



D3.1

CLARIN Human Interface Guidelines

Document information

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1 Executive Summary

This document describes a generic human interface design for CLARIN-related web sites. It sets out the basic guidelines for a common look-and-feel for the main CLARIN website (<https://www.clarin.eu>), centralized services such as the Virtual Language Observatory (<https://vlo.clarin.eu>), and other CLARIN-related websites. The guidelines aim at helping developers working towards a unified user experience in the CLARIN world. The common look-and-feel also contributes towards a recognizable CLARIN brand.

2 Introduction

CLARIN is the Common Language Resources and Technology Infrastructure project. It provides easy and sustainable access for scholars in the Humanities and Social Sciences to digital language data (in written, spoken, or multimodal form), and to advanced tools to discover, explore, exploit, annotate, analyse or combine them, wherever they are located. CLARIN is building a networked federation of language data repositories, service centres and knowledge centres, with single sign-on access for all members of the academic community in all participating countries. Tools and data from different centres are interoperable, so that data from different sources can be combined and processed by tools that can be chained to perform complex operations to support researchers in their work.

The CLARIN infrastructure is fully operational in many countries, and a large number of participating centres are offering their users services to data, tools and expertise via their own web-based access points. There is also the main CLARIN website, which provides introductory information to the CLARIN infrastructure, gives links to the CLARIN member organisations, features a news and events section, gives entry points to the main CLARIN services, and highlights selected resources.

As all of these services and the main CLARIN website have been developed by different centres without a common set of CLARIN provided design guidelines, their user interfaces are not coherent across the CLARIN infrastructure. It is therefore important to provide clear and easy-to-use guidelines that the service developers can follow to generate a consistent user experience for CLARIN related websites.

This document will outline the requirements and recommendations specific to CLARIN-related web-based entry points. These guidelines should be applied to all browser-based CLARIN entry points.

3 General Guidelines

The following guidelines apply to all web pages across all services under the CLARIN infrastructure.

3.1 Branding

It is important to follow the design guidelines in this document and adapt the theme and colours accordingly to create a unified user experience for the CLARIN infrastructure, which is essential for building a recognizable CLARIN brand.

3.2 User-Centred Design

In designing web pages, initial designs are often based on widely used page layout and navigation patterns, and should use best practices such as consistency, modularity, and simplicity. However, design decisions should also be informed by consulting users at each stage of the design process. This helps in better understanding their requirements, and finally, produces more effective designs.

It is important to take into account the target audience of a web page. In the case of the CLARIN infrastructure, it is important to cater for and distinguish between experienced and novice users. All pages should include links to Help, About and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) pages. Navigation shall be easy and there shall be links for advanced users to access the main contents directly without going through deep link hierarchies.

The [OS X Human Interface Guidelines](#) from Apple are a good reference point for user-centred design guidelines and shall be taken into account when designing CLARIN related web applications.

3.3 Accessibility

In the context of the web, the term *accessibility* is about designing user interfaces that make the content accessible to the widest number of users possible. The disability of the user to access the content can be a physical disability or it can be the disability of the client (software or hardware).

3.3.1 Disabled Users

The W3C [Web Accessibility Initiative \(WAI\)](#) outlines accessibility standards and guidelines that should be followed to make the contents accessible to disabled users. The [Google guidelines on Accessibility](#) also well applies to CLARIN-based applications.

3.3.2 Platform Compatibility

All web pages should be viewable across widely used browsers. Use [Browser Statistics and Trends](#) to identify those browsers you need to support for maximum coverage. Use [w3schools](#) as a reference to identify browser support with regard to HTML5, CSS3 and JavaScript.

3.3.3 Mobile Accessibility

Use platform specific guidelines as described in [iOS Accessibility Guidelines](#) and [Android User Interface Guidelines](#). Use a flexible and responsive design. Ensure that the pages' contents are rearranged given the browser's underlying device and screen resolution. Maximise accessibility by only using the standard UI controls, objects and elements.

