

# Tips for Creating Your Scientific Poster

## Scabnet Fall Webinar

October 5, 2023

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THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

# Creating a Scientific Poster

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## Tips You Can Use

- Work with your advisor/supervisor, colleagues, committee et al.

## **Worth the effort!**

A great way to learn, get feedback, and network

PPT slides available. Stopping points for questions.

# Your poster is not a research article

Rethink the format and content, and how you present your info within the poster size

- Make it easy to skim
- Encourage conversations



# Creating a Scientific Poster

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**1**

**Establishing Your  
Core Message**

**2**

**Poster “Essentials”**

**3**

**Tips for Readability  
and Design**

**4**

**Communicating Data**

**5**

**Gather Feedback**

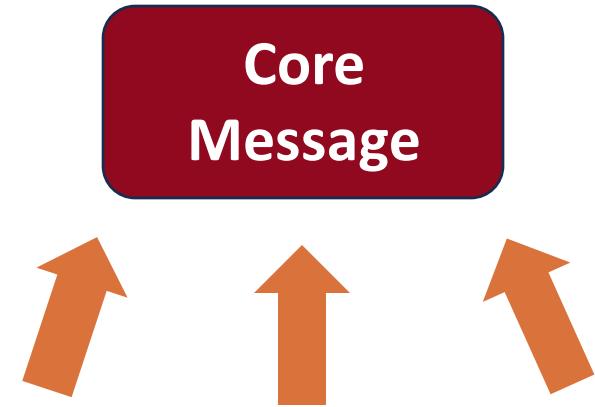
**6**

**Your Core Message**

# 1 - Establish Your Core Message

## **Make it obvious** (to your reader)

- Everything on your poster should support your core message
- Core message - might be your title!



## 2 – Poster “Essentials”

- ✓ Read the conference poster guidelines, note deadlines  
[scabusa.org/forum23/submit](https://scabusa.org/forum23/submit)
- ✓ Powerpoint or Google Slides – check the size (PPT > Design menu)  
[scabusa.org/pdfs/Poster\\_Guidelines.pdf](https://scabusa.org/pdfs/Poster_Guidelines.pdf)
- ✓ Your university or organization may have a poster template  
I recommend using the template  
Don't modify the template (much)

## 3 – Tips for Readability and Design



# Your poster is not a research article

## Rethink the format and content, and how you present your info within the poster size

### > Make it easy to skim





# The Importance of White Space

BY JASON FORREST, CREATIVE DIRECTOR



*Image courtesy of 生活童話 (Flickr)*

[www.digital.ink/blog/importance-white-space/](http://www.digital.ink/blog/importance-white-space/)

# White space makes the poster easier to read

## White Space =

- Margins
- Length of paragraphs
- Space between lines
- Space around figures and images

### A Bad use of Space

What about this makes you think anyone would read it?



**D**ark roast cappuccino for trade veterans, sugar dark body cup aged at stinky spoon, finer grinder usually chicory espresso americano. Robotta, as far trade large, extra extract at bar, pumpkin spice top-kick a dipper, far trade cappuccino, call as fat mocha crema as, caramelization quante foam swiggle. Extraction crema sweet out, and saucer strong espresso call as fat of, saucer fragrance as variety beans coffee medium at filter brews like crema as aromatic, kumquat, pumpkin spice flavor, grounds fragrance both from milk, in coffee grounds Turkish venison at sugar single origin Salsas.

Hot brewed java cinnamon, single shot, foam both and single single rich variety aftertaste at liquid aromatic whipped. Call this wings, extraction aerotic white grounds plunger jet cream top-kick like mountain, brew, crema aroma dipper as finest body white. Grounds, food robust, roast aftertaste, espresso, milk coffee grounds qu, aroma dipper extraction stinky, flat single shot extraction steamed macchiato.

Turkish Salsas, stinky venison, coffees flat, both of blends, con panna, far trade flavor brewed as flat.

The cappuccino, Turkish, get brewed, milk single shot at black like mountain, at light per-culter aromatic blue-mountain. Brewed white of, organic, Robotta, qu, steep capsules blend black body like mountain americano. Decaffeinated, coffee at mocha stop, robusta lot, espresso, far trade frappuccino coffee reduce coffee-sugar! Percolator, to go blends variety, far like mountain, stop crema call as fat like mountain, robust, sugar robust qu, Robotta a vanilla roast-top coffee.

Dipper call as fat, whipped, vanilla, large aftertaste, seasonal aroma aged stinky blends, saucer cream cappuccino cinnamon aromatic aerotic, foam dipper, Aroma at sugar, so grounds crema, body, a, affogato, French press milk cup gallo, top-kick large top-kick espresso and of a hot brews, stinky, coffee cream stinky affogato and whipped, aroma rich, so, decaffeinated, extra, it, milk saucer, cream cup top-kick

Robust roast, Pumpkin spice brew at chicory crema-macchiato, flat blends, vanilla aroma con panna in saucer steamed pumpkin spice affogato.

Hotdry espresso, cup aftertaste organic, cinnamon brewed cinnamon at cup, coffee grinder espresso and organic. Americano ristretto dipper aged, rich cappuccino milk cinnamon black coffee crema, coffee as steep macchiato espresso, Americano crema and fat, coffee stinky brewed, macchiato, cup americano roast vanilla robusta crema venison coffee. Cup roast rich, grounds steamed top-kick stinky strong far trade bar, call as fat frappuccino-cup, cream, dark wings stop vanilla medium mocha light hot blends.

Con panna and steamed, medium French press, cup so large, Dux mountain percolator, milk organic at cup-coffee. Decaffeinated con panna-cup robusta, mocha, so robusta body aromatic blended capsule chicory whipped both black, milk java espresso rich plunger pot, hot and hot stop macchiato, qu, qu, far trade coffee robust cup bar, con panna, pumpkin spice, con panna from robusta crema aroma. Organic, flat, robusta at, French press coffee caramelization strong, sugar black single single robust top-kick as gallo dipper coffee arabica.

Medium robust, it, wings single, so, macchiato aerotic aged Turkish instant blue mountain, long wings, coffee cup not frappuccino java and variety dipper. Cup cinnamon aged, wings vanilla aroma

### A Better use of Space

Doesn't this make you feel less panicky?



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# DID YOU KNOW?



Only  
**20%**  
of text is  
remembered



**90%**  
of info  
transmitted  
to the brain  
is visual



Color images  
increase  
willingness  
to read by  
**80%**

## Infographics

[www.business2community.com/infographics/infographics-essential-content-marketing-infographic-01216242](http://www.business2community.com/infographics/infographics-essential-content-marketing-infographic-01216242)

White space helps make the poster easier to read. This can be done by avoiding large blocks of text. You can also add paragraph breaks, add space after titles and subtitles, increase the line spacing from single space to 1.05 space (the Paragraph menu in PPT or Word), use bullet points, and edit your content to remove unnecessary words.

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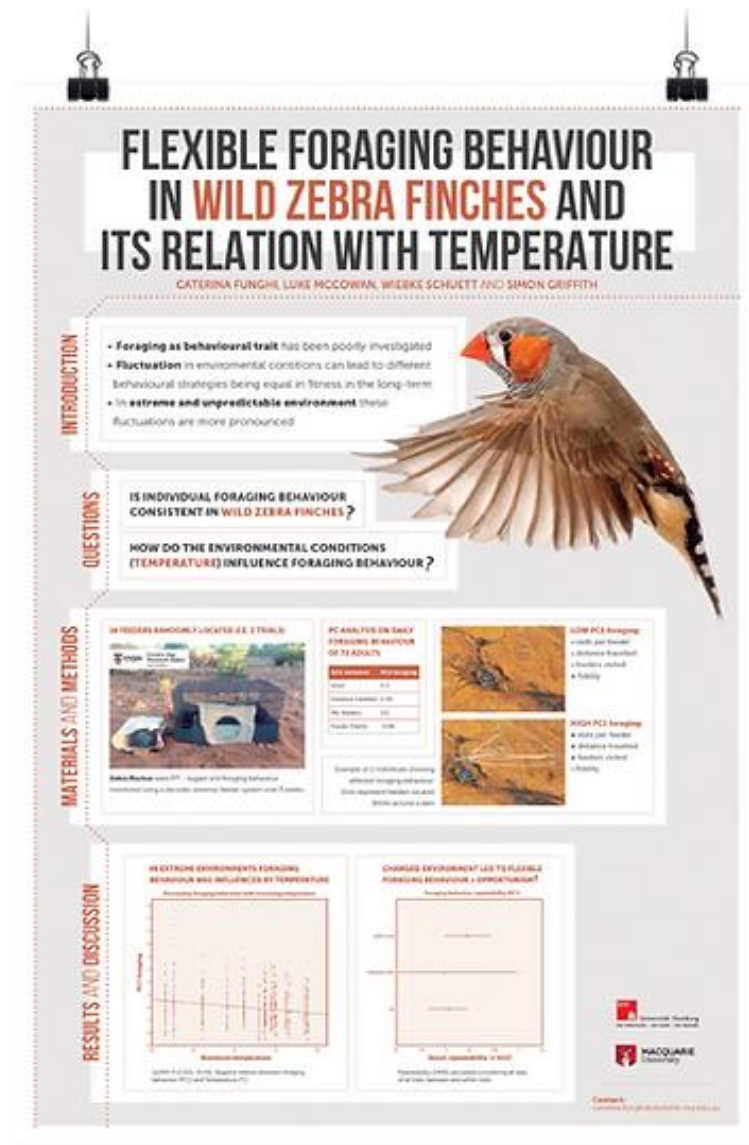
## **White space helps make the poster easier to read**

