



# A guide to creating your professional portfolio

**Find the best fit to help you stand out**

# What is a professional portfolio?

A professional portfolio is a curated collection of your best work. It acts as a personalized showcase of your skills and expertise for potential employers or clients. Depending on what is common in your industry, it can include items like writing samples, code snippets, artwork or lesson plans.

## In this guide...

**you'll learn why you need a portfolio and how to develop one.**

- 1 Benefits**
- 2 Formats**
- 3 Additional considerations**



# 1

## A professional portfolio provides many benefits, including:

### Personal branding

What you include tells the story of who you are as a professional and allows you to highlight your top skills, strengths, values and specializations. By showcasing unique projects or specialized techniques, you can highlight what distinguishes you from other candidates.

### Interview assistance

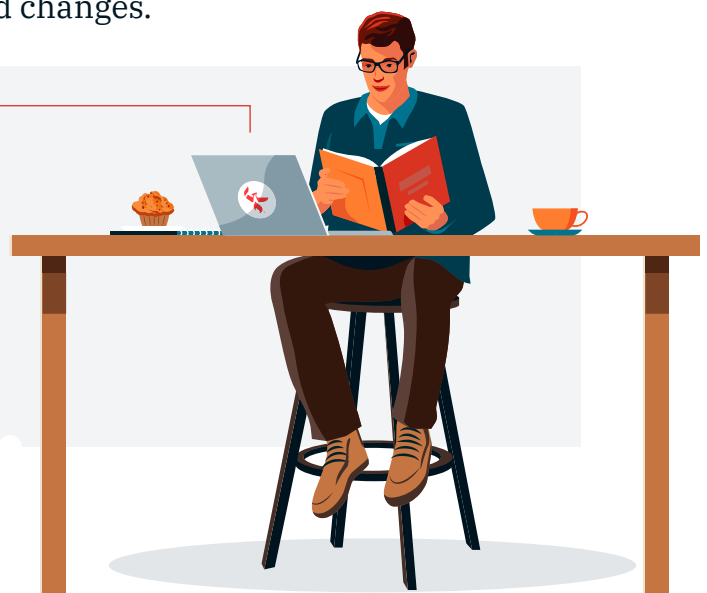
A portfolio can serve as a visual aid or a specific talking point during an interview with a potential employer.

### Network growth

Sharing your portfolio online boosts your visibility to potential employers or collaborators, especially if you share it through a direct link or your LinkedIn® profile.

### Professional self-reflection

Creating a portfolio encourages you to look back on your work, goals and achievements so that you can look forward to future learning opportunities and your desired career trajectory. As your career evolves, so should your portfolio, enabling you to reposition yourself as your career progresses and changes.



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**While not always mandatory, a professional portfolio can be invaluable in certain contexts.**

### **Consider the following:**

#### **Your industry expects or requires it**

If your profession relies heavily on visual work or tangible projects (e.g., graphic design, education, technology or writing), a portfolio is an essential tool to highlight your abilities and style.

#### **You're actively job searching**

In a crowded job market, a portfolio can offer concrete evidence of your skills and abilities, going beyond mere descriptions on a resumé.

#### **You're a freelancer or consultant**

People who want to pay for your services will want to know what you can do. By showcasing actual work samples, projects or achievements, you can provide proof of what you can accomplish.

#### **You're seeking to change industries**

A portfolio can show transferable skills related to where you want to go.

#### **You're seeking career advancement**

If you're aiming for career recognition or seeking collaboration opportunities, a professional portfolio provides a platform for your achievements and contributions.



# 2

## Common portfolio formats

### 1. E-portfolio

A digital portfolio or e-portfolio is a collection of your work samples presented via a website, video platform, online folder, PDF document or presentation file. E-portfolios are versatile and can include multimedia elements such as images, videos, audio clips and interactive content.

#### Formats include:

##### Website-based portfolios

These are personal websites that offer customization, typically using platforms like WordPress®, Wix®, Google Sites™, Behance or Squarespace®.

