ART+FEMINISM

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RESEARCH OVERVIEW

SUMMARY & DESIRED OUTCOME

The intent of this research was to uncover perceptions, attitudes, behaviors, needs, and aspirations of Art+Feminism community across a spectrum of engagement from new participant to seasoned editor. Our intent is to use these insights to inform how we might:

1. Better organize and utilize the Art+Feminism online archipelago and social channels
2. Make sure the project is semi self-sustaining
3. Develop tools and/or frameworks to help us make future decision

RECRUITMENT & SCREENING

We informed all participants that their participation was voluntary, they could opt-out at any time, and that their responses will be shared anonymously with Art+Feminism organizers and will inform recommendations shared on Wikipedia with the small Art+Feminism organizing community.

METHODOLOGY

We conducted 11 in-depth interviews with 13 people (two pair interviews) engaged with Art+Feminism at various levels. Six of those interviews were conducted at the March 5, 2016 Edit-a-thon at the Museum of Modern Art and five happened over the phone. We also did some observational research at both the Train The Trainer event at the Guggenheim on February 16, 2016 as well as the Edit-a-thon at the Interference Archive on March 6, 2016.

The interviews focused on open-ended questions and some included cognitive walkthroughs. In the cognitive walkthroughs, we asked participants to show us how they navigated the online content related to Art+Feminism and observed them using the Art+Feminism website, wikipedia meet-up pages, and social channels.

PARTICIPANTS

We sought to understand a wide variety of perspectives that reflected a diversity of experience and perspectives from the Art+Feminism community. We interviewed those who had never heard of the Art +Feminism, those who had only recently discovered it, and those who have a long-standing relationship with the organization. We selected participants across a spectrum of age, gender, race, and geophysical location. We spoke with:

- Members of the public with no prior exposure to Art+Feminism
- First time Edit-a-thon participants
- Returning Edit-a-thon participants
- People closely involved with the project including active local Wikimedia members and seasoned Wikipedia experts

THEMES & INSIGHTS

MISSING THE BIG PICTURE

There is a desire to see the big picture, both what the project is and it's impact as quickly and succinctly as possible when arriving at the website. Newcomers struggled to find a succinct explanation of Art+Feminism anywhere online.

QUOTES

"On the website, it's not so intuitive to use. The first thing I go to is the twitter hashtags. For people that don't already know what the organization does, it would be helpful to have a brief explanation about what the organization does."
-H, 22, first time user

"[looking at FAQ] I feel like these are questions that you kinda have if you know about the organization already, but because I don't know anything, I would rather know what and Edit-a-thon is and what the mission of Art+Feminism is"
-I,21, first time user

"I might be a lazy internet user, but if there isn't a summary clearly put out in the beginning or somewhere that's going to catch my eye, I'm just going to keep following links"
 -I, 21, first time user

"I expected less tabs / icons / videos and more statistics."
-G, 24, first time user

"I personally am very interested in outcomes [more than any of the other tabs]"
-C, 35, first time attendee

HOW MIGHT WE?

How might give newcomers a clearer picture of what Art+Feminism does and why they should care?

MISSING THE EVENT

We observed people go to both your Edit-a-thon page on your website as well as the Wiki-meetup page and fail, over and over again, to find an event. The map was often seen as an 'infographic' communicating that these events did happen internationally, but no clarity that it was a way to navigate to a specific event. There was a sense that subscribing to the newsletter would be a low-volume way to get notified of an event.

QUOTES

"It looks a lot like a regular wikipedia page and so I was expecting to see an article about Savannah, Georgia [rather than a Meetup page]. I didn't realize I was on some kind of special version of wikipedia."
-G, 24, first time user

"Because I've only really accessed your website, I think it be good to be a little more explicit for first time users"
-I, 21, first time user

"I think it might be good for people to have a shortcut to the meetup page from the website--a big button, or a page with various links. Like if I just went to the website, I wouldn't know if there was an edit-a-thon in my area."
- K, Art+Feminism ally

HOW MIGHT WE?

How might we make finding an event nearby a simplified and smooth process?

LACK OF FINDABILITY

When googling Art+Feminism for the first time, people rarely select the Wikipedia page and sometimes miss the website entirely. There seemed to be a little confusion around which url was truly yours and we often saw people click on unrelated projects like http://www.nyfai.org/.

QUOTES

"On google, I'm typing in Art+Feminism nyc, so what I'm getting is just a bunch of articles on Feminist artists in New York. ... Not really what I expected and doesn't seem to be affiliated. I thought it would be at the top."
-G, 24, first time user

"[while looking the possible Google options] I'm looking for it, but I'm not sure which one is yours..."
-I, 21, first time user

HOW MIGHT WE?

How might we increase the visibility of Art +Feminism for those searching for the organization for the first time? For the second time? For the hundredth time?

DIFFERING STORY LINES

Participants across the engagement spectrum at times struggled to succinctly describe Art +Feminism. When asked to describe the project in their own words, we heard things like Art +Feminism is a 'community' or a 'movement'.

QUOTES

"[I was impressed] they had so many kinds of people here. So it's a little bit of a movement, where they bring a lot people together who are interested in the arts and activism and editing and sharing knowledge. Obviously it's feminism but it's obvious from the panel that this is super inclusive that is the whole point, feminism with a wide, open [lens] ... that together we are change something that is just too much of the establishment"
-C, 35, first time attendee

HOW MIGHT WE?

How might we describe Art+Feminism so that it embraces both our own vision of who we are as well as some of the warmer language our community uses?

TOO MUCH, TOO SOON

Duplicated and overabundant content confuses people looking for quick solutions and too many resources in the wrong places are leading people down the wrong involvement paths. Some areas of the website seem too specific and turn off people who would otherwise be interested in getting involved.