3.3.4 HTML Accessibility

A web design is often more robust when it requires a minimum of dependencies. However, use of CSS and JavaScript is recommended to enhance the user experience, but also ensure that the basic contents of a web page are accessible without browser-support for CSS and JavaScript.

3.3.4.1 DocType

Always use the [W3C recommended Doctype](#). Ensure that all mark-up validates against the doctype. Specify the main language of the page, e.g.,

```
<!DOCTYPE html>
<html lang="en-GB">
</html>
```

3.3.4.2 Title

A proper title of the page should be specified. Each page of the website should have a unique title. Note that this is one of the most important on-page ranking factors and should be treated with care, also given that the page's title tag shows up in the results pages of the major search engines. The length of a title should not be longer than 60 characters, e.g.,

```
<title>CLARIN Human Interface Guidelines</title>
```

3.3.4.3 Headings

A proper heading hierarchy should be followed. A logical heading structure is invaluable for users of screen readers and similar assistive technologies for navigating through content.

TabIndex

Use focusable controls such as `<a>` or `<button>`, which are accessible to keyboard as well as pointing devices. Tabindex attributes should be avoided; often this results in an unpredictable tab order that users find in conflict with the page's content organisation. All focusable elements must have a clearly identifiable visual style when they have focus.

Image Alternatives

All images must have an alt attribute that properly describes the image. Assistive technologies such as screen readers will provide the content of the tag attribute as a text alternative when the image cannot be displayed or seen.

Form Labels

Form fields that allow input must have an associated label, either in the form of a `<label>` element or, for simple forms when no visible label is required, a title attribute.

3.4 Copyright

All web pages should only use properly licensed material, including graphical contents and CSS/JavaScript libraries. Note that this includes Creative Commons licenses.

3.5 Logo

The CLARIN logo should be visible on every web page related to the CLARIN infrastructure. The colour of the logo shall be dark blue, whenever possible. In the other cases, the black logo can be used.

The logo can be used with or without the subtitle. The subtitle reads “Common Language Resources and Technology Infrastructure”.



The logo shall not be changed, any form of modification is inadmissible. The logo may not be scaled, distorted or rotated. The use of other typefaces is not permitted. No colour versions may be used apart from those defined in this document.

The logo should be linked to the main [CLARIN website](#). It is the standard navigational means to point from any CLARIN service to the main CLARIN infrastructure website.

3.6 Typography

Good typography establishes a visual hierarchy for rendering prose on the page that help readers understand relations between prose and pictures, headlines and subordinate blocks of text. For a detailed understanding of typography, please consult the [Typography chapter](#) of the Web Style Guide book.

The typefaces to be used within the CLARIN identity are 'Source Sans Pro' and 'Roboto Slab'. 'Roboto Slab' can be used for 'streamers' ('blockquotes') or 'subheads'. These typefaces are for online (web) and offline (print) use. When digital view ability issues arise (e.g. in Word and PowerPoint, on computers where these fonts are not available), 'Calibri' should be used as a replacement.

Source Sans Pro

Aa

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
 1234567890(,;:?!\$&*)

Source Sans Pro
 Weight: 400
 Style: normal

Roboto Slab

Aa

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
 1234567890(,;:?!\$&*)

Roboto Slab
 Weight: 400
 Style: normal

Calibri

Aa

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
 1234567890(,;:?!\$&*)

Calibri
 Weight: 400
 Style: normal

The web fonts are obtainable via:

[Source Sans Pro](#)

[Roboto Slab](#)

Links to the desktop fonts (zip-files):

[Source Sans Pro](#)

[Roboto Slab](#)

The Calibri font is the default font installed with Microsoft Office.

3.7 Colours

Colour is an effective tool to attract the eye, emphasize display elements, and improve the aesthetics and appeal of a page. It is also an important aspect of branding. An overuse of colours can create an undesirable and unappealing look and feel.

All colour combinations must pass the WCAG 2.0 AA-compliant colour contrast check in accordance with the [Snook colour contrast checker](#).

