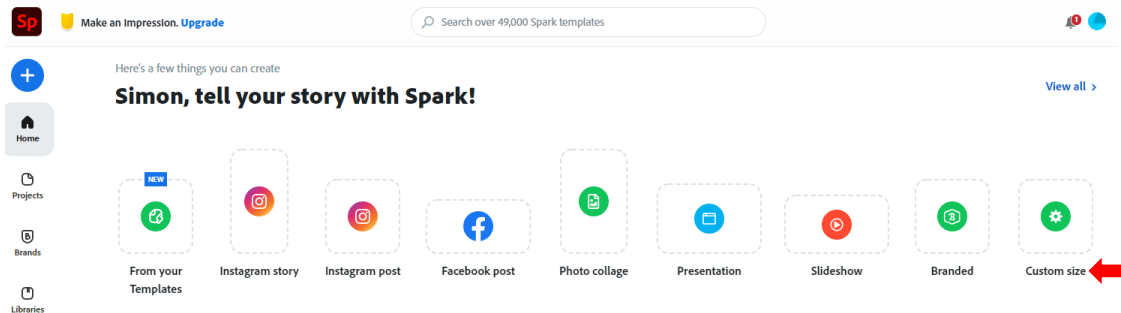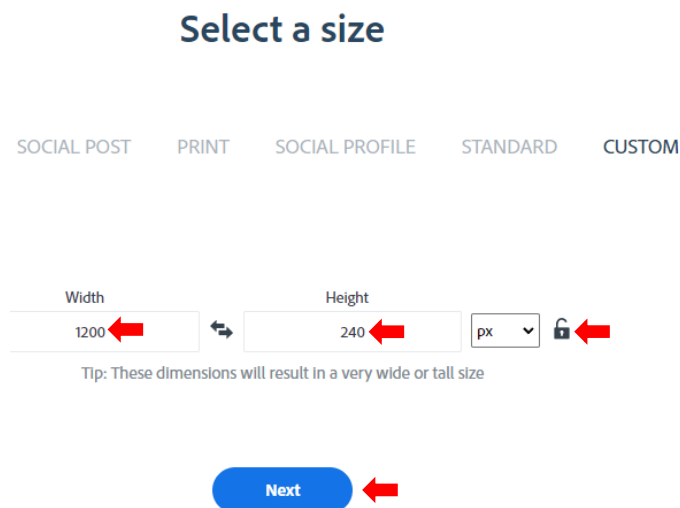# How to make a banner in Adobe Spark

**Access Adobe Spark:** Open your default web browser and open the **Adobe Spark** website (https://spark.adobe.com/) – You will need to sign in with your university credentials or register a new account if you have not yet signed up with the Adobe Creative Cloud.
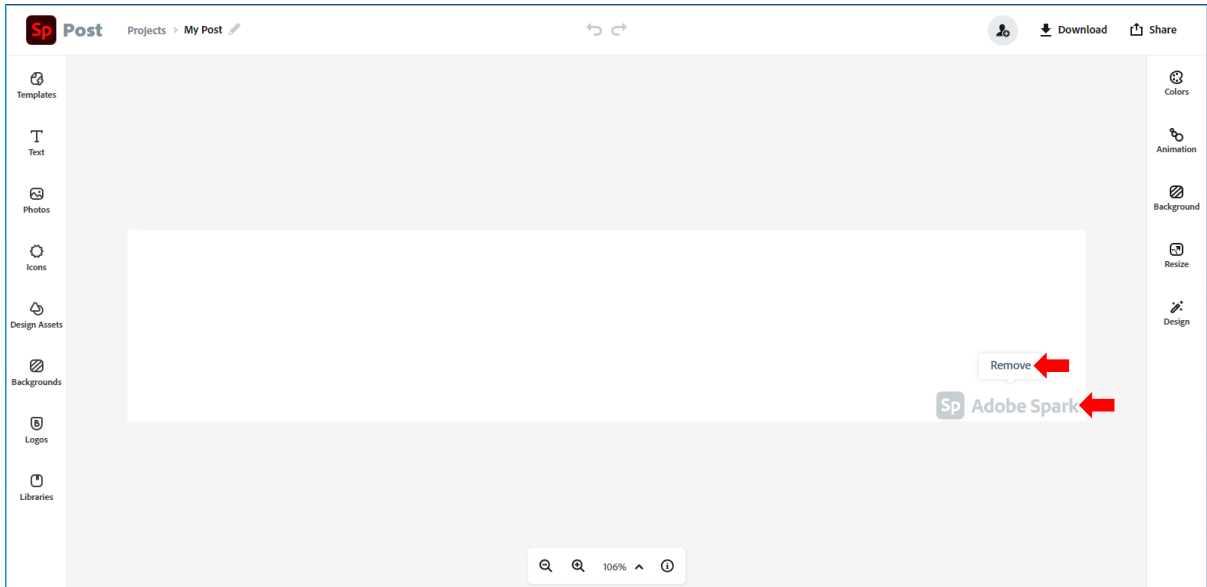
Once you are logged into the Adobe Spark website, you can select the Custom Size project.