QUOTES

"It gets really particular, very quickly [in reference to the about page] that's very specific immediately. Oo I'd be like woah, you're inviting me and then you're giving me really specific information.. to them it sounds like an about [page] but for me it sounds like the details of starting editing "
-C, 35, first time attendee

"Although this is useful b/c I don't know how to edit wikipedia. The logical progression is I'd want to see something broader, then see something more minute after I've internalized the issue at hand."
-G, 24, first time user

HOW MIGHT WE?

How might we show people the information they're looking for at the right time without overloading them with information they don't need?

WIKIPEDIA ITSELF IS A BARRIER

People with little experience with Wikipedia have great difficulty navigating the Wikipedia meetup page. The Wikipedia Meetup page reads as a regular Wikipedia page which created a lot of confusion and also set expectations for how links should work.

QUOTES

"It looks a lot like a regular wikipedia page and so I was expecting to see an article about Savannah, Georgia [rather than a meetup page]. I didn't realize I was on some kind of special version of wikipedia."
-H, 22, first time user

"There is definitely a culture with this prowess to being able to navigate this ridiculously byzantine web of non-user friendly sites. That culture is part of the culture that makes it hard."
-M, Art+Feminism ally

"Because the Wiki interface, the way the Wiki page is displayed, it makes it looks like you're supposed to be editing it because every page when you're logged in has a source page and an edit page. That can be confusing for people who aren't interested in using it as a Wiki. They're just interested in how do I give money to this organization, or how do I find out how to volunteer."
 -L, Art+Feminism ally

HOW MIGHT WE?

How might we guide people between the Art +Feminism website and Wikipedia more effectively?

How might we create a plan for organizing Art +Feminism's content in a stable and navigable state?

INSIDER LANGUAGE ALIENATES

We observed people tripping over words like 'rhizomatic' or 'edit-a-thon'. A few participants who were not as familiar with the project had no idea what 'edit-a-thon' meant. Others we interviewed at the event had difficulty understanding the panel because of insider language.

QUOTES

"If didn't have my background, I would probably ask, but what does [rhizomatic] mean? its humorous to me because it reminds me of a different space [in college and academic circles]... I would make it very clear. …. I would make sure [the language is] clear and meaningful for everybody"
-C, 35, first time attendee

"The meetup page and the website could use a copy edit for style inconsistencies and punctuation errors."
-K, Art+Feminism ally

"I guess you get consumed trying to be like, what are they talking about? and then you've missed the rest of it." (referring to the use of IRL and twitter eggs in the open panel discussion at the MoMA edit-a-thon)
-B, 30, first time attendee

HOW MIGHT WE?

How might we utilize inclusive language that all people can understand regardless of their background?

How might we speak in a voice that makes all people feel welcome?

NYC-FOCUS ESTRANGES

People outside New York found much of the content featured on your main wiki meetup page irrelevant. This was a barrier to understanding the scope of the project as well as understanding that anyone, regardless of place, could attend or organize an event.

QUOTES

"I'm looking at the MoMA plenary, but this isn't relevant to be because I'm in Atlanta. I'm not even sure if this is affiliated of if I can get involved"
-G, 24, first time user

HOW MIGHT WE?

How might we widen our net of inclusivity to invite both those inside and outside of New York City to contribute towards the goals of Art +Feminism?

LOOKING FOR WAYS IN

People we spoke with at the edit-a-thon we're looking for ideas about what to edit and pathways in. We also observed a pattern that people who either don't want to become an editor are looking for other ways to be involved in and engage with the project.

QUOTES

"Well there's a lot of stuff, it's a huge thing and I just wanted to see what's there, what's there and what's missing rather than me rather than randomly just trying to see what I can think of… I'd like to know, "Are there areas where I could add?" because [Native American History is] a particular area of special to me?" … generally, I'm looking for some kind of structure to participating on Wikipedia" - N, 50, first time attendee

"I would return to Smith [College] as a touch point for resources I think, but I'm not sure."
-F, 29, first time attendee

"Some people just should just not edit."
-J, Art+Feminism ally

"I'd expect to see subject headings because wikipedia itself is so cross disciplinary, if you wanted people to edit, you'd need people to edit who are experts in those disciplines. I would expect also to see something [on Art+Feminism website] to split it up by those subjects: biologist, historian, or psychologist."
-G, 24, first time user

"I am not one of the people… who off the top of their head knew, 'I want to cover so-and-so' … so I think what would be really great for me, is to be like, 'are you really new to this?' Here's where we're finding we really need help"
-C, 35, first time attendee

HOW MIGHT WE?

How might we lead people toward roles that are suited to their particular interests and skills?

How might we help someone find a place in the Art+Feminism community for those unable or uninterested in editing?

LOOKING FOR WAYS BEYOND

We heard a desire to stay involved after the edit-a-thon, but a lack of clarity about how to do this or where to specifically find resources to support ongoing involvement.

QUOTES

"I would want to reach out towards Art+Feminism first [for help] … but I know the lift of email for this kind of stuff when it's all volunteer … I think it should be people like myself who came today supporting each other and giving each other tips"
-C, 35, first time attendee

"I would like to know what to do if i needed help."
-E, 28, first time attendee

"The hardest thing has been to find legitimate sources on my own"
-F, 29, first time attendee

HOW MIGHT WE?

How might we sustain an interested participant between and outside of edit-a-thons?

How might we more clearly direct inquires through the website regarding editing and other aspects of Art+Feminism?

OPPORTUNITIES

OCCUPY A BOLDER VISION OF WHO YOU ARE

The gift you're bringing to the world goes beyond training people to become wikipedia editors. There's value to raising awareness about bias on wikipedia. There's value in organizing a community of people who want to make the world a culturally richer place for marginalized groups. Give yourself permission to push back against the idea that there is only one way to onboard someone to wikipedia or to these ideas.

ASPIRE TO INSPIRE

One of the most powerful and interesting expressions happening online was the #noweditingaf hashtag—it went beyond event logistics and photos of people at desks, and elevated the artists themselves. It made visible these incredible artists, in real time, and the people laboring to do so.

