Communicating your Hackathon Project

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Communicating your project effectively is as important a skill as coding

A perfectly executed solution that isn't well communicated can invalidate all your hard work

Thinking about how you communicate your projects also helps you structure and design the project itself

The Judging Criteria Help You Structure Your Project

Technical Implementation

Did you solve a challenging technical problem?

Did you get a working demo completed within the allotted time?

Communication

How effective; engaging; coherent is the presentation overall?

Did the team work well together?

Is the presentation of the physics and methods used clear and understandable?

Aesthetics

Is the solution beautiful; polished?

Does it show the beauty of scientific computing?

Are all figures and visuals clear and accessible?

Structuring your Presentation

Introduce your team: Team name + team members + degree you're in

< 30 sec

Define the problem: What is the problem you're trying to solve? What is the context that informs it? Why does it matter?

~1 min

Your project: What is your solution? How does it address the problem? Why did you choose it?

How it works: How does your project work? What are the key features? How do we use it? Show us a demo

~3 min

Take-aways: What key points do you want us to remember? Future directions?

~30 sec

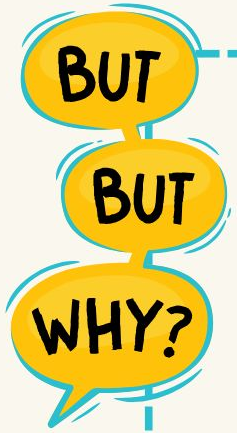
Some Tips for Preparing your Presentation

- **Consider your audience:** you're being judged by experts, but not experts in this topic
- **Be intentional about language:** explain key concepts and avoid jargon where you can
- **Be strategic** about what you include vs what you leave for the questions period
- **Anticipate possible questions** and be prepared to answer them
- **Factor in time to make your presentation** when you're structuring your project

More Tips for Preparing your Presentation

- **Decide who will be the presenter(s):** it's ok if you choose only one person to present
- **Practice at least once** to give you a sense of timing, flow, and clarity
- **Take it slow!** If you find that you can't get through it all when you practice, cut out material
- **Test your demo t**o make sure it's working as expected
- **Use the mentors as a sounding board:** practice with them to see how it sounds to an outsider

Q: Do I really need to make slides?



Slides (or other visual tools) aren't mandatory, but can **help your audience understand** and **help you structure your project**

Use templates for your presentation, to cut down the time it takes to make them

Aim for clarity and over perfection: slides don't need to be elaborate, they just need to get your point across

Keep accessibility in mind

Colours: choose colour-blind safe palettes and high contrast

Fonts: font shape and font size (18+ please!)

Use icons and symbols to emphasize important information instead of just colour

What if we don't finish our project?

A weekend isn't much time to think up, design, and implement a project. If you don't finish, please present anyway! You can tweak the structure:

- Introduce your team
- Define the problem
- Explain your (intended) solution
- Show us how far you got
- What you expect it to look like when it's done

Some Resources

- A Total Guide to Accessible Colors [Including Palettes & Templates]
- Accessible Colour Palette Generator
- How to Choose a Font for Accessibility
- Ensuring your Canva Designs are Accessible
- How to Create a Winning Hackathon Pitch in 5 Steps → not explicitly for scientific hackathons but has some good tips on structure