You will need to set the dimensions of the banner correctly so that Blackboard Ultra will be able to accept and utilise the banner once complete. The size that the new Blackboard Ultra Banner facility accepts is 1200 x 240 pixels. If you click on the padlock this will lock the banner size so you can't change it once created. This is quite useful to stop you accidentally changing the dimensions later. Once the options have been set click **Next**.
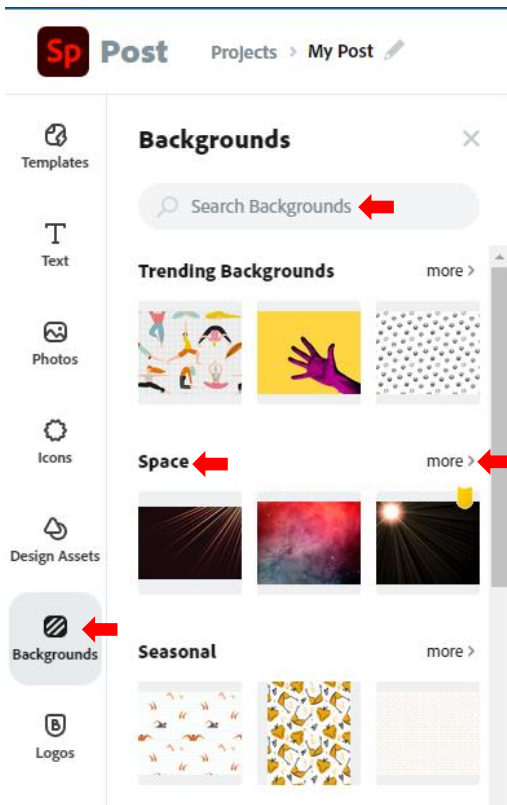


Once the banner image holder has loaded, the first thing to do is remove the **Adobe Spark** logo from the bottom right corner. Click on this logo and select **Remove**. You may be asked if you want to remove this as a one off or for all future projects, select the one-off option to continue (you me be presented with a pop-up advert, this can be ignored and closed).

You are now ready to design your Blackboard Ultra banner!  There are now several options that are available to you to think about how you will design and create your banner.

**Explore banner ideas and inspiration:**  Click on the **Backgrounds** button to view the library of background images that are organised by category, each category will show a sample of images which can be expanded by clicking on the **More** link. There is also a search facility if you are looking for a specific type of image.
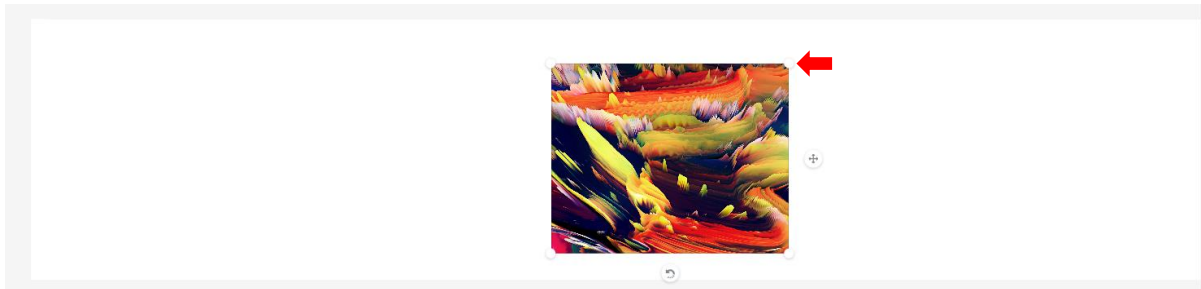