Consider if there's an aspect of your project that is more intently focused on inspiration. Perhaps your Tumblr could become a place for sharing the hundreds of artists on Wikipedia that people in your community have worked to make visible.

SHOW THE IMPACT

People want to know why they should care about this project. On the homepage, clearly showcase the importance of the work you do. Consider doing this in a visual, easily interpretable way.

USE THE VERNACULAR OF THE WEB

Which means avoiding words like vernacular. Words like rhizomatic get in the way of helping people to clearly understand who you are, what you do, and what you're about. They can be intimidating, off putting, or even confusing. Abandon any use of insider language that might intimidate.

*See *Nicely Said* for tips and tricks.

BE WARM, NOT COOL

Use words like 'community' or 'movement' that have warmth and welcome. Use 'we' to engender the sense of this being a collective group and to invite participation and a sense of belonging.

IT'S AN ARCHIPELAGO, NOT CONTINENTS

We heard it's important to you to make sure the project can be managed and sustained over time. Every new paragraph, every new page, every new link is something you have to manage, maintain, steward, and sustain. The content on the Art+Feminism Wikipedia meetup pages is creating chaos, confusion, and conflict that you are having to apply time, attention, and resources to manage.

It's our strong recommendation to dismantle all but the most necessary pages on the wikipedia Meetup pages (like Ambassadors and the Meetup pages themselves) that are meant for a more engaged segment of your audience and that benefit from the ability to mutually edit content.

INCLUSIVE ISLANDS WITH PURPOSE

Every island in the archipelago should have a clear purpose and intent. Identify and prioritize user stories as a means to determine information hierarchy. Keep priorities in focus—and always consider the needs of new audiences when adding anything to the website.

Ask: will this be legible to someone who doesn't know anything about this project? A thirteen year old? A 76-year old? Someone who doesn't have a college education or who is tech savvy?

BUILD BRIDGES INSTEAD OF EXPANDING ISLANDS

Keep the islands compact and navigable. Build bridges between islands to guide people toward people, tasks, or information.

Consider using Facebook as a kind of bridge between edit-a-thon's where people can ask each other questions, share information, and share progress.

KILL YOUR DARLING

All of your social accounts, your hashtags, the way you say the project out loud, the way other people talk about the project is 'Art and Feminism'. Your current url creates confusion and dilutes the power of the brand you've built. The things you originally aspired for with 'plus feminism'—to inspire others to take the torch into their own communities and start editing—have come to pass. Celebrate these victories as Art+Feminism.

This dissonance in your url might be one of the things hurting your SEO. Your website can and should be the first result. We observed over and over people googling 'Art and Feminism' or 'Art and Feminism nyc' and not finding you.

*Ps: I bought artandfeminism.org for you.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

HOMEPAGE

Focus on answering key questions at a high level. Have your primary content blocks offer pathways toward deeper content (events, about, editing, etc).

EVENTS

Maintain an organized, legible place on your website for upcoming events. Keep in mind that content that is too New York-centric might turn away potential users who live further away.

'GET INVOLVED' TRAILHEAD

There are people who want to contribute to the mission of Art+Feminism, but not all of them want or are able to edit wikipedia pages. Create possibilities for participation at several levels. Help people to find their own way by offering pathways to:

- Share Art+Feminism with others
- Submit content that needs to be added or edited on Wikipedia
- Stay connected to you and with each other beyond the event

Make participating at all levels easier by having areas of the site devoted to these particular tasks. These can act as considerate bridges in the Art+Feminism archipelago to help people with different interests and engagement levels find a pathway forward.

MOBILE CONSIDERATIONS

Mobile browsing recently surpassed desktop and will continue to rise. Consider that the first, second, and hundredth time someone accesses your site, it will be from a mobile phone. This is especially true if people are clicking Art+Feminism links they see in their Facebook or Twitter feed.
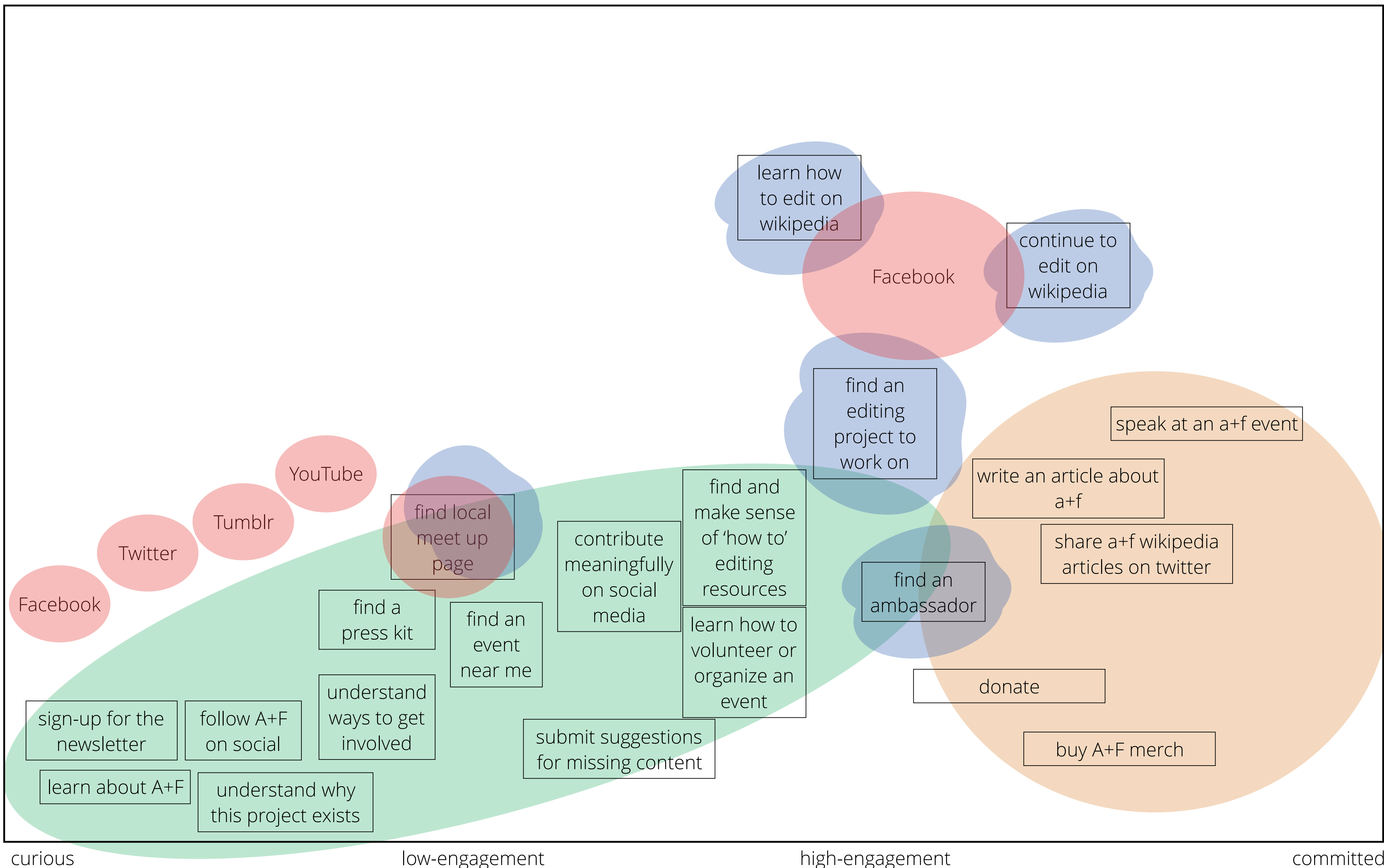
- Design and write for mobile first
- Look at your site on mobile to make sure you know what the majority of your audience is seeing and experiencing
- By making your content and message more concise and clear, everyone one will benefit