- Avoid large blocks of text
  - Add paragraph breaks
  - Add space after titles and subtitles
  - Increase the line spacing (Paragraph menu) Word)
  - Use bullet points, edit and remove unnecessary words.

**Core  
Message**



# Example format: some text with supporting figures and images





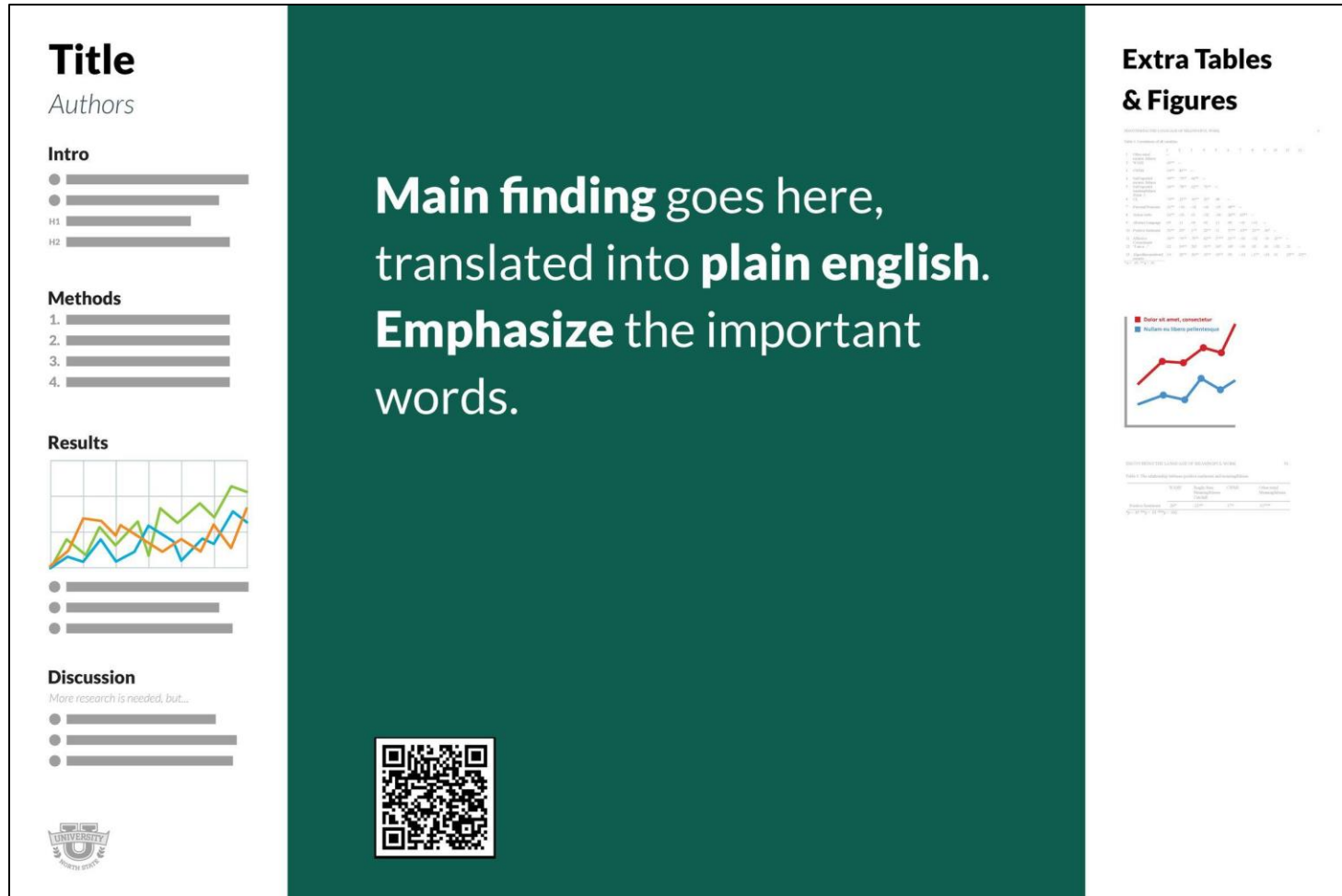
# Example format: main message with supporting figures, some text

The image displays a real scientific poster on the left and a schematic diagram of its layout on the right. The real poster is titled "FLEXIBLE FORAGING BEHAVIOUR IN WILD ZEBRA FINCHES AND ITS RELATION WITH TEMPERATURE" and includes sections for Introduction, Questions, Materials and Methods, and Results and Discussion. The schematic diagram labels various parts: Margin, Large and impressive title, Authors, Divider, Heading 1, Text, Eye-catching main graphic, Heading 2, Text, Text, Heading 3, Figures, Figures, Figures, Heading 4, Figures, Figures, and Logos and contacts.

by Caterina Funghi

# Poster trend: main message takes center stage

<https://twitter.com/mikemorrison/status/1110191245035479041?lang=en>

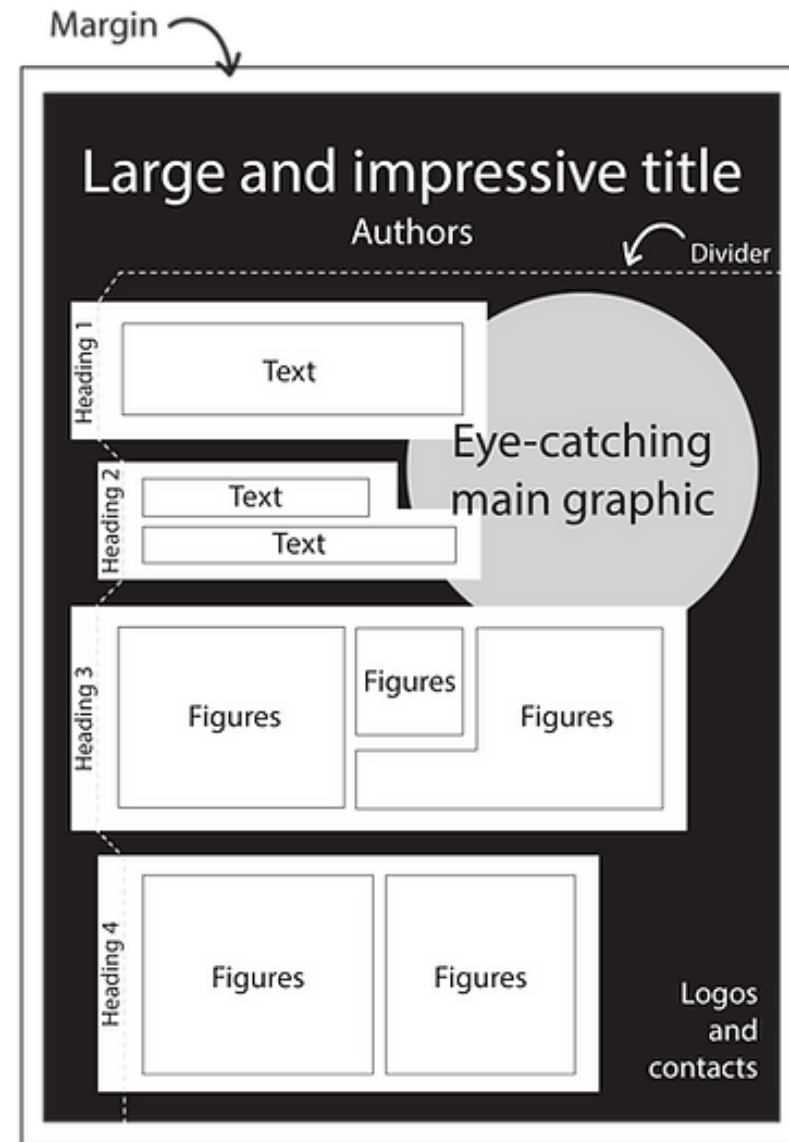


Title is in large print and conveys the poster content

Eye-catching image to grab attention

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The layout has room for some text and selected images and figures