3.7.1 Alert Colours

Information conveyed with colour must be identifiable. If a colour is assigned a specific meaning it must have only that meaning throughout the CLARIN infrastructure. The Bootstrap alert colours should be used:

Text Colour	Highlight Colour	Purpose
#3c763d	#dff0d8	Success Messages
#31708f	#d9edf7	Information Messages

#8a6d3b	#fcf8e3	Warning Messages
#a94442	#f2dede	Error Messages

3.7.2 Colour Palette

The following colour palette shall be used in all occasions for CLARIN communications. The primary CLARIN colour, taken from the CLARIN logo, is 'Dark Blue'. This should be the dominant colour used for backgrounds and headings.

	HEX #07426E RGB 7, 66, 110 CMYK 100,50,0,50 Pantone PMS Reflex Blue Logo colour (Dark Blue)
--	---

Various shades of the primary colour may be used in different scenarios.

	HEX #39688B R=57 G=104 B=139 C=81 M=51 Y=27 K=11 Dark Blue 80%
	HEX #618EA8 R=106 G=142 B=168 C=62 M=34 Y=23 K=6 Dark Blue 60%
	HEX #9CB3C5 R=156 G=179 B=197 C=43 M=22 Y=17 K=2 Dark Blue 40%

3.7.3 Secondary Colours

As a secondary option a spring green colour should be used. This can highlight subheadings and it can also be used in buttons and other controls.

	HEX #A2C037 RGB 162, 192, 55 CMYK 50,0,100,0 Pantone PMS 376 Tertiary colour (Spring Green)
	HEX #B5CD5F R=181 G=205 B=95 C=37 M=2 Y=75 K=0 Tertiary colour (Spring Green) 80%

	HEX #C7D987 R=199 G=217 B=135 C=29 M=1 Y=59 K=0 Tertiary colour (Spring Green) 60%
	HEX #DAE6AF R=218 G=230 B=175 C=20 M=0 Y=41 K=0 Tertiary colour (Spring Green) 40%

3.7.4 Text Colours

For general content, text shades of grey should be used.

3.8 Layout

This section provides basic guidelines about common elements across the CLARIN websites. It describes a generic template that can be used and modified by service designers according to their requirements.

A logical and consistent page layout makes it easy for viewers to access, understand, and remember information. Hence, developers shall keep the layout of a web page simple and consistent. The main information should be clearly visible and it should be easy to navigate back and forth.

CLARIN AND SERVICE LOGO	MAIN NAV BAR <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	Search Box and User Menu
Main Content		Secondary Menu or Highlighted contents
Footer and Copyright		

3.8.1 Header

To make for a consistent user experience, every page should include a similar header that includes a main logo of the service and also the CLARIN logo. The main navigation should be part of the header and a search box.

3.8.2 Navigation

All web pages should include a main navigation bar that provides

- links to the major sections and to the important functionality of the website;
- a link to go back to the local homepage;
- a link to the “About” section, and

- a link to the main CLARIN website.

Other menu items are context dependent. A dropdown menu should be used to provide access to subsections. However, as described in Section 4.1, the depth of the dropdown menu should be restricted.

If a website offers functionality that only authenticated users can access, a user menu shall be incorporated in the top-right corner of the layout. In case the user is not logged-in, a menu that allows user to login or to register shall be shown instead.

A secondary menu can be displayed in the right sidebar.

