

## Communicating Nobel Prizes –Nobel posters in Physics and Chemistry

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### INDEX TERMS

Nobel Prizes, Nobel Prize in Physics, Nobel Prize in Chemistry, The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, Volvo

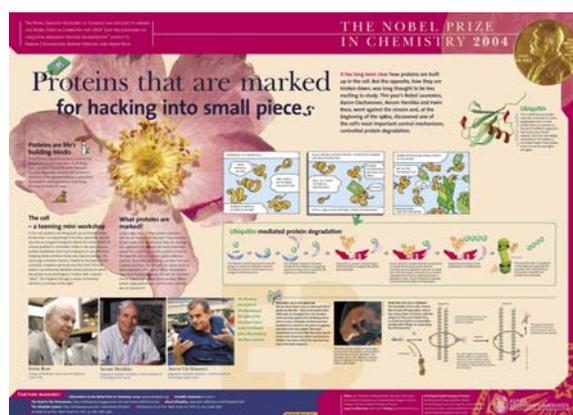
### SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

Communicating Nobel Prizes in Physics and Chemistry is a unique opportunity to communicate science to the public. The Prize is famous throughout the world which means that by writing "Nobel" on a poster, the target audience knows that this has to do with science. No further introduction is not needed.

The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences (RSAS) produces posters of the Nobel Prizes in Physics and Chemistry every year. The posters are printed in two editions, the first one, in Swedish and English, is distributed in connection with the Nobel week in December. The second edition, printed in about 10 different languages, is distributed all over the world four to six months after the first edition.

### IN THE BEGINNING

The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences is the Prize-Awarding Institution for the Nobel Prize in Physics and in Chemistry. In 1983 the RSAS began producing posters describing the science behind the prizes in a popular way. The Nobel Prizes in Physics and Chemistry are famous in society and not only within the science community. By making these posters it became possible to reach new groups and hopefully make them interested in science and technology and the research behind the prizes.



English Nobel poster for chemistry 2004.



Chinese version of the Chemistry poster 2004.

In the beginning, the posters were only printed in Swedish and English and were distributed to schools, libraries and universities, mostly in Sweden. The aim was to mix easily accessible texts and illustrations so that the posters could be used, for example, in teaching. In 1995 The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences made an agreement with the Swedish car manufacturer

Volvo. The agreement made it possible to translate the posters into many different languages so that the posters could be spread internationally. The posters for the 2004 Prize were translated into Chinese, Japanese, Croatian, German, French, Spanish, Russian, Dutch and Hebrew. The posters are designed to fit pupils studying physics and chemistry in upper secondary school but the target audience is the general public..

#### THE SCIENCE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

The posters are produced by a working team consisting of staff from the Public Relations department at RSAS, members of the Nobel committees for Physics and Chemistry and two designers. One group for each subject. The committee members stand for the scientific content and the PR department and designers for the layout and that the text are adapted for the general public.

The prize quotes are the base of both posters, the quotes are written by the Nobel committees. The texts and illustrations on the posters evolves around the discovery, invention or improvement made by the Laureate/Laureates. One important step in making the posters are finding a good headline. The headline must be simple and not too scientific. There is also a desire to make the poster a bit like a smorgasbord – many things to read about, but you don't have to read all at once. You should be able to go back and find new things to read about. The illustrations are naturally very important and much work is done to make them both beautiful and informative.

#### DISTRIBUTION

It is not possible for the Academy itself to spread the posters to school classes, laboratories, teachers etc in countries throughout the world. The RSAS realised that the distribution was best handled by organisations in every country respectively. So organisations such as Universities, Physics- and Chemistry Societies and other non-profit organisations were contacted. The offer was that they order 3000 or more posters in a language of their choice and undertake to spread the posters within their countries. The distributor pay only for the distribution within their country! For this they get their logotype printed at the bottom of the poster. The sponsor's logo is printed on all sponsored posters.

The second edition of the Nobel posters for Physics and Chemistry are now printed in 240 000 copies. The interest of receiving the posters or becoming a distributor is great. The posters are found in many laboratories, schools and libraries all over the world. Some countries, for example India, do unfortunately not have any distributors yet. But the RSAS hope to find contacts in countries that are not yet represented. The fact that web versions of the posters can be found on the Internet has not decreased the interest for the printed posters.

#### POSTERS AND GAMES ON THE INTERNET

The posters are also distributed on the Internet. Web adapted versions of the posters can be found at [www.Nobelprize.org](http://www.Nobelprize.org). At the same website many different educational games can be found. The web adapted versions of the posters and the games are only distributed in English. All games are based on discoveries that were awarded the Nobel Prize and they are produced by personnel at the [Nobelprize.org](http://Nobelprize.org). The RSAS have published information about the posters and how to become at distributor at [www.kva.se](http://www.kva.se).

## EVALUATION

The RSAS have done evaluations on the distributors views on the posters. They have all been very positive, but there have been wishes that the posters should have more illustrations and less and shorter texts and the RSAS try to accommodate that.

## FUTURE

In the future RSAS hope to increase the second edition of the Nobel posters and by doing so also contribute to increase the interest and knowledge of science in society.

## REFERENCES

[www.kva.se](http://www.kva.se)

[www.nobelprize.org](http://www.nobelprize.org)