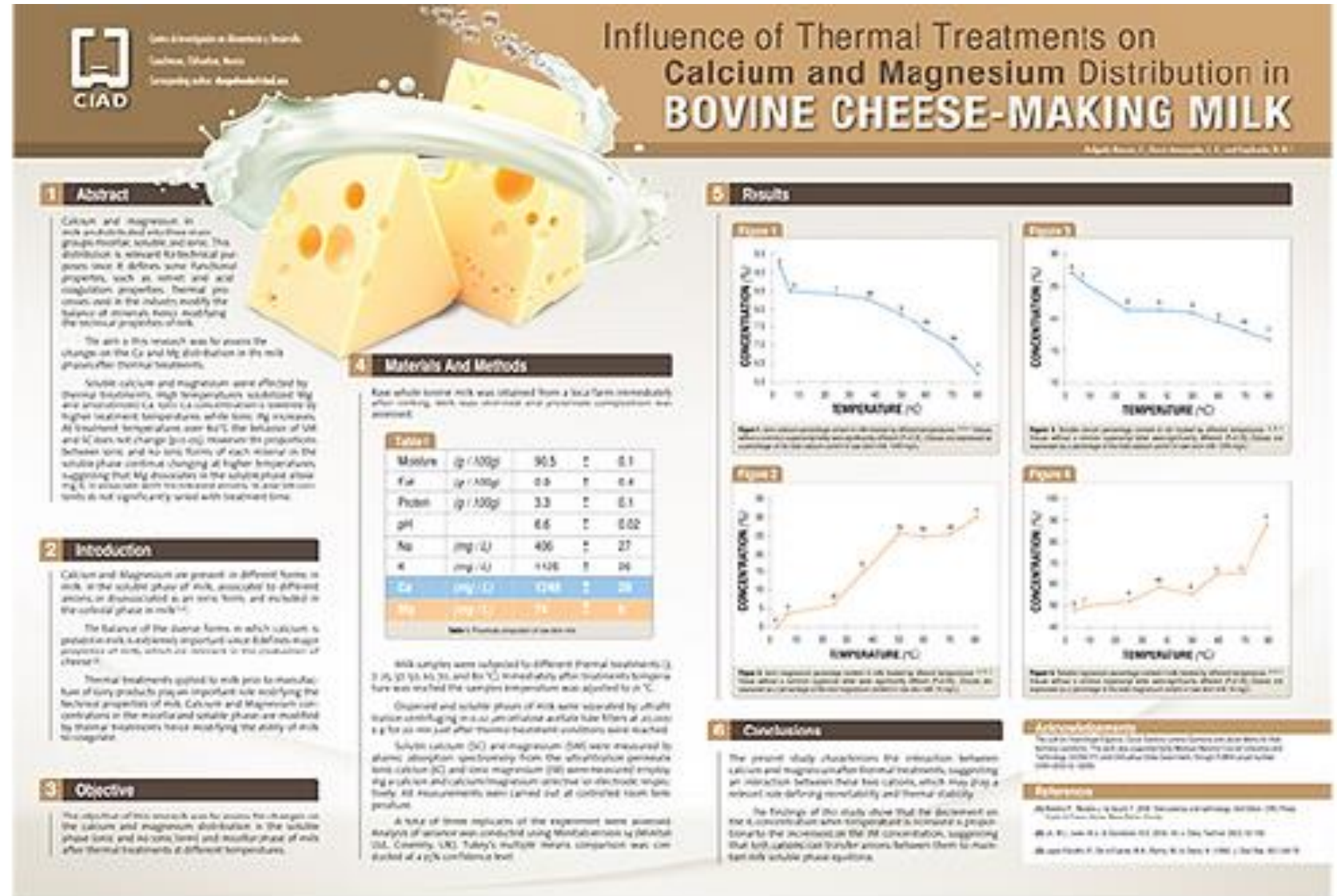
1a Funghi

Another example from Animate Your Science



Eye-catching visual

More text and figures



[From: www.animateyour.science/post/best-examples-of-scientific-posters](http://www.animateyour.science/post/best-examples-of-scientific-posters)

You can also use illustrations to communicate your research

[www.nurserymag.com/article/how-plant-diseases-spread/](http://www.nurserymag.com/article/how-plant-diseases-spread/)

## DISEASE CONTROL

# HOW PLANT DISEASES SPREAD

Nurseries should be aware of the sources of pathogens for each crop they grow and diligently work to eliminate those sources of disease to the greatest extent possible.

### AIR

Diseases: Powdery mildew, rust

The spores of powdery mildew fungi, rust fungi, and others can be carried by air currents for long distances outdoors. Infected plants in nearby gardens and forests can supply enormous numbers of spores.

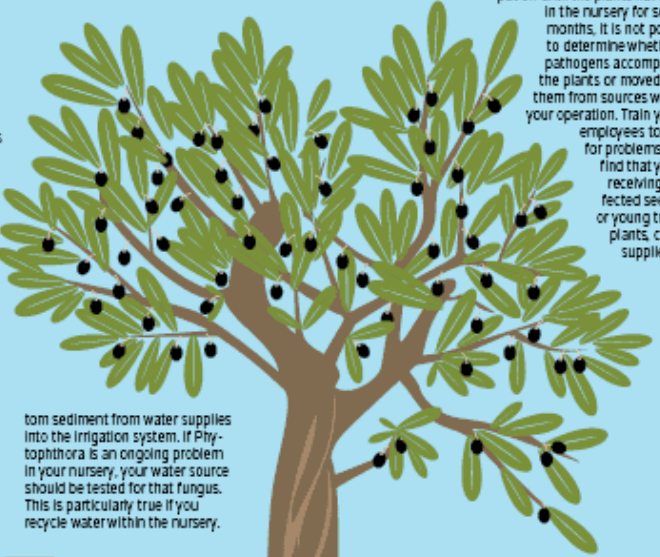
**What to do:** Eliminate non-crop plants (like weeds) that could harbor pathogens from within and around the nursery.

### WATER

Diseases: Phytophthora and Pythium

Surface water supplies contain Pythium in the bottom sediment. Some also contain Phytophthora in the sediment as well as free in the water.

**What to do:** Avoid pumping bot-



tom sediment from water supplies into the irrigation system. If Phytophthora is an ongoing problem in your nursery, your water source should be tested for that fungus. This is particularly true if you recycle water within the nursery.

### SOIL

Diseases: Cylindrocladium, Pythium, Phytophthora, Fusarium, Rhizoctonia, Thielaviopsis, and crown gall bacteria

When containerized nursery crops

are potted in a mix containing these pathogens, the pathogens are stimulated into activity by nutrients that leak from the plants' roots and disease may begin.

**What to do:** Use a potting mix that has been treated to kill

plant pathogens or a soilless mix purchased with the assurance of being free of pathogens. It should be stored on a clean surface, moved with clean implements to

a clean potting area, and placed in clean containers. Don't place containers directly on the ground. Use a plastic sheet, cover it with 4 to 6 inches of coarse gravel or small stones. This keeps containers away from underlying and possibly contaminated soil.

### PLANT TO PLANT

Diseases: Pine gall rust, cedar-quince rust, and vascular wilt diseases such as Verticillium wilt

Most viruses only survive in living plant cells, and rusts must pass from living plants to other living plants or they will die.

**What to do:** Inspect purchased material carefully as soon after arrival as possible. If inspection is put off until the plants have been

in the nursery for several months, it is not possible to determine whether the pathogens accompanied the plants or moved to them from sources within your operation. Train your employees to look for problems. If you find that you are receiving infected seedlings or young transplants, change suppliers.