PROJECT SKETCHES

Art+Feminism Experience Map (Current State: Tectonic Plates)

hard

learn how to edit on wikipedia

identify an editing project to work on

continue to edit on wikipedia

find a press kit

find local meet up page

find and make sense of 'how to' editing resources

understand why this project exists

understand ways to get involved

learn how to volunteer or organize an event

learn about A+F

sign-up for the newsletter

find an event near me

contribute meaningfully on social media

find an ambassador

YouTube

Tumblr

Twitter

Facebook

follow A+F on social

easy

curious   low-engagement   high-engagement   committed

user story

Website

Wikipedia

Social

Art+Feminism Experience Map (Ideal State: Archipelago)

hard

learn how to edit on wikipedia

continue to edit on wikipedia

Facebook

find an editing project to work on

YouTube

speak at an a+f event

write an article about a+f

Tumblr

share a+f wikipedia articles on twitter

Twitter

find local meet up page

find and make sense of 'how to' editing resources

contribute meaningfully on social media

find an ambassador

Facebook

find a press kit

find an event near me

learn how to volunteer or organize an event

donate

understand ways to get involved

buy A+F merch

sign-up for the newsletter

follow A+F on social

submit suggestions for missing content

learn about A+F

understand why this project exists

easy

curious   low-engagement   high-engagement   committed

user story

Website

Wikipedia

Social

Opportunties

Art+Feminism Navigation

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Footer

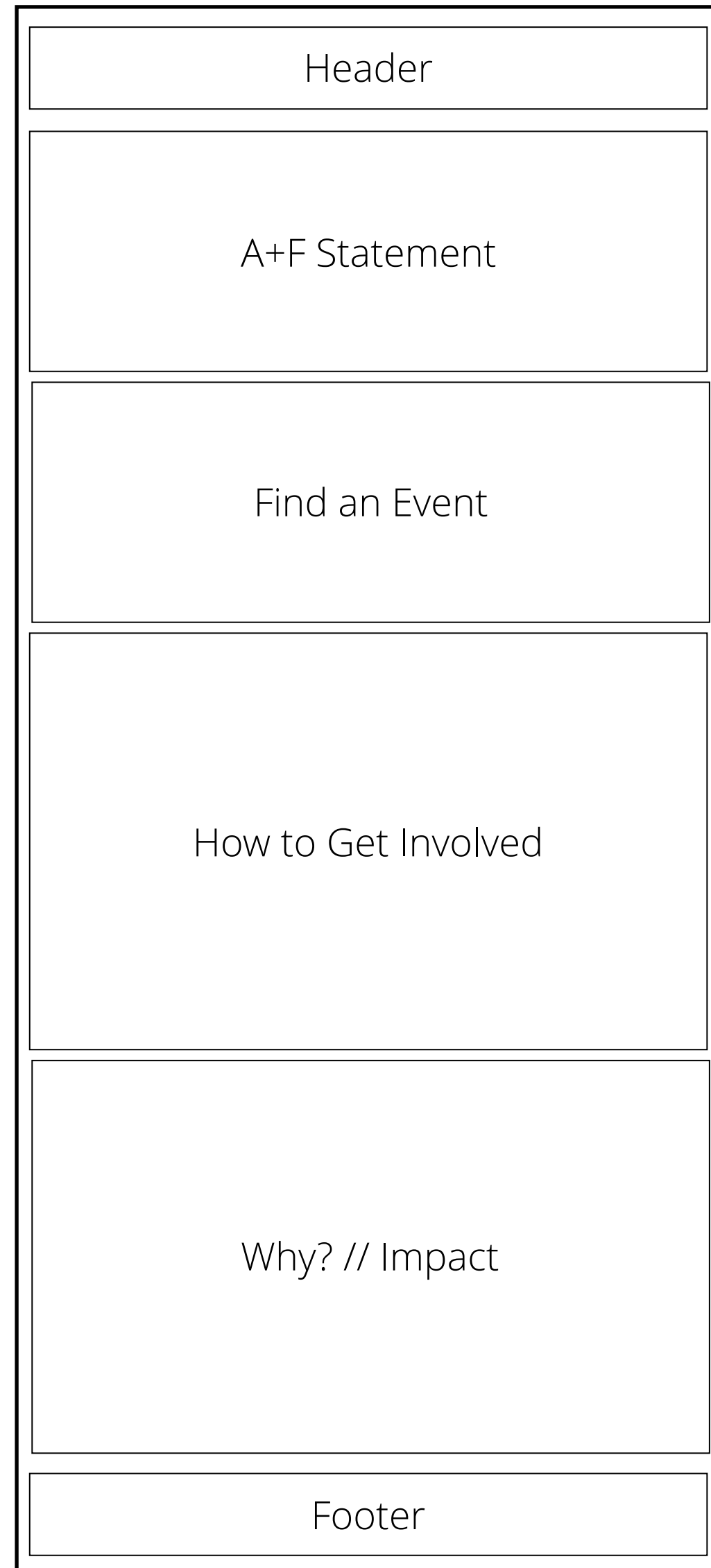Join our mailing list: | email address | **Join**