3.8.3 Footer

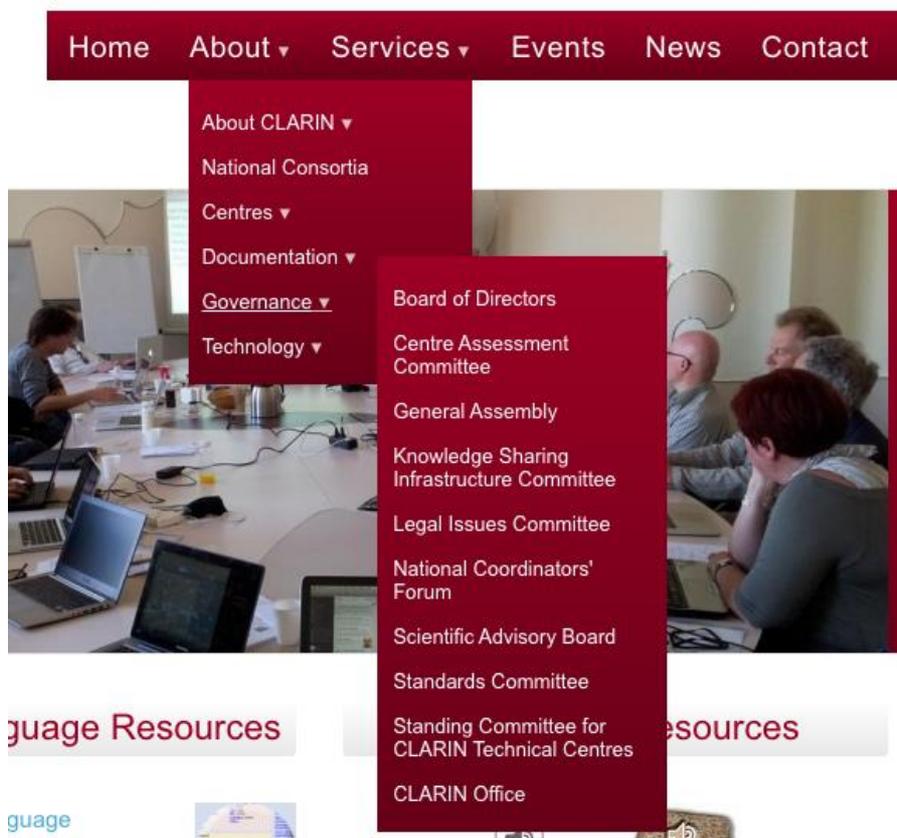
All web pages should include a common footer that includes links to help menus such as “Contact Us”, “About”, “FAQ”, “Terms of Use” *etc.* It should include information about partners, grants and members. A clear copyright message should be displayed that also highlights “CLARIN” in the copyright text.

4 Guidelines for Main CLARIN website

The <https://www.clarin.eu> website is the main entry point for the CLARIN infrastructure and therefore requires special attention.

4.1 Multi-Level Menus

The CLARIN website has a multi-level navigational hierarchy. An important aspect to simplify the design is to avoid multi-level dropdown menus; these menu require a lot of display space and it is also difficult to show such menu hierarchies on mobile devices. The following screenshot shows the current menu design of the CLARIN website.



It is recommended that the maximum depth of the menu should be two. The multi-depth menus should be converted to single hierarchy menus. As a reference look at the [CESSDA](#) website.

4.2 Template

The following mockup is proposed for the main CLARIN website:

The screenshot displays the CLARIN website homepage. At the top left is the CLARIN logo. The navigation menu includes 'Home', 'About', 'Services', 'Events', 'News', and 'Contact'. A search bar is located on the right. Below the navigation is a large image of a meeting. To the right of the image is a blue box with the text: 'CLARIN is searching for a new Director for User Involvement' and 'CLARIN ERIC has an opening for the part-time position of Director for User Involvement.' Below this are three service tiles: 'Search for Language Resources' with a magnifying glass icon, 'Deposit Your Resources' with a cloud upload icon, and 'Featured Resource' with a pencil icon, listing 'Deutsches Textarchiv'.

5 Technical Specifications

5.1 Bootstrap

Bootstrap is the most popular HTML, CSS, and JS framework for developing responsive, mobile first projects on the web. To apply the CLARIN human interface guidelines, a customized version of Bootstrap 3 will be provided to all developers; they can hence adopt the CLARIN look and feel with minimal effort.

For a minimalistic design, only the CSS part of the Bootstrap package should be required. To use Bootstrap's JavaScript functionality, the jQuery library needs to be included.

5.2 Web Icons

Bootstrap includes over 250 glyph icons that can be used. However, [Font Awesome](#) is one of the best available CSS Toolkit as it supports [over 600](#) scalable vector icons. It is highly recommended to use Font Awesome to enhance the design's usability with informative icons.