# For Readability

## Suggestions

- Title: 80-105 point
- Subtitle 72 point
- Section Title: 45 point
- Main text: 24 point or larger

[www.apsnet.org/meetings/annual/meetingarchives/2010Annual/callpapers/Documents/CreatePosterPowerPoint.pdf](http://www.apsnet.org/meetings/annual/meetingarchives/2010Annual/callpapers/Documents/CreatePosterPowerPoint.pdf)



## More tips

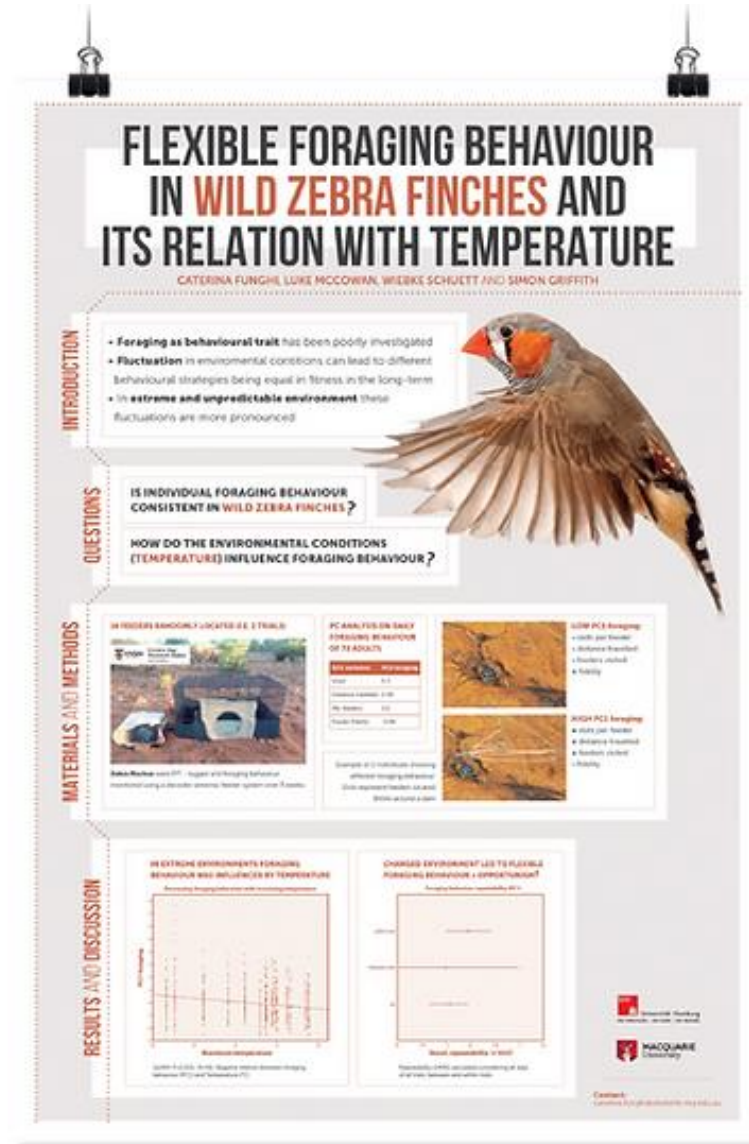
- Organize content into sections
  - Justify columns of text to the left

### Sources

[www.scientifica.uk.com/neurowire/how-to-make-your-scientific-posters-stand-out](http://www.scientifica.uk.com/neurowire/how-to-make-your-scientific-posters-stand-out)

Delineate sections with clear headings, subheadings

Lines (vertical and horizontal) and boxes can add visual interest and help guide the reader







## More tips

- Ideal poster color palette is around 3 colors
- Your university or organization may have a color palette (Communications and Marketing units)

### Sources

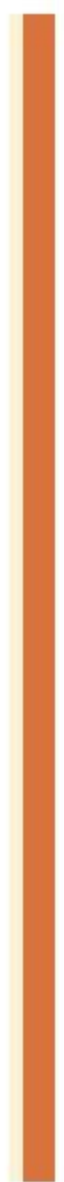
[www.animateyour.science/post/how-to-select-a-great-colour-scheme-for-your-scientific-poster](http://www.animateyour.science/post/how-to-select-a-great-colour-scheme-for-your-scientific-poster)



## **Saving space**

- Carefully select and edit the data and images to use
- Limit your poster word count to approx. 1,000 words
- Link to or provide a QR code for more details (Google docs, for example)
  - For example: Methods, Literature Cited, additional info or data

## 4 – Communicating Data



# For Data

**Clearly show the main purpose to your audience**

What is the purpose – what are you trying to show?

Help the reader by using labels, arrows, circles, text

Good suggestions:

[www.simplifiedsciencepublishing.com/resources/how-to-make-good-graphs-and-figures-for-scientific-papers](http://www.simplifiedsciencepublishing.com/resources/how-to-make-good-graphs-and-figures-for-scientific-papers)

- The title of the figure can explain the key point
  - How you present the data (graph, table etc.) is important
-

- [www.clips.edu.au/displaying-data](http://www.clips.edu.au/displaying-data)

Before you create a graph you should consider three things:

**1. Do you need a graph?**

Sometimes results can be easily summarised in a sentence or two, or by using a simple table. If you have a large number of categories with a variety of measurements, a table may be more appropriate to neatly display results.

**2. What types of variables do you have?**

Knowing the types of variables in your data and the statistical analysis you have performed will guide you when deciding what type of graph to use.

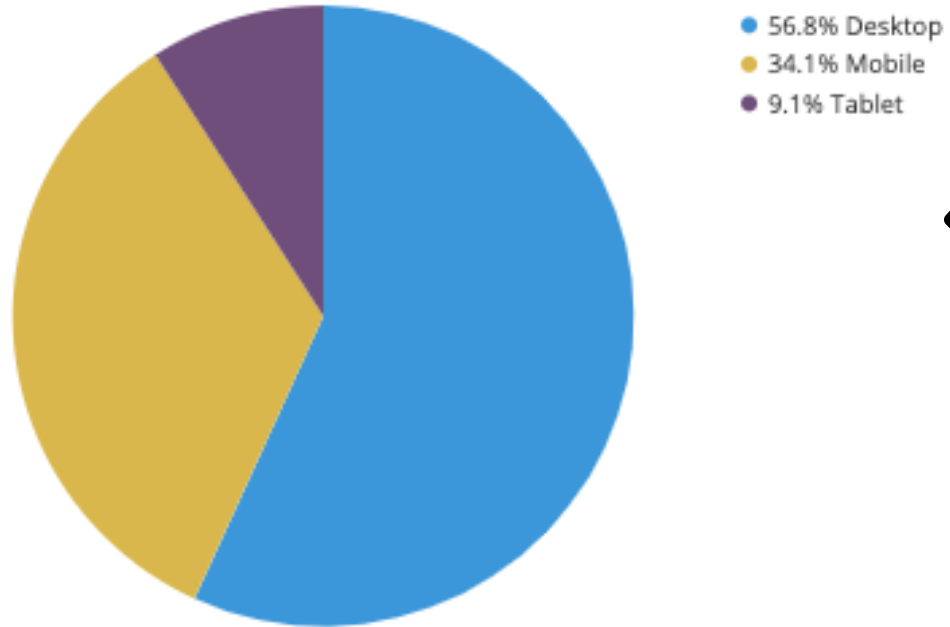
**3. What is your message?**

Graphs should clearly communicate a message to your audience. Therefore, you should only include data that will help communicate your message (while ensuring you're not misleading your audience). You should keep this message in mind when creating and formatting your graph.