Editing Kit   Organizing Kit   Press Kit

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Art+Feminism Website Home Screen
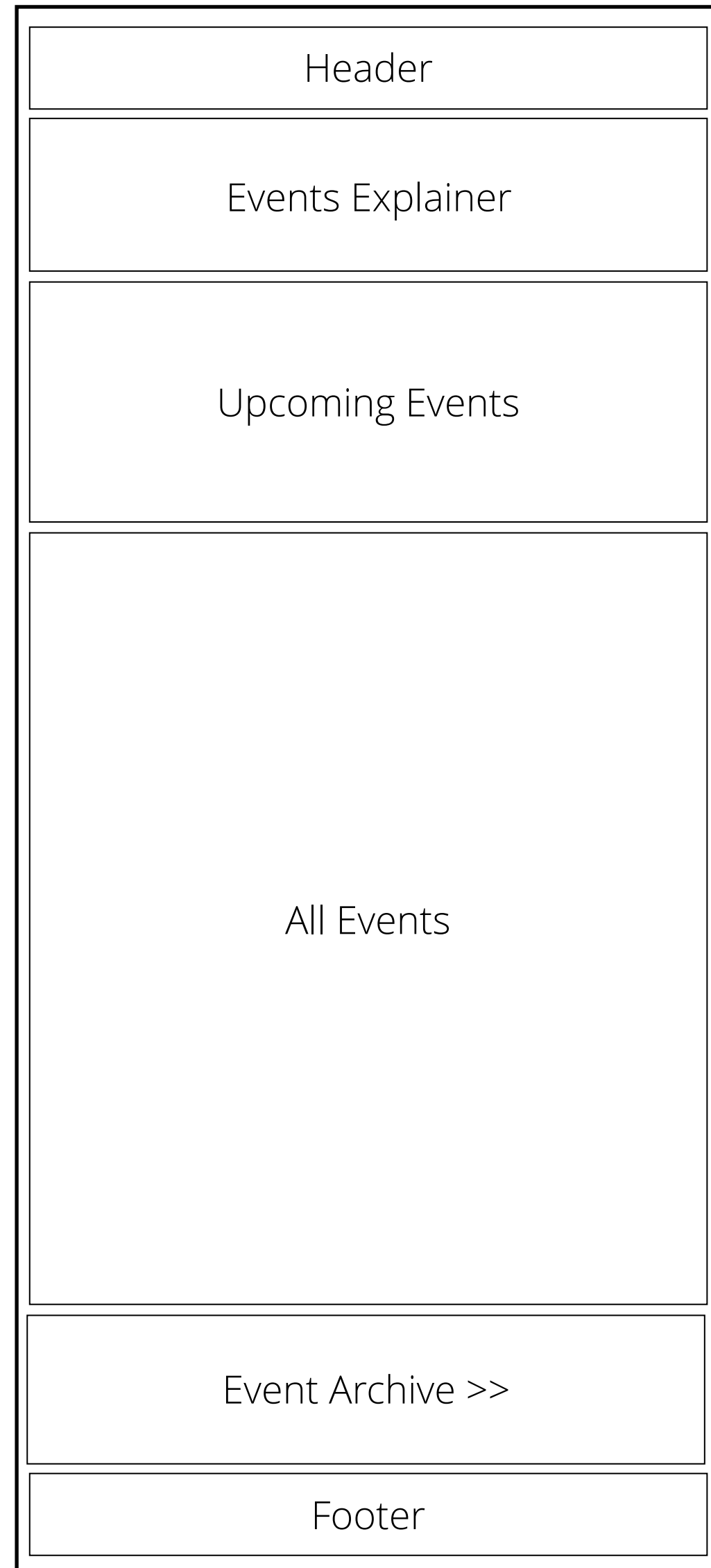