Think of the intention behind your banner, then choose a template that resonates with your vision and start customising.
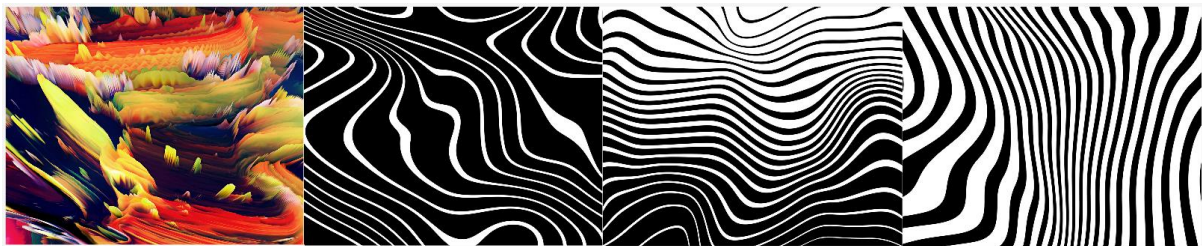
Some images within this section will only be available to premium members so cannot be used, these are marked with a yellow shield as shown below.
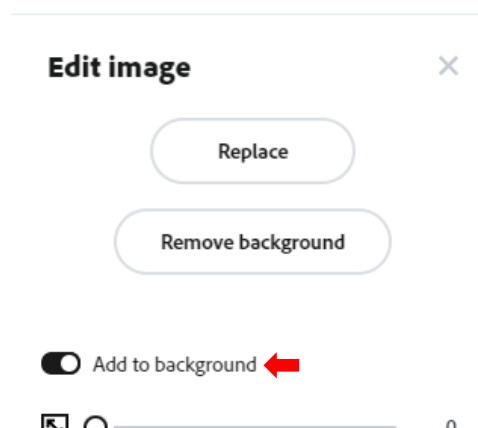


Once an image has been inserted you may need to resize the image to fit the dimensions of your custom banner, use the image handles in the corners of the image to drag out the required size (to either fill the whole 1200 x 240 banner or fit part if you intend to include multiple images), this might also mean that parts of the image are no longer visible.
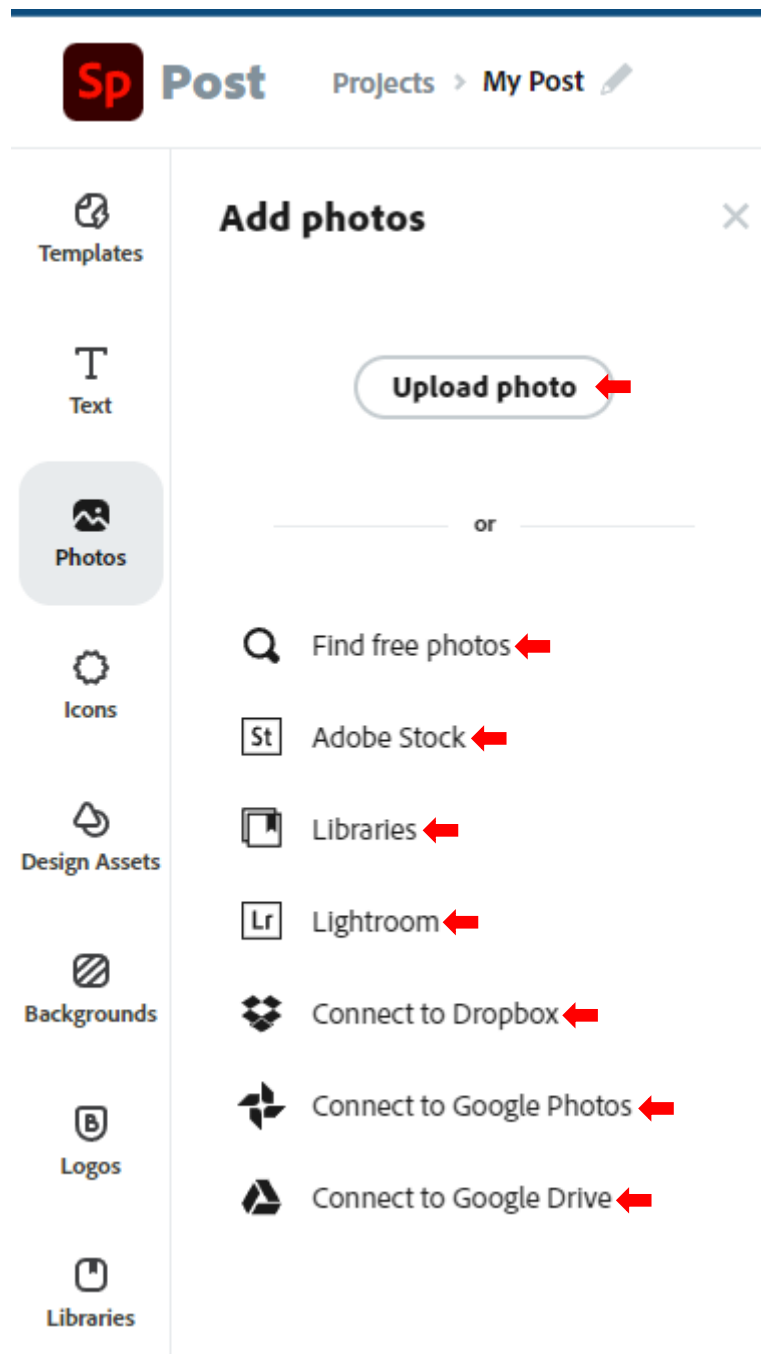