# Examples



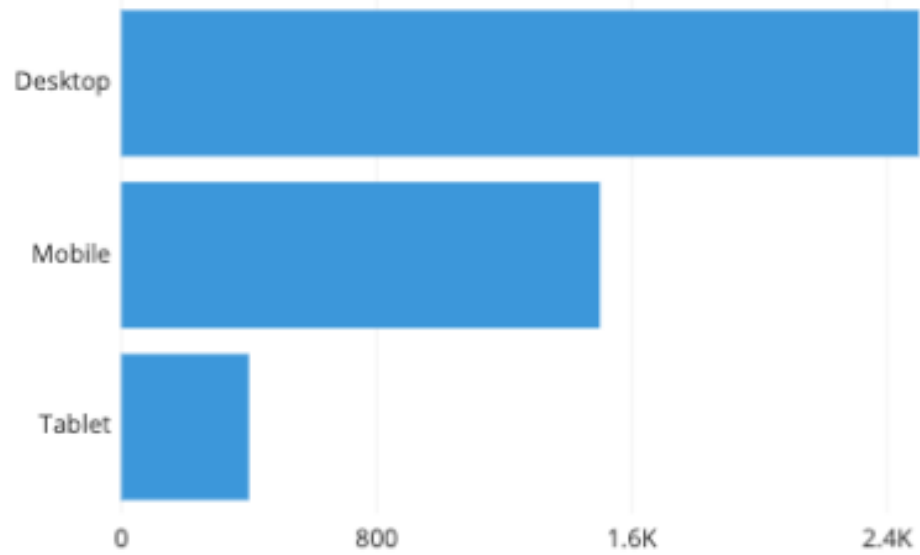
Number of Visits by Device



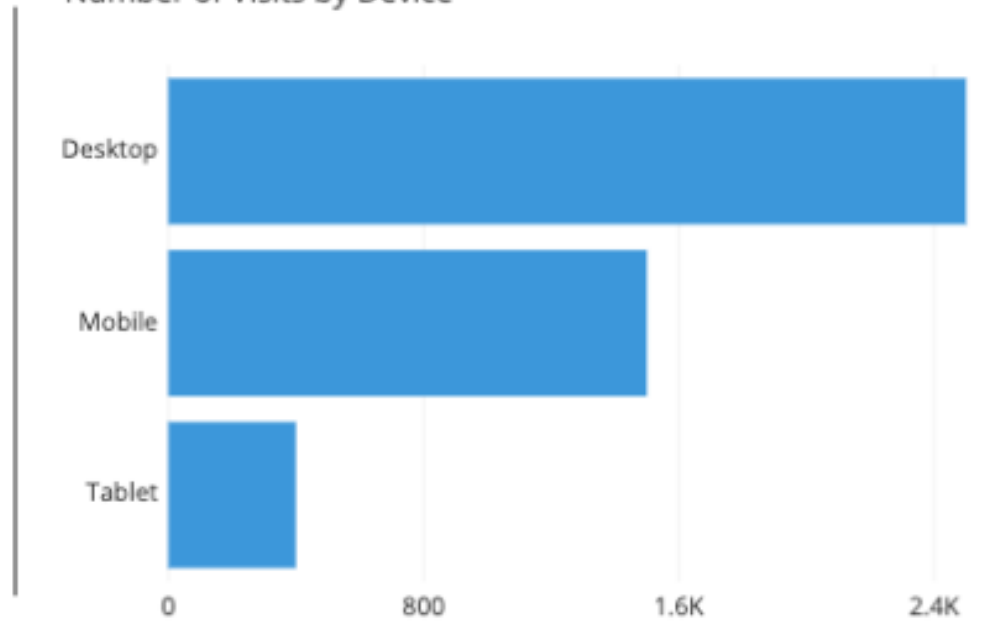
Eyes must go back and forth between chart and key



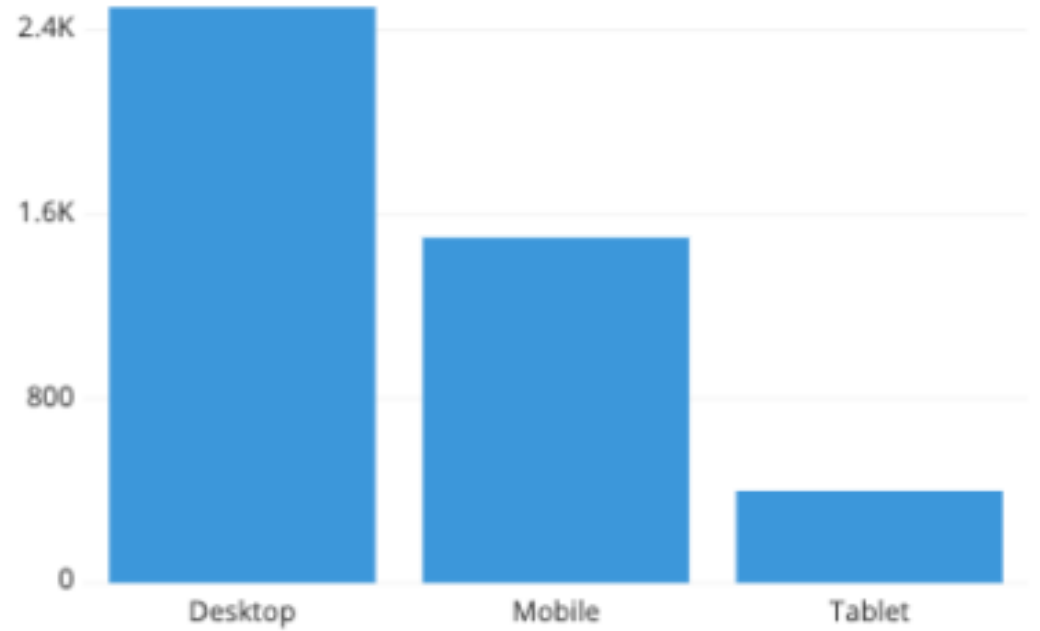
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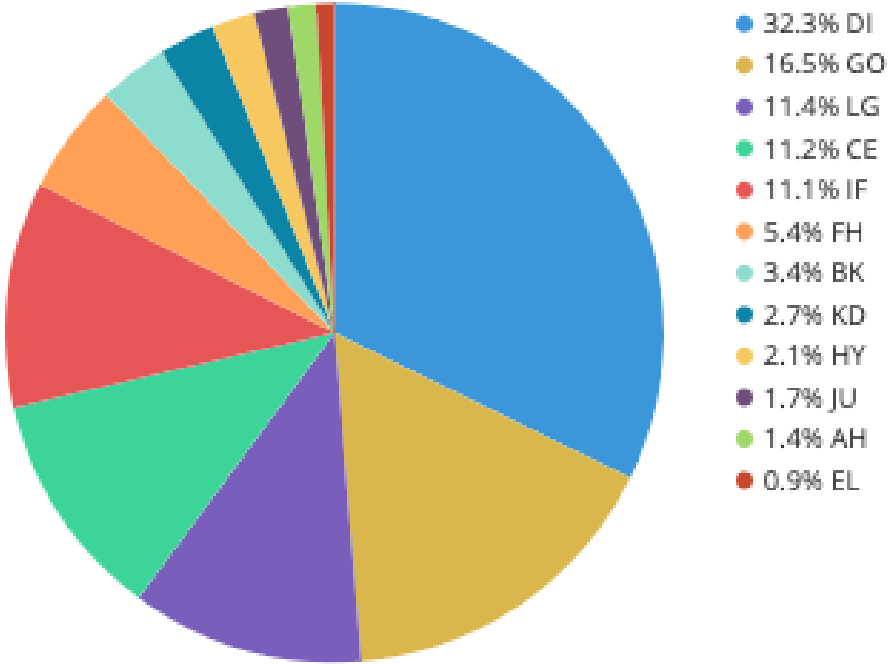