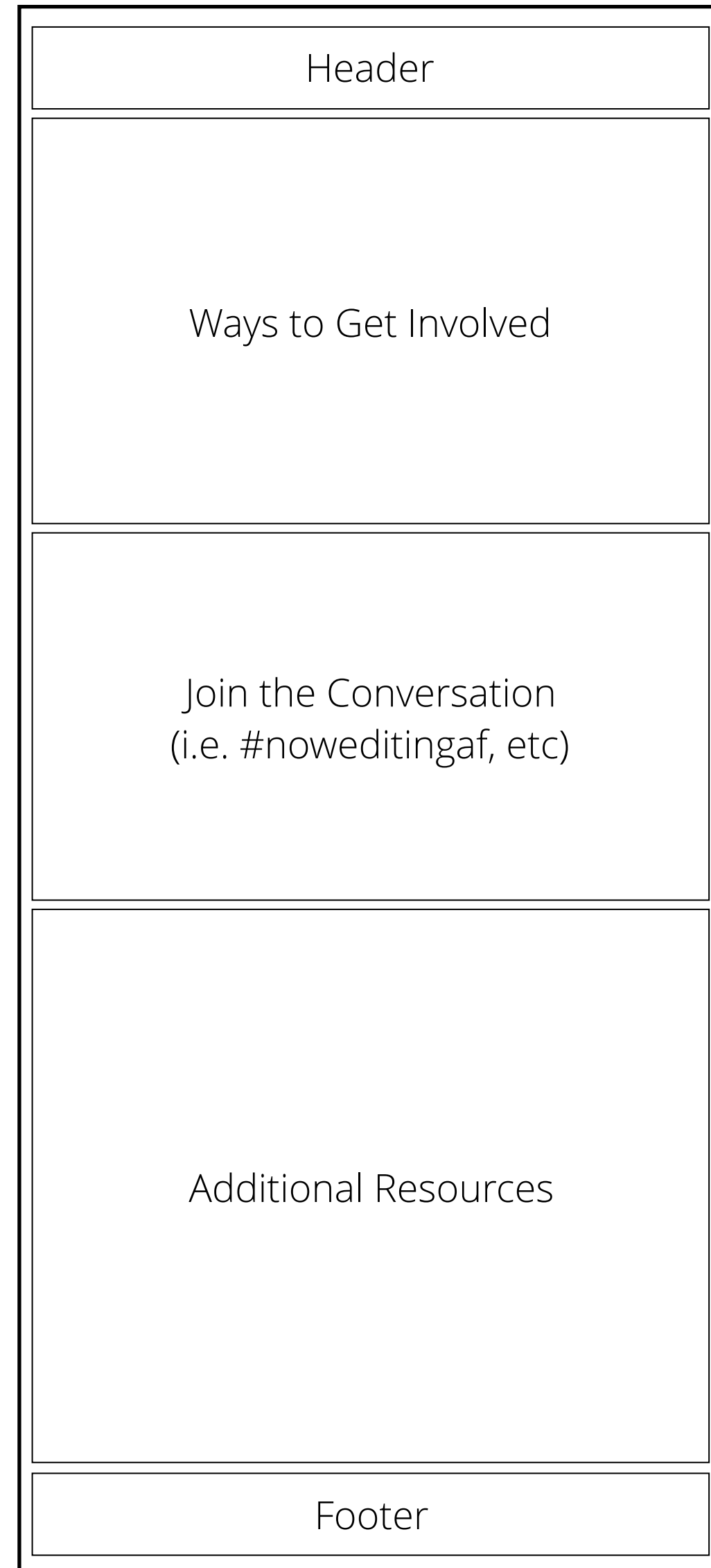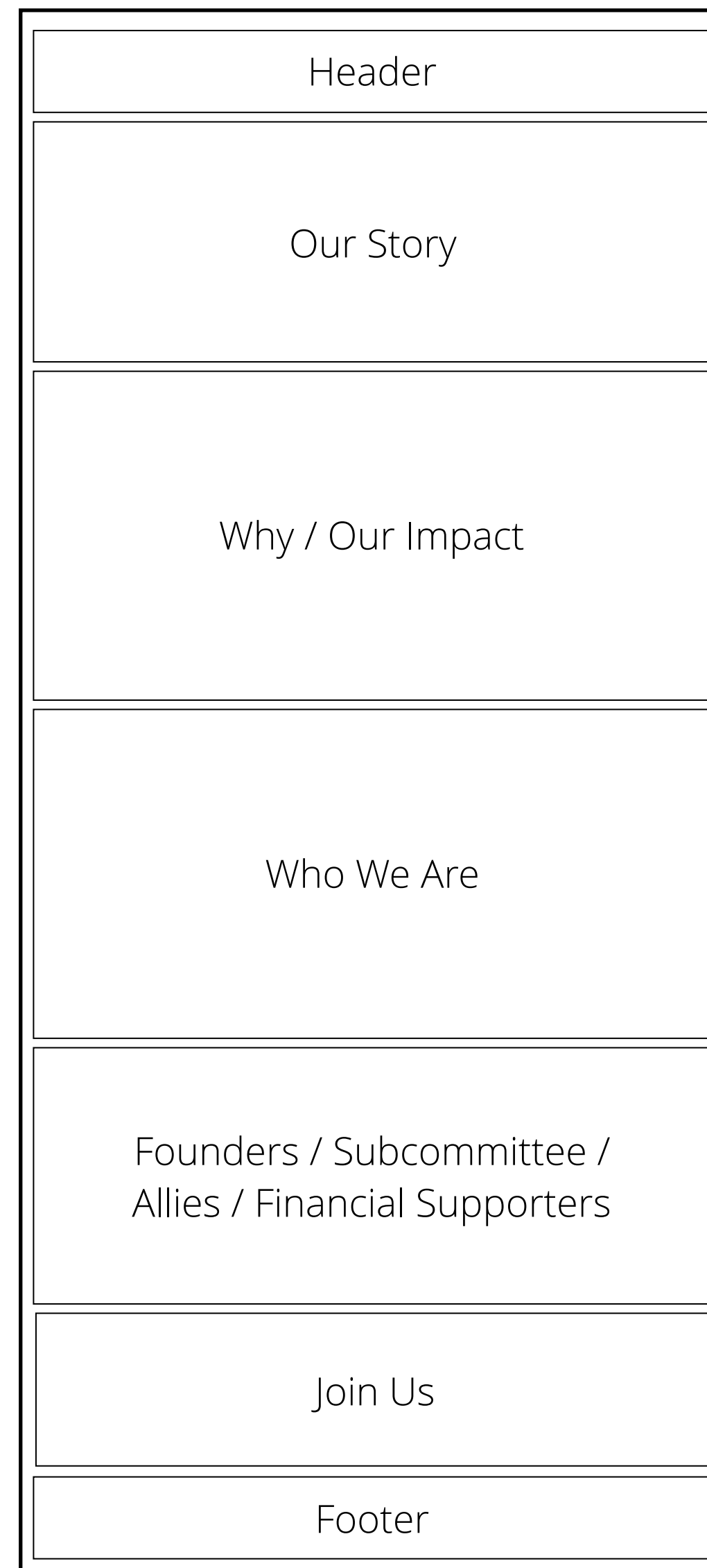
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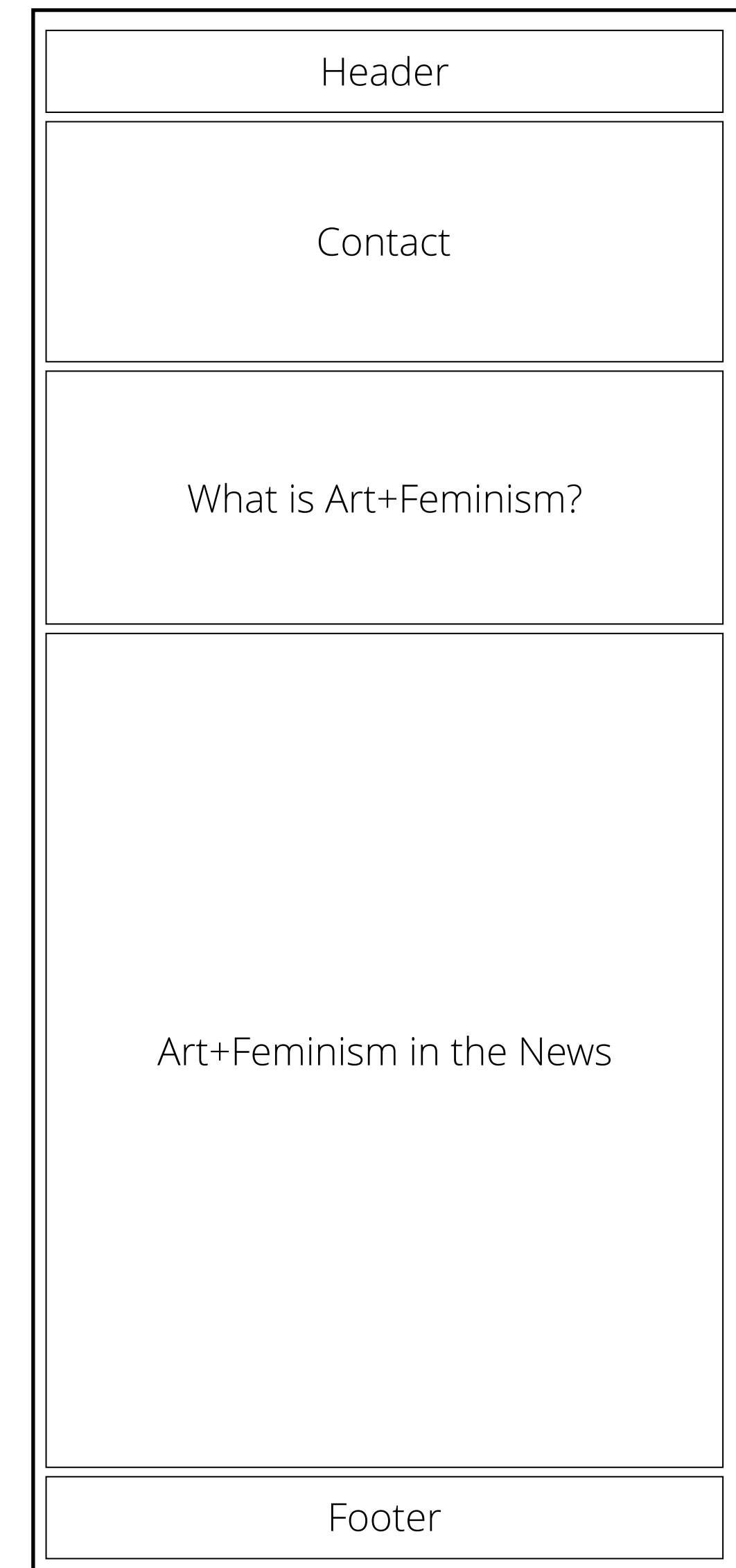| |
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