

# Poster Guidelines

## I. Poster Display Boards:

- The display board provided for the poster presentations are 4 feet tall and 8 feet wide. It is recommended that your poster is sized slightly smaller than this (e.g., 3 feet x 6 feet).
- The display boards are velcro and pushpin compatible. Velcro and pushpins **will not** be provided by the conference. ***It is the resident's responsibility to bring appropriate material for hanging their posters.***

## II. General Guidelines for Creating an Effective Poster

- The content of a scientific poster is similar to the content of a platform presentation.
- Planning and organization of your work will help to determine what content to include and a logical sequence for displaying your work. A short introduction, the project objective, methods, results, discussion/implications, references, and acknowledgements are common headings used on scientific posters.
- An effective poster will provide a visual communication of the research project. It shows, not tells. Use graphs, charts, table as a tool for communicating key information. Make the text easy to read and understand.
- Review the content of your poster with your residency preceptor and peers before the final version is submitted for printing. Their feedback will help you determine if changes are needed.
- Don't forget the obvious - use spell check!

## III. Poster content:

### 1. Title

- a. The poster title is first point of contact with audience and should quickly orient the audience to the subject and purpose.
- b. Try and keep the title on one line (max of 2 lines).
- c. Format the title by using sentence case. Do not use title case or all caps as these are more difficult to read.
- d. Make sure that the type is large enough to be read from 15-20 feet away.

### 2. Authors and Affiliation

- a. Located below the title in a smaller font size than the title.
- b. Add affiliations below the authors.

### 3. Introduction/ Background

- a. The Introduction presents the background and the purpose of the research.
- b. Use bulleted phrases or short, easy to read sentences. **Do not include your entire abstract.**
- c. A hypothesis can be included in the introduction.

### 4. Objectives

- a. State the purpose or hypothesis of your project.
- b. Include secondary objectives if appropriate.

## **5. Materials / Methods / Study Design**

- a. The Methods section should address the following areas:
  - i. Study design
  - ii. Number of patients
  - iii. Inclusion/exclusion criteria
  - iv. Data elements collected
  - v. Outcome variables and how they were measured
  - vi. Method of statistical analysis.
- b. Data analysis

## **6. Results**

- a. Provide a summary of important results, not every result possible.
- b. Include Figures / Tables
  - i. Clear, useful visuals
  - ii. Short, clear legends
  - iii. Explain abbreviations
- c. Make sure your results relate to your research objectives.

## **7. Conclusions / Discussion**

- a. Address the significance of the results.
- b. Convey the implications- don't just restate the results.
- c. Make sure all presented data supports your conclusion(s).

## **8. Author contact information**

## **9. Acknowledgements / Disclosures**

- a. Financial
- b. Work related

## **10. Assessment Question**

## **11. References (optional)**

# **IV. Poster Design (PowerPoint has a number of poster templates)**

## **1. Organization:**

- a. The flow of your poster should be the way we read in English-from top left to bottom right.
- b. Organize information in 3 to 5 columns.
- c. Headings for each section help move readers through your poster: e.g. introduction, methods, results, discussion, references, and acknowledgements are common headings.
- d. Maintain consistency throughout your poster. Section headings should be in the same font and point size, columns should be in the same or complementary widths.

## **2. Selecting a font type:**

- a. Maintain consistency between sections.
- b. Serif fonts are easier to read- help the guide eye, I vs. l issue.
- c. Best: Times New Roman, Book Antiqua, Garamond, Century Schoolbook
- d. Okay: Arial, Microsoft Sans Serif, Helvetica

- e. Bad: Broadway, Courier, Brush Script, Chiller, Old English Text, Harrington

### 3. Appropriate font size- not too big, not too small

- a. ALL CAPTITALS ARE DIFFICULT TO READ
- b. The following are general suggestions for text size:
  - i. Title — 96 pt
  - ii. Authors — 72 pt
  - iii. Affiliations — 36-48 pt
  - iv. Section Headings — 36 pt
  - v. Body text — 24 pt
  - vi. Acknowledgements — 18 pt

### 4. Condense everything

- a. Minimize text; keep it simple and direct. Posters with less than 800 words are ideal. **Tip:** *To view your word count in PowerPoint, click the File menu, select Properties, and then click the Statistics tab*
- b. Use short, easy to understand words

### 5. Color choices

- a. Attract attention, too much may distract
- b. Use color with deliberation. Choose 2–3 colors that complement each other. Any more than three risks looking unprofessional.
- c. Avoid: fluorescent, rainbows, fancy stuff like tie-dye, dots, stripes, etc.
- d. Contrast is good- avoid dark on dark or light on light
- e. If fading background, go light-lighter or dark-darker, not light-dark (affected by text color)

### 6. Pictures, figures and tables

- a. Remember, less is better. Ask yourself, do your charts, tables, graphs, photos or other graphic elements only include the data or images that truly support or enhance your message?
- b. If you include a photograph, add a thin gray or black border to make the photograph more visually appealing.
- c. Ensure that your text boxes, charts, graphs, photos, etc. are aligned.  
**Tip:** *In the PowerPoint toolbar, select the View tab and select Grid and Guides. Click on the grid and display guides to assist in aligning your poster.*
- d. Space is important in a poster: without it, your reader has no visual pauses to think. Make sure you have sufficient space between columns and figures.

## V. Poster Presentation:

- a. Be prepared to give an overview of your work in 3-5 minutes.
- b. Give people time to look at the poster; stand to one side but stay in the picture
- c. Speak to your viewers as you explain your poster.
- d. Point to specific parts of your poster whenever possible so that viewers can follow your project summary.
- e. Anticipate questions and rehearse answers.