Be mindful of the choice of image as some may create accessibility issues when adding text (covered in a later part of this tutorial).



There is also an option to add a specific photo as a background image.  Click on the **Add to background** slider to set this.
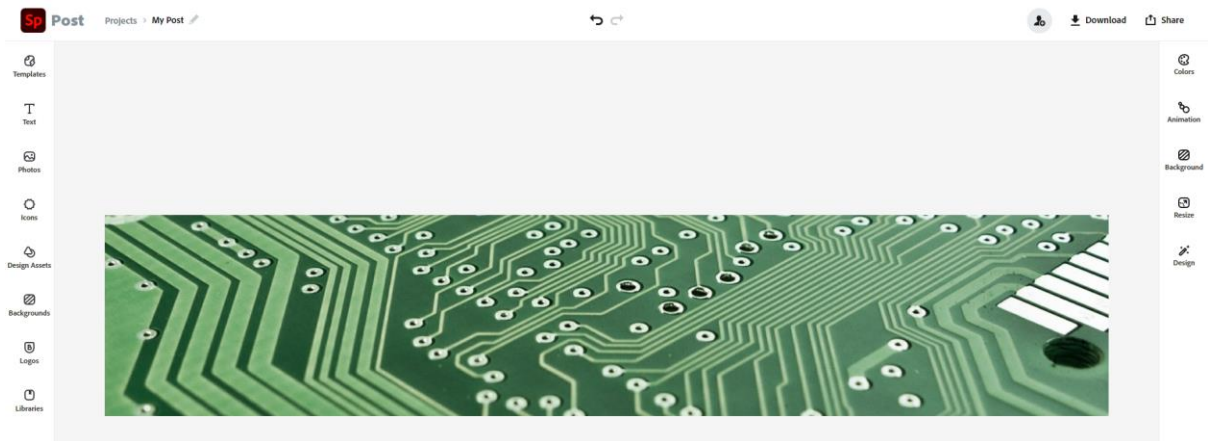


Another option is to upload your own images as this might give a more personalised feel to the banner and your module in Blackboard Ultra. To upload your own photos, click on the **Upload Photo button.**