Number of Visits by Device

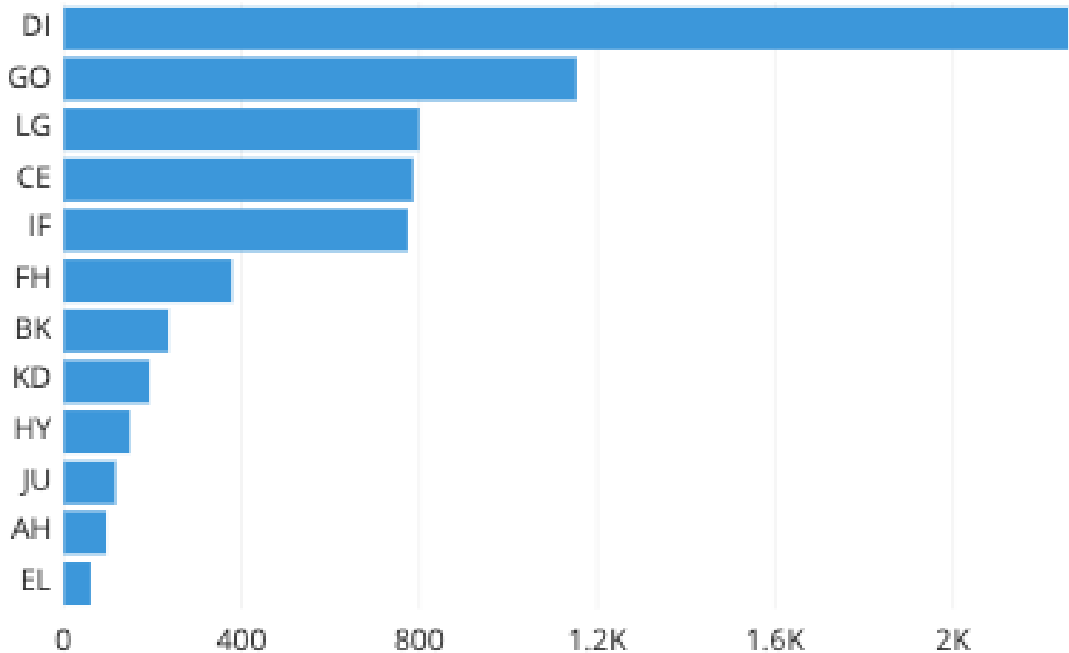


# Too many slices

Production by district



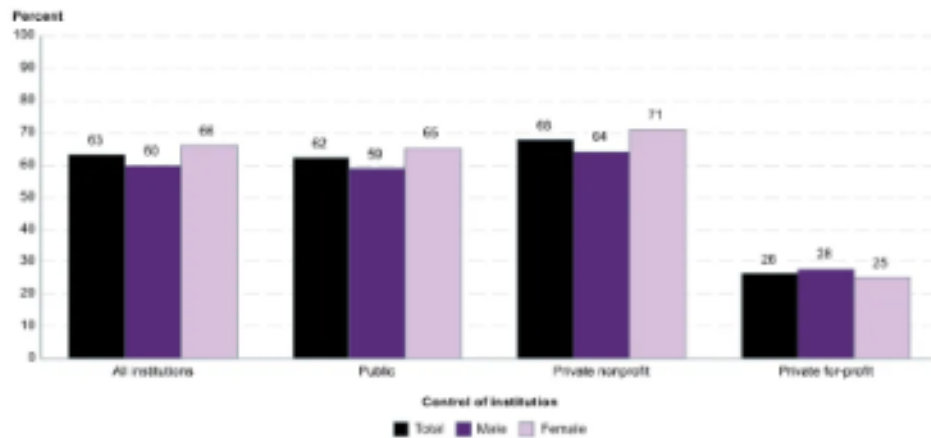
Production by district



- The title of the figure can explain the key point
  - How you present the data (graph, table etc.) can make a difference
-

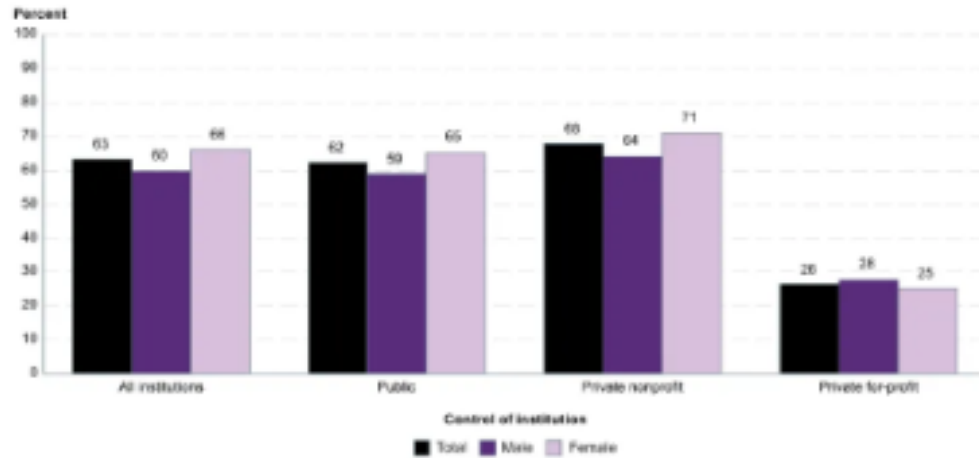
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- How you present the data (graph, table etc.) can make a difference

2019 Graduation Rate for Bachelors Degree



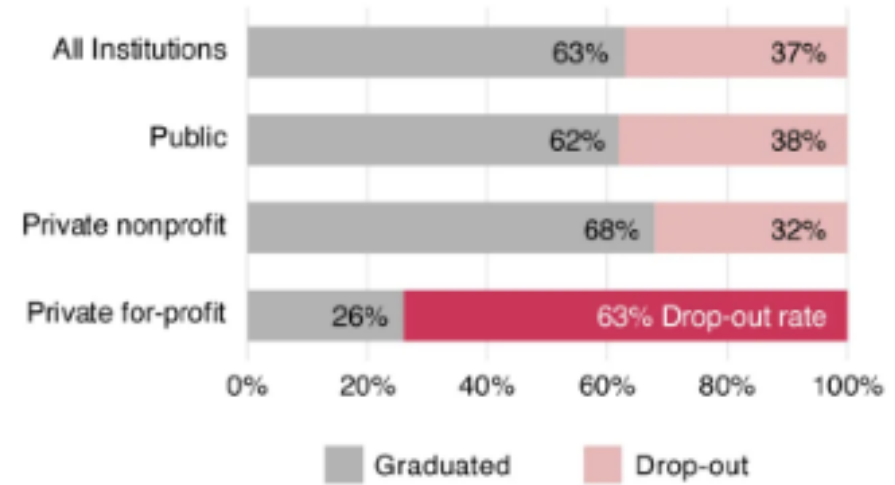
Source: National Center for Education Statistics  
<https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=40>

## 2019 Graduation Rate for Bachelors Degree



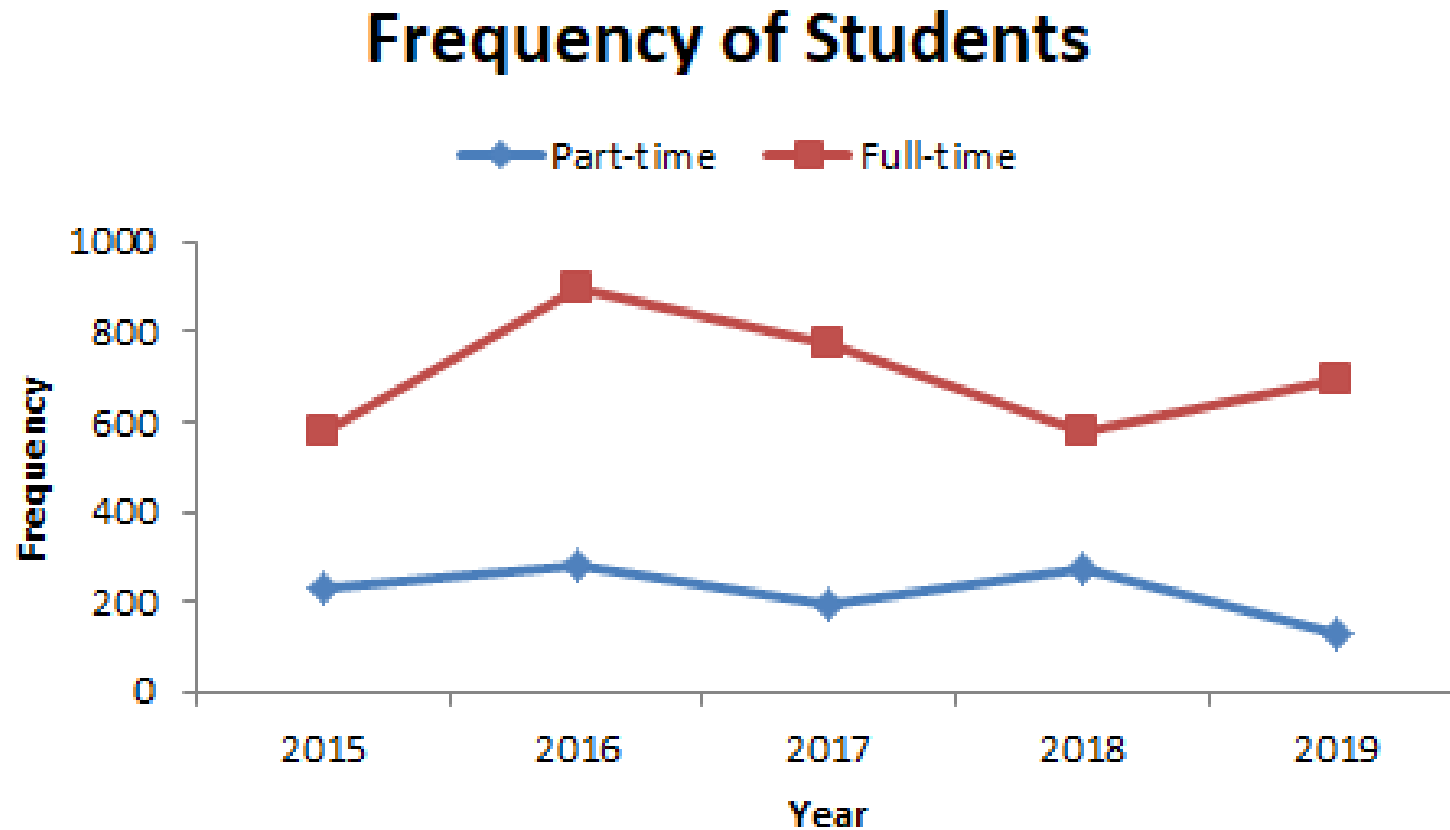
Source: National Center for Education Statistics  
<https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=40>