##### LinkedIn profiles

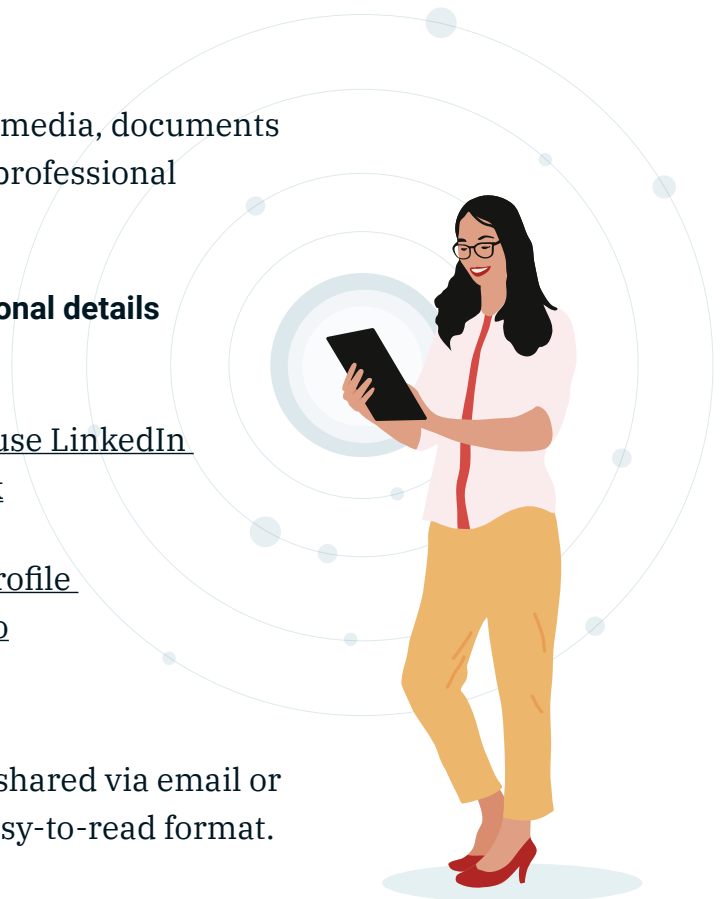
LinkedIn profiles with added media, documents and featured work provide a professional setting for your portfolio.

Click the links below for additional details and examples:

- [Step-by-step guide to use LinkedIn to showcase your work](#)
- [How to convert your profile into an online portfolio](#)

##### PDF portfolios

Stand-alone files that can be shared via email or online offer a portable and easy-to-read format.



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## GitHub™ repositories

This platform is primarily used by developers to showcase code and projects. Users can create repositories to display work, organize projects, and use GitHub Pages to highlight skills and achievements.

—> [How to create a GitHub portfolio](#)