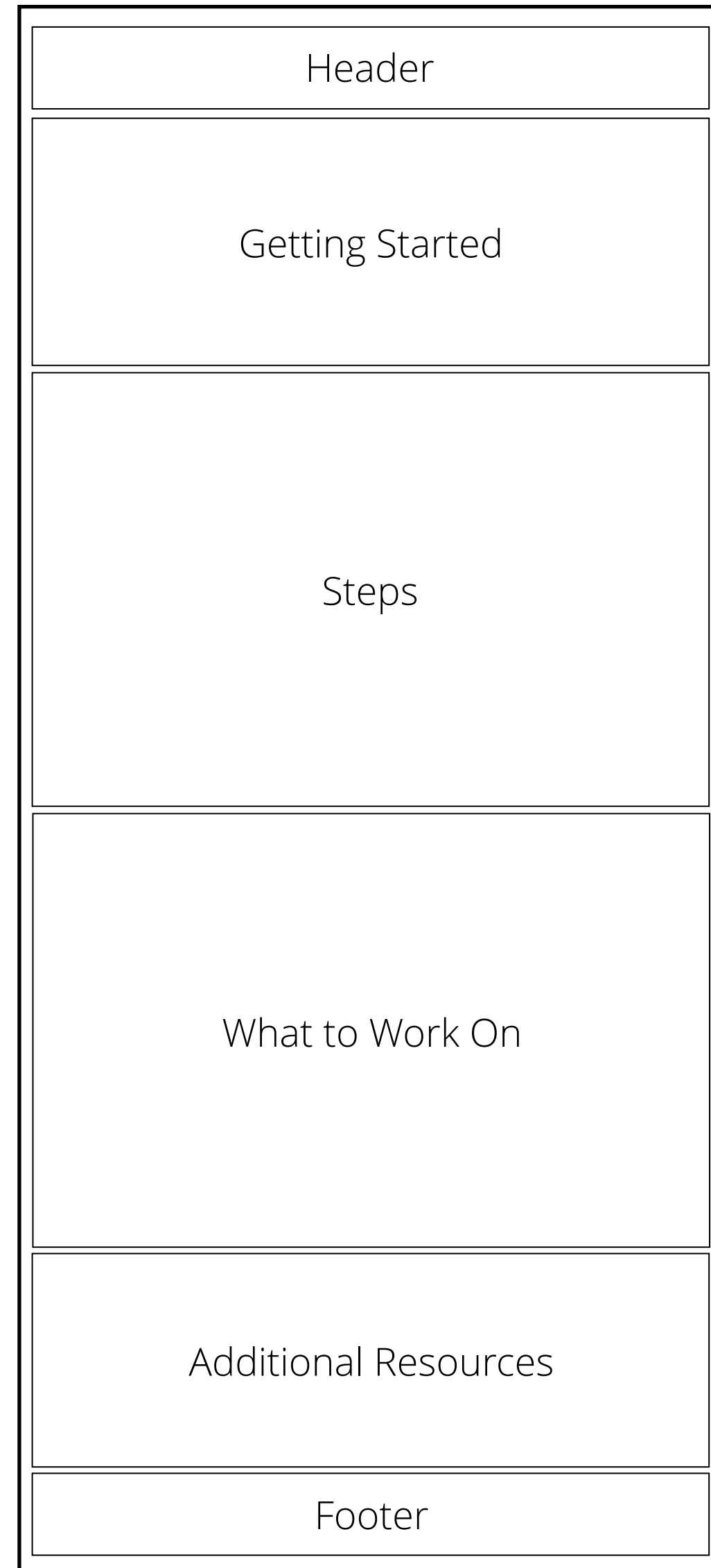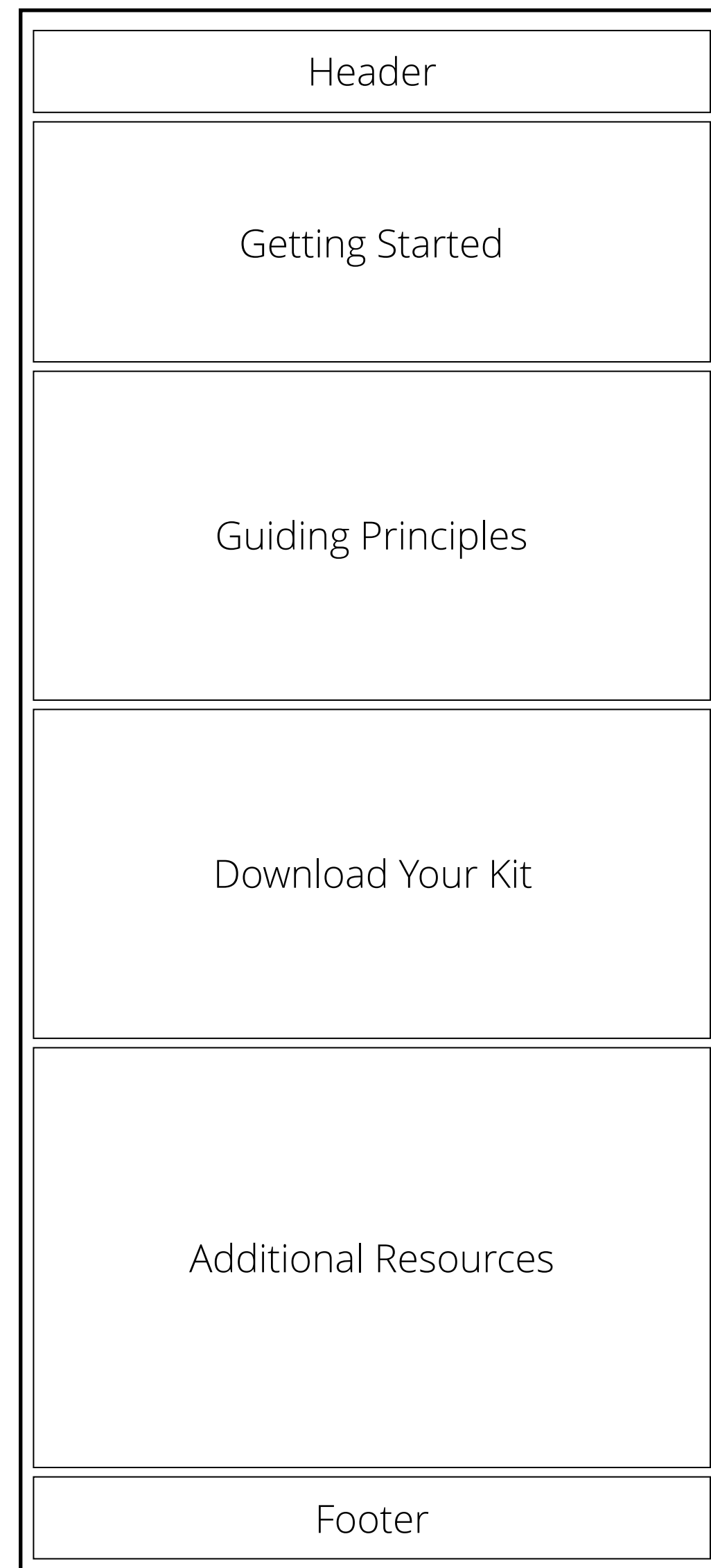
NEXT STEPS

A+F NEXT STEPS

- Review sketches and gather feedback on screens and priorities
- Share feedback with us by 3/27 (next Sunday)

JENNIFER & NIC NEXT STEPS

- First pass of information architecture and A+F copywriting homework delivered by April 10

THANK YOU