scientific posters

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how to stand out from the crowd

scientific posters : how to stand out from the crowd

the good...

Claim one key message, not dozens of small messages. People do not have a lot of time to look at your poster.

Less is more. Include only information that is key to your message. If you cannot present it in a few minutes, it is too busy.

Keep it short. Reduce the number of words to a minimum, ideally not exceeding 250 words.
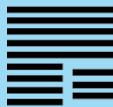
Use blanks and clear space to highlight key elements and clearly separate sections. Try to leave 40% of the poster blank.
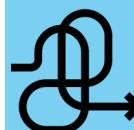
A clear flow and consistent layout is essential. Ideally, information should flow from left to right, top to bottom.

Align the elements one to the other. Create visual connections between related elements.

Control the attention of the audience. Use colour, bolding, white space or increased size to highlight key information.
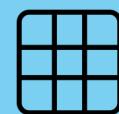
Use grids to control the alignment of elements. Do not align by eye.

FOCUSED • ORDERED • NETWORK • CLEAR VISUALS

ADAPTED TO
- the topic of the conference
- the audience
- the guidelines

A clear title is essential to grab the attention. Make it informative but short, and closer to a newspaper title than a scientific article.

Contact information is not an option. Include at least your affiliation and email. Alos think about social media and OrcID.

**Prepare handouts.** For example, you could give a printed copy of the poster or one of your latest publications.

Dare to be original. Why not include a QR to a film or an object to attract attention, such as a 3D molecule.

Re-figure your figures, do not copy-paste them from a scientific publication. Adapt the line thickness, font size and colours to the poster.

Use legible fonts, usually a serif font for body text and a sans serif for headings. For example, here: Garamond and Corbel.

Too much colour will ruin the poster. Use 2-3 colours and apply them to everything on the poster, figures included.

Bigger is almost always better. Try to use at least 96 points for the title, 48 for the headings and 40 for the body text.

The Bad And Ugly Poster
With A Very Long Uninformative Title Capitalised
And An Unreadable, Small Font That Spills Over Into A Third Line

Dr Jon Snow & Dr Tyrion Lannister
(without any contact details and not aligned)

so many logos that the main one is almost invisible

Abstract

Even if not requested in the guidelines, repeat here all the information given in the book of abstracts. Maybe someone has stolen it all, who knows.
This will annoy the reader, but will give you the enormous satisfaction of being able to fill the poster easily.

Introduction

Some brave reader has dared to read your poster. Now, instead of hooking him/her by describing what your question is and why the answer is interesting, dive straight into lots of meaty text.

!!??

If you really want to add illustrations, use a random clipart. It looks professional at all times.

Conclusion

Put it in an imprevisible place and do not highlight it. Make it as wordy as the rest of the poster. You are a master if it has nothing to do with your intro and if it contains jargon and abbreviations.

Materials and methods

Start with the methods, this is what really interests everyone. Describe all the tinny details of what you did. Do not leave any white space and do not respect the boundaries of the box. Words are always much better than a visual flowchart or a drawing that describes your general experimental approach. If you have complex mathematical formulae or chemical equations to include, it is even better.
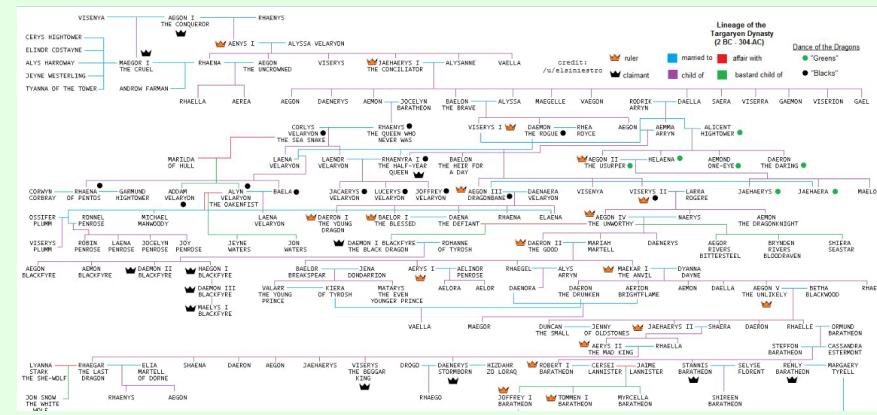
Results - with results as a title, why bother using this space for a message

Write a short novel here to describe your results, yes all of them! Do not select information according to your main message. Include also as much raw data as possible.
Do not forget to include a large table full of statistics. If you include figures, put either no legend or a wordy one and use the same line thickness and font size as for a scientific publication. Just be prepared to lend the reader a magnifying glass. Make sure your figures are cramped, with no spaces to separate them.

Character	Strength	Dexterity	Constitution	Intelligence	Wisdom	Charisma
Eddard Stark	15	12	14	10	16	14
Daenerys Targaryen	10	14	12	16	14	18
Jon Snow	16	14	14	12	14	12
Tyrion Lannister	8	14	12	18	16	16
Arya Stark	12	16	10	14	12	10
Bran Stark	10	12	12	16	18	14
Sansa Stark	8	12	10	16	16	18
Cersei Lannister	12	10	14	16	8	16
Joffrey Baratheon	14	10	14	12	8	12
Theon Greyjoy	14	14	12	12	12	10

If you have a stunning image, make sure you put it in an angle and include a long, very long legend as you would for a publication.
Never use a key message or a question as a title of your figure. It is too helpful.
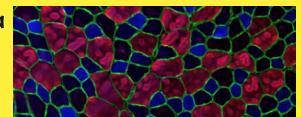
Use as many colours as you can. The aim is to burn the retina of the readers.

And if it is almost unreadable on the background, so much the better.

Deatil is not improtant

and smaller is almost always better

Forget about acknowledgments

Never thank anyone

This poster contains 445 words. Aim for 250 words. If it is over 500 words, it is annoying to everyone except your lab mates.