## Google Drive™/OneDrive folders

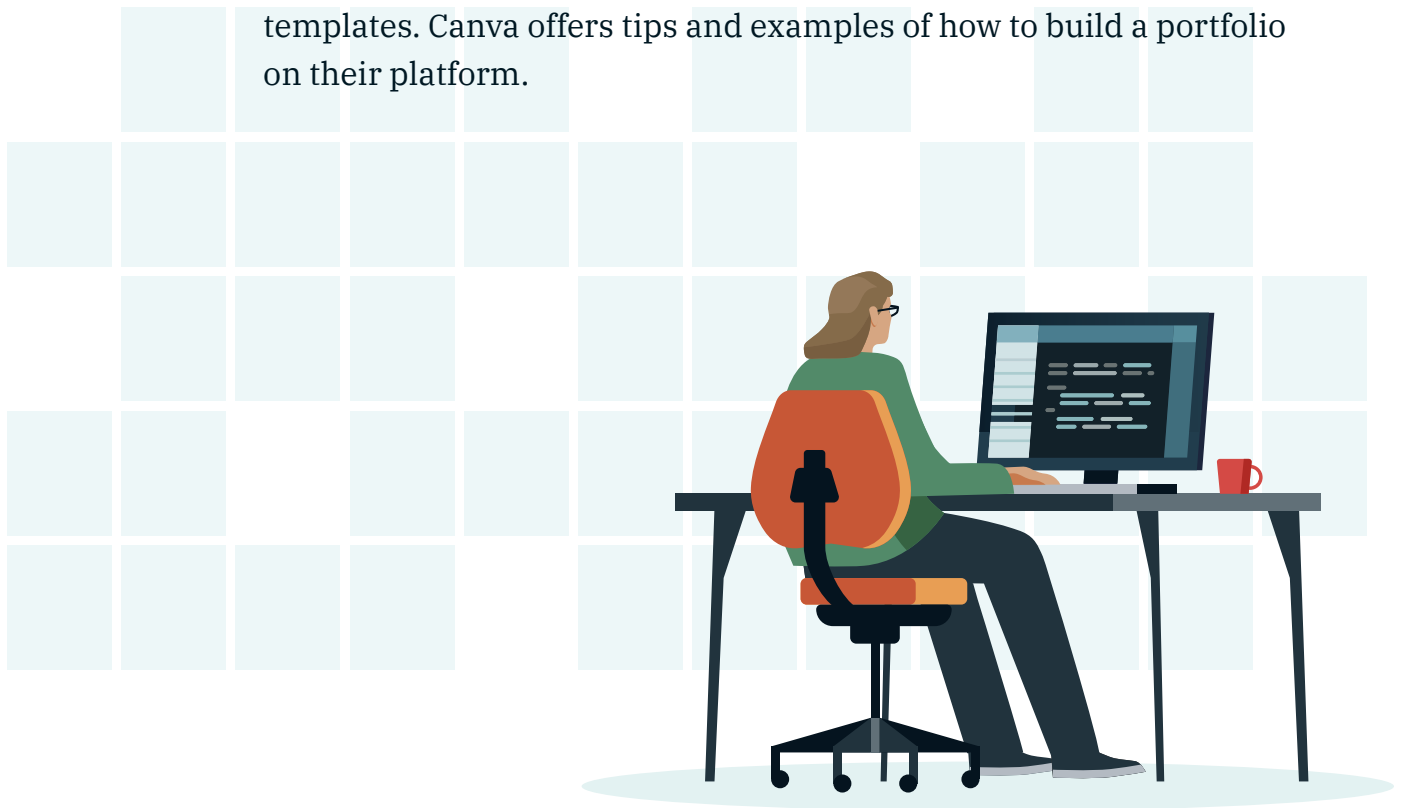
Cloud-based storage where you can share various types of work through a simple link

## PowerPoint® presentations

Portfolios designed as slideshows, which can be shared via email or presented in person, offer a visual and structured format

## Canva®

An online design tool that lets you create portfolios with customizable templates. Canva offers tips and examples of how to build a portfolio on their platform.



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## 2. Interactive portfolios

An interactive portfolio is a type of e-portfolio that uses elements such as animations, coding projects, sliders or clickable links to engage the viewer and provide an immersive experience. This portfolio option is often used by designers and developers to showcase technical skills and creativity. Most interactive portfolios leverage a personal website or a web-based platform.

### Formats include:

#### Web-based portfolios with animations

A personal website that uses animations, transitions or hover effects to guide the viewer through your work. This approach adds a dynamic feel to your portfolio and can showcase your skills in design and animation.

#### Coding project demonstrations

Portfolios that include live coding examples or interactive code snippets are often used by software developers to demonstrate their programming skills and allow viewers to interact with code in real time.

#### Clickable prototypes

Clickable prototypes are used to demonstrate user interface (UI) and user experience (UX) skills. You might use tools like Figma™, Sketch™ or Adobe® XD, for example, to create interactive elements like clickable buttons, drop-down menus or swipe gestures.



