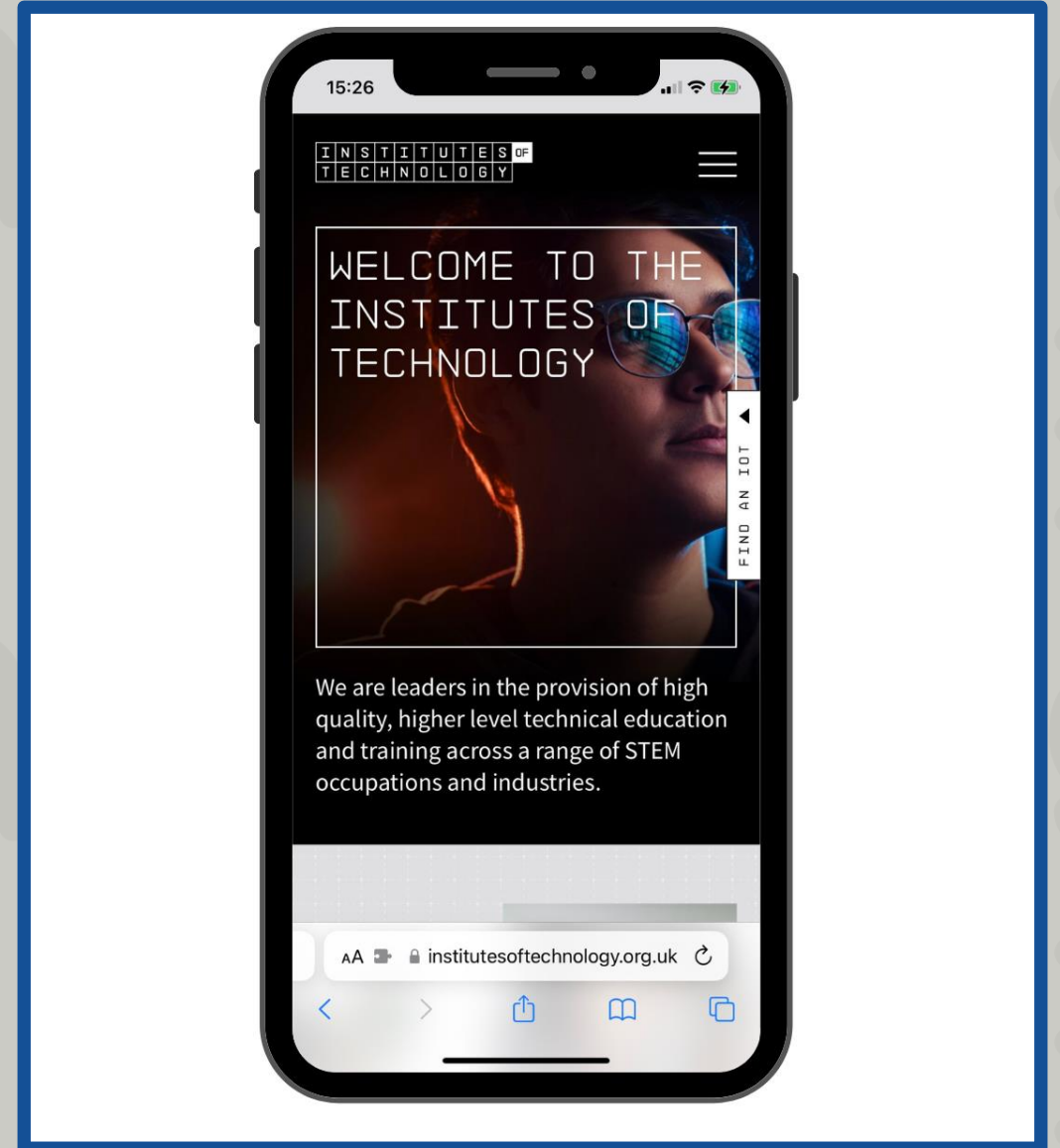
A new report launched today on behalf of the Internet of Things (IoT) Network outlines some of the challenges we face on both a national and local level. The report showcases how IoTs are working alongside employers to teach the technical skills needed to succeed in the future.

[LEARN MORE](#)

## #8 MAKE YOUR SITE MOBILE RESPONSIVE

Integrate responsive design into your web build to ensure that your site can adapt to whatever device a user uses.

Your website will adjust to fit the screen and provide a better experience for your audience.



## #9 OPTIMISE YOUR SITE FOR SEARCH ENGINES

If you're going to invest time in your site, you want to make sure that it's optimised to rank in search engines. Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) involves strategies like:

- **Researching and optimising for relevant key words** – Perform key word research and think about how you integrate these key words into your web content. You may also want to familiarise yourself with the IoT FAQs in the [website template and guidance document](#) and develop content that helps to answer these key questions.
- **Ensuring your site loads quickly** – As noted above, think about image and video files and how you can maximise quality without impacting on the user experience
- **Making your site mobile responsive** – If your site isn't responsive, search engines index the different 'versions' of your site to see how it functions on different devices, which pushes your SEO rating down. But if your site is responsive, search engines will give your SEO a boost.
- **Updating your content regularly** – If your site remains static, it won't attract traffic. Regular updates play a vital role in SEO and also improve the interaction with your audience
- **Creating content to drive traffic to your site** – Driving organic traffic to your website increases the click through rate for your search engine results which helps with your SEO ranking.