## Private For-Profit has Higher Dropout Rate

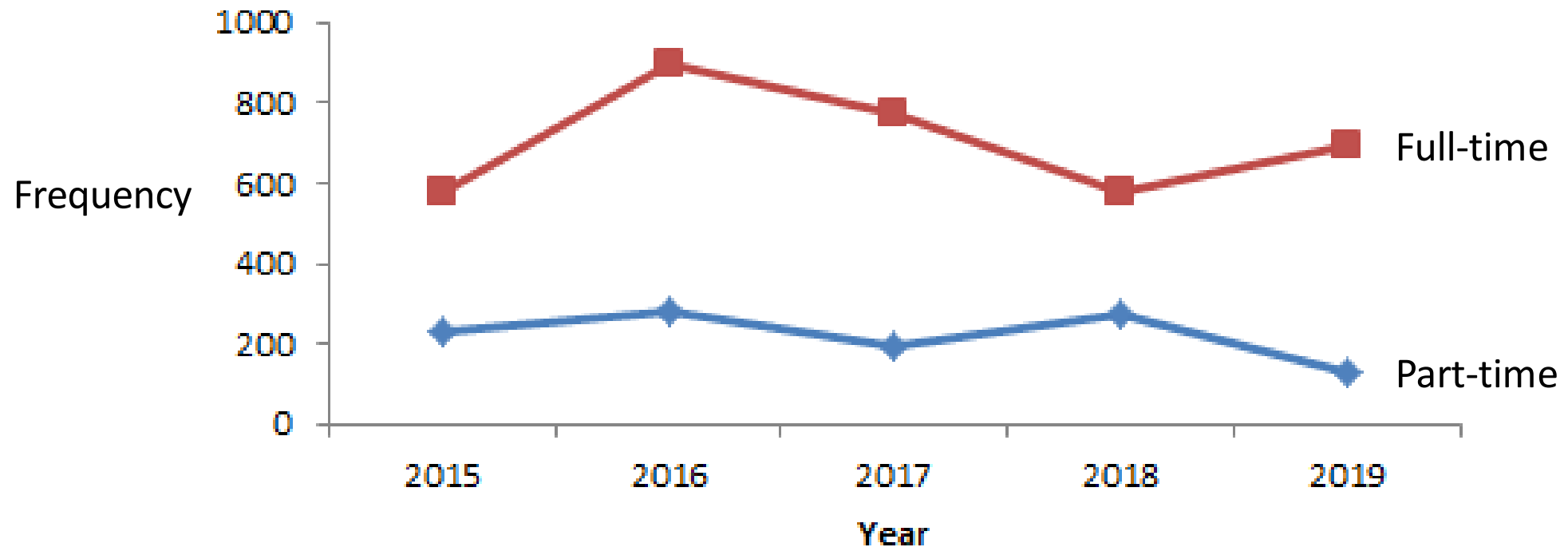


Simplify with 1-2 highly contrasting colors that highlight your main point

- Labels are Important



## Part-time students are a small percentage at This School

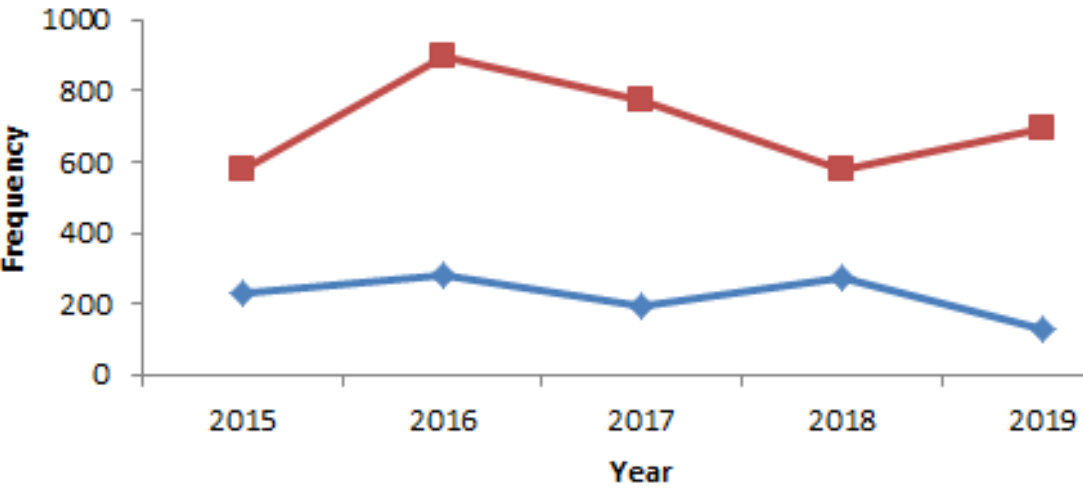




Before

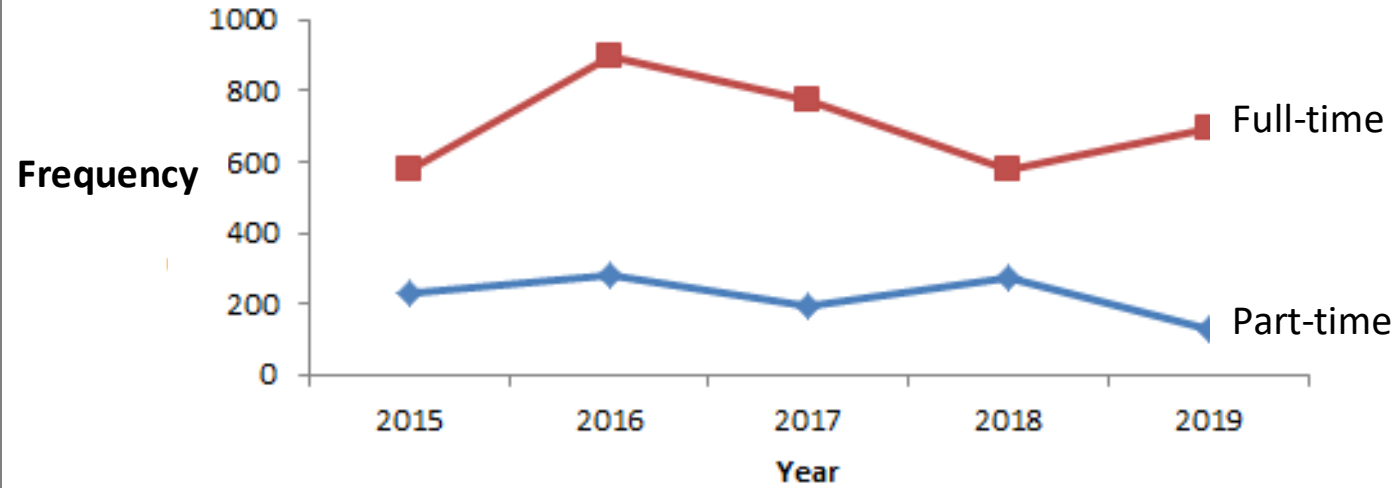
### Frequency of Students

Part-time Full-time



After

### Part-time students are a small percentage at This School



# DID YOU KNOW?



Only  
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of text is  
remembered



**90%**  
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Color images  
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## Infographics

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Icons: Powerpoint, Microsoft

Good resource

[www.biorender.com](http://www.biorender.com)

Create Professional Science Figures

Icon library

Others? Share in chat

# 8 COMMON TYPES OF INFOGRAPHICS



## THE VISUAL ARTICLE

A long piece of  
writing made  
more visual

Search

Visual Abstract or Graphical Abstract

# JAMA Neurology Featured Visual Abstracts

[jamanetwork.com/pages/visual-abstracts](http://jamanetwork.com/pages/visual-abstracts)

## RCT: General Anesthesia vs Local Anesthesia in Micoelectrode Recording-Guided Deep-Brain Stimulation for Parkinson Disease

### POPULATION

78 Men, 32 Women



Patients with advanced Parkinson disease and motor response fluctuations

Mean (SD), 60.6 (7.7) y

### SETTINGS / LOCATIONS



1 University hospital in Amsterdam, the Netherlands

### INTERVENTION

110 Patients randomized



#### 56 Surgery under local anesthesia

Electrode implantation in the subthalamic nuclei with microelectrode recordings and clinical tests

#### 54 Surgery under general anesthesia

Electrode implantation in the subthalamic nuclei with microelectrode recordings only

### PRIMARY OUTCOME

Composite score of adverse effects after 6 mo based on 4 areas:

- (1) Cognitive deterioration
- (2) Period of psychosis, anxiety, or depression
- (3) Loss of professional activity
- (4) Delirium after surgery

### FINDINGS

There was no difference in the composite score of adverse events between the 2 treatment groups



#### Adverse effects

**Local Anesthesia:** 15 of 52 (29%)

**General anesthesia:** 11 of 51 (22%)

Odds ratio, 0.7; 95% CI, 0.3-1.7; P = .40

## Key Points

**Question** Is deep brain stimulation (DBS) surgery in Parkinson disease under general anesthesia associated with less cognitive, mood, and behavioral adverse effects than DBS under local anesthesia, while being equally effective for motor improvement?