## 3. Physical portfolio

A tangible collection of work samples, physical portfolios are often used in interviews or presentations where you want to provide direct contact with your work. Example elements may be drawings, paintings, printed designs or photographs. This portfolio format is most used in fields like graphic design and art.

### Formats include:

#### Professional binder, folder or case.

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# How do I choose the right portfolio for me?

Choosing the right portfolio format depends on many factors, including your target industry, the type of work you want to highlight, your target role, your target audience, your target company and your personal preferences.



<b>E-portfolio</b> <b>Industries</b> Education, IT, content creation, video editing, writing, freelance, small business owners, consultants, thought leaders, marketing, learning and development	<b>Shared work samples</b> Lesson plans, infographics, writing samples, videos, newsletters, client testimonials, reports, presentations, marketing campaigns, white papers, project plans, training materials	<b>Locations/media</b> Website, Google Drive, LinkedIn platform, video platforms (YouTube, Vimeo) social media (Instagram, X, TikTok) Canva design, PowerPoint, GitHub platform
<b>Interactive</b> <b>Industries</b> IT, creative fields, game development, marketing, UI/UX design	<b>Shared work samples</b> Multimedia projects, code snippets, games, interactive webpages, responsive design, sliders, hover effects, animated content	<b>Locations/media</b> GitHub, website, software, appsX, TikTok) Canva design, PowerPoint, GitHub platform
<b>Physical</b> <b>Industries</b> Art, graphic design, architecture, photography	<b>Shared work samples</b> Drawings, paintings, printed images, blueprints, models, brochures, writing samples	<b>Locations/media</b> Folder, binder with sheet protectors, custom presentation box



# 3

## Additional considerations for your portfolio

### Tailor your portfolio

The best approach to building a portfolio is to keep it focused on the roles you're aiming for. If you're applying for various types of jobs, consider building portfolios tailored to each role.

- Customize your content to highlight skills and experiences relevant to your industry, desired industry or target audience.
- Organize your portfolio sections or pages based on the specific interests or requirements of different industries or positions. For example, if you're an educator, you might have different sections or lesson plans, technology projects, training materials you developed, and skills and certifications..

### Update your content regularly

Like any other professional document, it's best to often update your portfolio with new work examples and elements. Even if you're not actively seeking new opportunities, it's a good practice to refresh your portfolio at least once or twice a year with your evolving skills and experiences.

- Set a recurring reminder to review and update your portfolio on an annual or semiannual basis.
- Document new projects, accomplishments or skills as they occur, making it easier to incorporate them into your portfolio during updates

### Incorporate feedback and iteration

Solicit feedback from colleagues, mentors or industry peers on potential improvements or updates to your portfolio content and presentation.

## Do your homework

Establish the best length, format and elements for your portfolio by diving into what your industry prefers.

- Seek out information from professional associations or explore your industry's thought leader portfolios on their social media pages or websites.

## Are you ready to enhance your career?

Start crafting your professional portfolio today to showcase your skills, expertise and unique value to potential employers or clients. Here are some practical steps to get started:

- 1 Begin by setting aside time to gather your best work samples and determine the format that best suits your industry and goals.
- 2 Next, organize and select your portfolio content. Then, set aside some time for designing and creating your portfolio, depending on its complexity. See this article by The Muse for inspiration: [“Four Secrets to Building a Portfolio.”](#)
- 3 Once your portfolio is ready, refine and polish it so it effectively represents your brand and accomplishments.
- 4 Finally, launch your portfolio and begin promoting it to your network and prospective employers or clients. Remember to regularly update your portfolio with new achievements and projects.



Your portfolio is more than just a collection of work samples. It's your personal brand's narrative, and creating one can help you make a lasting impression. Get started now and pave the way for your future success!

For additional information see [Career Support - Tools & Resources | University of Phoenix](#)

**You've got this!**

Good luck on your portfolio