There are also several other options here that you might want to explore including:
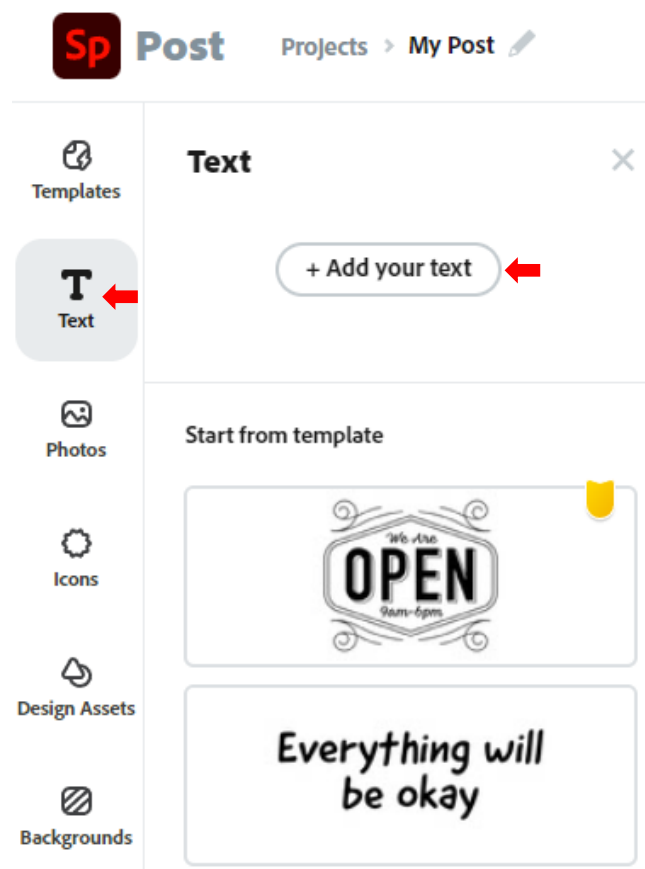
- Search for royalty free photos
- Adobe stock photos
- Libraries
- Importing from Adobe Lightroom
- Importing from Dropbox
- Connecting to Google Photos
- Connecting to Google Drive

Like above once the image has been inserted you might need to resize to fill the banner

**Bring your banner to life with imagery and typography:** Once you are happy with the images on your banner, you can customize your banner with fonts, and text. Strike a perfect balance of text and images to communicate your messaging based on where you plan to share your banner.
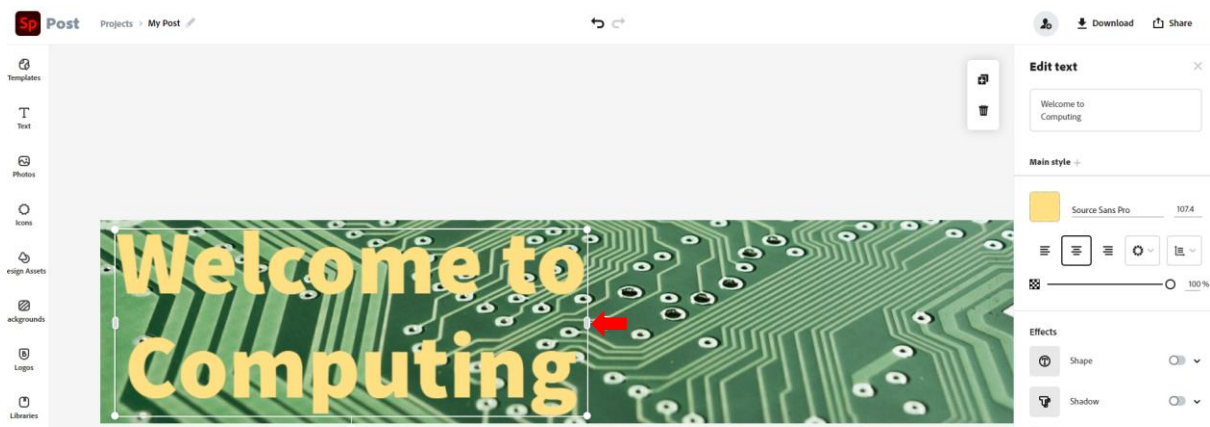
To add text to your banner, select the text option from the Spark menu.

You can click on the + Add your text button and start typing the required text into the **Edit text** menu to the right of the screen.  Within this editor you can control:
- Font type
- Font Colour
- Font Alignment
- Effects
  - Shape
  - Shadow
  - Outline

Once you have added your text you can move the inserted text within your banner, altering the size of the text box will reshape the text over additional lines or one single line.



Remember that although there is no right or wrong with creating your banner colours and image usage, it should keep in mind the impact our design may have on the accessibility of the Ultra site.

There is a multitude of further options that can be explored to produce a higher quality product, too many to cover in this brief guide.  Why not explore the functionality that is available within Spark?

**Publish and share your banner:**  Once you are happy with the banner that you have created you can instantly download the banner design to your device and share it with your audiences.  You can also revisit your project in the future to make updated versions.



To download the banner as an image, click on the Download option located in the top right of the screen and select which image format you prefer.  Blackboard supports banner image formats of .PNG and .JPG.