# TIPS FOR DESIGNING BETTER RESEARCH POSTERS

Research posters are a common way to show the results of a project in the academic community. Researchers present posters at conferences as a way to communicate their work in a summarized way to a broader audience.
The research poster must be clear, concise and attractive in order to generate discussion and feedback from colleagues. However, it is not easy to achieve those goals when putting all your work in a layout. Here are some tips to help you design effective research posters that stand out.

## PREPARATION

Before creating your poster you should consider the following questions:

- What is your target audience?
- What is your main message?
- What does your viewer need to know?

Once you've decided on the main content, make a rough draft or storyboard with the information, tables and graphics you need.

## TEXT

Keep in mind that important information should be readable from about 2-3 meters away and attract interest from about five meters.

Use of bullets, numbering, and headlines, make it easy to read. However, do not add bullets to section headings, better use a bolded, larger font for demarcating sections.

Avoid blocks of text longer than 10 sentences.

Use a sans-serif font like Arial or Helvetica and keep size around 70 - 100 pts, subheadings around 40 pts and body text around 24 pts.

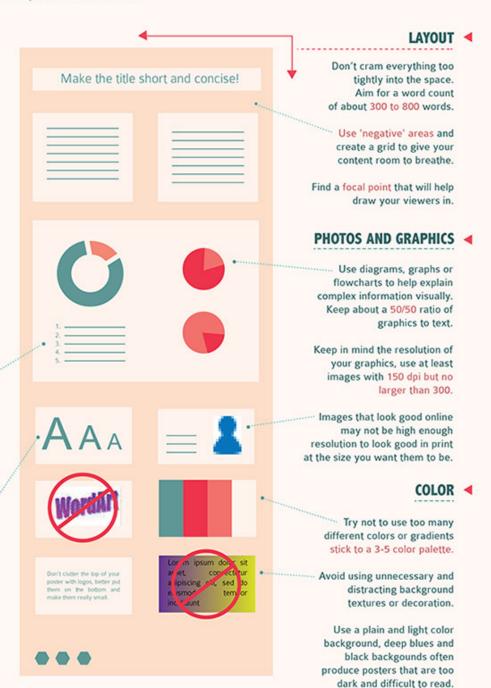Sometimes less is more, avoid any three-dimensional text or graphic.

## PRINTING AND PRESENTING

Save the file in a PDF format with the correct size, if possible print a draft first and double check for mistakes.

Consider preparing handouts of your poster.

References:
http://colinpurrington.com/tips/poster-design
http://www2.napier.ac.uk/gus/writing_presenting/academic_posters.html
http://guides.nyu.edu/content.php?pid=1748758sid=1471879

Make the title short and concise!

Don't clutter the top of your poster with logos, better put them on the bottom and make them really small.

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## LAYOUT

Don't cram everything too tightly into the space. Aim for a word count of about 300 to 800 words.

Use 'negative' areas and create a grid to give your content room to breathe.

Find a focal point that will help draw your viewers in.

## PHOTOS AND GRAPHICS

Use diagrams, graphs or flowcharts to help explain complex information visually. Keep about a 50/50 ratio of graphics to text.

Keep in mind the resolution of your graphics, use at least images with 150 dpi but no larger than 300.

Images that look good online may not be high enough resolution to look good in print at the size you want them to be.

## COLOR

Try not to use too many different colors or gradients stick to a 3-5 color palette.

Avoid using unnecessary and distracting background textures or decoration.

Use a plain and light color background, deep blues and black backgounds often produce posters that are too dark and difficult to read.

## SOFTWARE

Microsoft PowerPoint is the popular, easy-to-use software. However it is not the best option for poster design.

Adobe InDesign and LaTeX are the best options for text editing and layout but can be complex to use. Another option is Adobe Illustrator or Photoshop which are perfect for images and graphs.