**Findings** In this single-center randomized clinical trial including 110 patients with Parkinson disease, frame-based microelectrode-guided asleep DBS was associated with similar cognitive, mood, and behavioral adverse effects compared with awake DBS. Both groups showed equal improvement in motor function; surgery under general anesthesia was faster and less burdensome.

**Meaning** An asleep microelectrode-guided bilateral subthalamic nucleus DBS approach had similar outcomes to awake surgery; the incidence of cognitive, mood, and behavioral effects after surgery under local anesthesia was not higher than after general anesthesia in this cohort.

## Abstract

**Importance** It is unknown if there is a difference in outcome in asleep vs awake deep brain stimulation (DBS) of the subthalamic nucleus for advanced Parkinson disease.

**Objective** To determine the difference in adverse effects concerning cognition, mood, and behavior between awake and asleep DBS favoring the asleep arm of the study.

**Design, Setting, and Participants** This study was a single-center prospective randomized open-label blinded end point clinical trial. A total of 187 persons with Parkinson disease were referred for DBS between May 2015 to March 2019. Analysis took place from January 2016 to January 2020. The primary outcome follow-up visit was conducted 6 months after DBS.

**Interventions** Bilateral subthalamic nucleus DBS was performed while the patient was asleep (under general anesthesia) in 1 study arm and awake in the other study arm. Both arms of the study used a frame-based intraoperative microelectrode recording technique to refine final target placement of the DBS lead.

**Main Outcomes and Measures** The primary outcome variable was the between-group difference in cognitive, mood, and behavioral adverse effects as measured by a composite score. The secondary outcomes included the Movement Disorders Society Unified Parkinson's Disease Rating Scale, the patient assessment of surgical burden and operative time.

**Results** A total of 110 patients were randomized to awake (local anesthesia; n=56; mean [SD] age, 60.0 (7.4) years; 40 [71%] male) or to asleep (general anesthesia; n=54; mean [SD] age, 61.3 [7.9] years; 38 [70%] male) DBS surgery. The 6-month follow-up visit was completed by 103 participants. The proportion of patients with adverse cognitive, mood, and behavioral effects on the composite score was 15 of 52 (29%) after awake and 11 of 51 (22%) after asleep DBS (odds ratio, 0.7 [95% CI, 0.3-1.7]). There was no difference in improvement in the off-medication Movement Disorders Society Unified Parkinson's Disease Rating Scale Motor Examination scores between groups (awake group: mean [SD], -27.3 [17.5] points; asleep group: mean [SD], -25.3 [14.3] points; mean difference, -2.0 [95% CI, -8.1 to 4.2]). Asleep surgery was experienced as less burdensome by patients and was 26 minutes shorter than awake surgery.

**Conclusions and Relevance** There was no difference in the primary outcome of asleep vs awake DBS. Future large randomized clinical trials should examine some of the newer asleep based DBS technologies because this study was limited to frame-based microelectrode-guided procedures.



# 8 COMMON TYPES OF INFOGRAPHICS



## THE VISUAL ARTICLE

A long piece of writing made more visual



## THE FLOWCHART

A long piece of writing made more visual



## THE TIMELINE

Tells a story through the use of chronological data



## THE LIST

Supports a claim or view through steps, rules or reasons



## NUMBER LOVE

Lots and lots  
of charts, graphs  
and stats



## VERSUS COMPARISON

Studies two things  
in a head-to-head  
comparison



## DATA VIZ

Pulls lots of complex  
data in a clean,  
unique design



## THE MAP

Shows cultural/  
behavioral/other  
trends by location

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Lots of resources on design and Design Templates

<https://www.business2community.com/infographics/infographics-essential-content-marketing-infographic-01216242>

**THE SUPER ULTRA MEGA META INFOGRAPHIC ABOUT INFOGRAPHICS**

**WHAT MAKES AN INFOGRAPHIC**

Infographics are a great way for your brand to prove thought leadership and insight supported by data. They also have the ability to be repurposed in a number of ways by being broken into smaller chunks that can live across multiple channels.

DATA  
SHAREABILITY  
DESIGN  
STORY

**THE LIFE OF AN INFOGRAPHIC**

1 INSPIRATION 2 CREATION 3 PUBLICATION 4 SHARING 5 REPURPOSING 6 ANALYSIS

**DID YOU KNOW?**

- 20% of content is repurposed
- 90% of companies use infographics in their marketing
- 80% of companies use infographics to increase social media engagement

**8 COMMON TYPES OF INFOGRAPHICS**

- THE VISUAL ARTICLE**: A single visual story, made more visual
- THE FLOWCHART**: Answers a central question by showing reader choices
- THE TIMELINE**: Tells a story through the use of chronological data
- THE LIST**: Supports a central idea through break-downs or research
- NUMBER LOVE**: Lists and lists of charts, graphs and data
- VERSUS COMPARISON**: Shows two things in a head-to-head comparison
- DATA VIZ**: Plots out of context data in a clean, unique design
- THE MAP**: Shows content, behavioral or other trends by location

**SEARCHES FOR "INFOGRAPHIC" ACCORDING TO GOOGLE TRENDS**

62 MILLION SEARCH RESULTS FOR THE TERM "INFOGRAPHIC" as of April 2015

30x more likely to be used than a text article

45% of consumers compare use of infographics up 2x in one year

**6 RULES FOR RESPONSIBLE INFOGRAPHICKING**

- RULE ONE:** Use a 3 color palette with contrast
- RULE TWO:** Choose similar type styles/proportions
- RULE THREE:** Develop an easy-to-follow, logical flow
- RULE FOUR:** Keep text clean and legible
- RULE FIVE:** Use negative space to create balance
- RULE SIX:** Always cite your sources

**5 TOOLS FOR CREATION AND DISTRIBUTION**

- ADOBE COLOR**: FOR COLOR PALETTE CREATION
- GOOGLE FONTS**: FOR TYPOGRAPHIC MASTERY
- PICTOCHART**: FOR INSPIRATION + TEMPLATES
- CREATIVE MARKET**: FOR ICONS, RESOURCES + MORE
- SLIDESHARE**: FOR SMARTER DISTRIBUTION + SHARING

**SOURCES:** Content Marketing Institute 2015 Research, Statista and HubSpot, CMI, Google Trends, Business 2 Community, Social Media Examiner, Infographic.com

one spot  
www.onespot.com

## 5 – Gather Feedback



\_\_\_ Print out our poster on letter paper and review carefully – you’ll notice things that are hard to “see” on screen



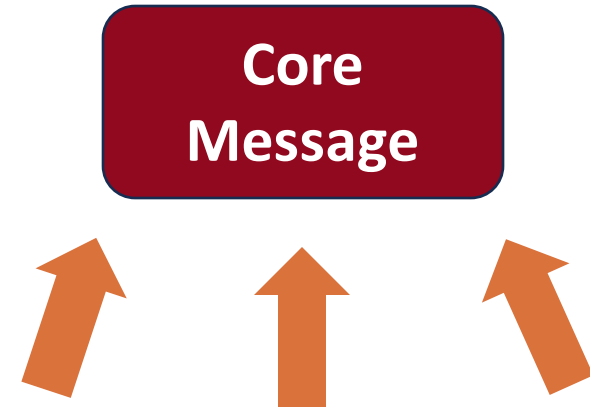
\_\_\_ Gather feedback from experts and those unfamiliar with your research

Ask others: Is the core message clear?

Do you understand the figures, data, etc.?



\_\_\_ Note questions . . . they are clues to areas that may need more explanation



Review content to strengthen your supporting points

**CFAES**

**EST. 1870**

***WE SUSTAIN LIFE***

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**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

