

Guidelines for Posters

Historically, the poster exhibition and reception has been the most well-attended session at the conference! The following guidelines are provided to assist in your poster preparations so that you can attract more viewers, engage in more conversation, and leave with a stronger network of peers. We ask that all poster presenters follow these guidelines and invite any questions that you may have.

SETUP

Poster presentations are held on the Wednesday evening of the conference, from 7:00 to 8:30 pm. Volunteers will be there to assist you.

SIZE AND SHAPE

All posters are displayed on a floor standing fabric-covered bulletin board with 2 presentations per side. The poster presentation boards are 8 feet WIDE by 4 feet HIGH and, allowing for the frame, **each presenter will have 44" x 44" for his or her display.**



INSIDER TIP

IF YOU HAVE BUSINESS CARDS, THIS IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO DISTRIBUTE THEM AS WELL.

WHAT TO BRING

Bring your poster and at least 50 copies of a one-page handout about your work (with your email or eLibrary link) to distribute. Consider uploading your poster presentation content into the AEA eLibrary and refer people there to learn more and/or access the full presentation content. You DO NOT need to bring the poster board itself or pins for attaching your poster components. AEA will supply the poster board and plenty of pins.

DESIGN

Poster presentations should be visually appealing. Your poster should be:

- **Readable** from at least six feet away, the smallest type should be approximately 24 pt with headings in 48 point or larger. The title can be 64 points or larger. Don't forget to include the names and affiliations of authors. Narrative text should be in a serif font (like Times New Roman, Baskerville, etc.). Headings, titles, graph labels and so forth can be in a sans serif font (like Verdana, Trebuchet, or something even more



INSIDER TIP

NOT SURE IF YOUR ELEMENTS ARE READABLE? PIN ONE TO A WALL AND BACK AWAY THREE STRIDES. CAN YOU READ THE HEADLINES AND SUBHEADINGS ENOUGH TO BE DRAWN IN TO READ MORE?



INSIDER TIP

READY TO PRINT? YOU'LL NEED TO HEAD TO A BUSINESS THAT CAN HANDLE LARGE PRINTING ON A SINGLE SHEET OF PAPER. CHECK YOUR LOCAL UNIVERSITY FIRST. OTHERWISE, PLACES LIKE FEDEX/KINKOS WILL PRINT AND EVEN SHIP YOUR POSTER.



FEEDBACK

PAST POSTER CONTEST JUDGES HAVE SAID "IT SHOULD STRIKE A BALANCE BETWEEN INCLUDING SUFFICIENT INFORMATION ABOUT THE TOPIC (E.G., INTERVENTION, POPULATION, METHODOLOGY, RESULTS) AND NOT BEING CLUTTERED. GRAPHICS, WHENEVER POSSIBLE, HELP."

interesting). Also consider breaking up large paragraphs into smaller chunks, which are more approachable.

- **On one sheet** of large 3'8" by 3'8" paper. Do not post multiple 8.5"x11" pages of a written paper (make them available for distribution via the eLibrary). Instead focus on the key elements.
- **Do not require electricity.** You may not use a computer as part of your display. There is not flat space and no electricity - all posters are on standing boards.
- **Understandable**, focusing on the 'big picture' points and with a minimum of jargon. Past evaluations have clearly indicated that one frustration, in particular for new and international attendees, is the use of 'insider' language, acronyms, and abbreviations that make it difficult to comprehend a presentation.
- Logically organized into sections with text and graphics that flow from one part to the next. One way to maintain organization is to leave plenty of empty space between sections. Keep the poster uncluttered.
- **To the point** with elements that highlight your work. You have a brief period of time to catch attendees' attention. Emphasize the most important components of your work in a clear and visually appealing way. Those who share your interests will stop and learn more from you directly or from your handouts.
- **Colorful** with well-chosen graphics and judicious use of color to emphasize key points. Be careful about the use of colored text; it can be difficult to read unless printed with dark colored ink on a light colored background.
- **Visually engaging**, in that a passerby would be attracted to the poster by use of large, clear graphs or diagrams, photographs, or other images directly related to your work. Use your own photos or locate some online at [professional stock photo sites](#). Even in the absence of pictures, data visualization and color blocks behind key text are two simple ways to increase visual engagement.
- **Conversational in nature.** The poster's text should be framed in a language that is appropriate for a walking, interested reader. The type of language suitable for a journal article can be difficult to digest in a poster setting.
- **Succinct text** with references or URLs removed from the poster and placed on a supplementary handout. The title should be able to be read at a glance.



FEEDBACK

PAST POSTER CONTENT JUDGES HAVE SAID GREAT POSTERS ARE “EASILY READABLE, VERY VISUAL. REALLY LIKE A MAGAZINE STYLE FORMAT WITH DOMINANT PHOTOS/ARTWORK AND NICE FONTS THAT ARE EASY ON THE EYE, NOT CLUTTERED OR CRAMPED”



INSIDER TIP

SOME PEOPLE ARE MORE SHY THAN OTHERS AND MAY WALK BY AND JUST PICK UP YOUR HANDOUTS OR CARD. A FRIENDLY “WELCOME” OR “PLEASE DON’T HESITATE TO ASK ANY QUESTIONS” ON YOUR PART CAN SERVE AS A GREAT ICEBREAKER.

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING THE EXHIBITION:

Remain at your poster, ready to discuss your work. Individual attendees browse among the posters throughout the event and chat with those presenting work of interest to them. If you get caught up in conversation with someone, try to be aware of, and welcome, others who may approach your poster and have questions about your work.

POSTER COMPETITION:

There will be a prize for the best poster presentations. A panel of judges will review posters based on content AND presentation.

RESOURCES

- [Review great posters](#) – from AEA and others – to see what works in action.
- Review the commentary at [Better Posters](#) for some insight about what distinguishes average posters from the excellent.
- Just getting started? Take 10 minutes to watch this set of YouTube videos about [how to construct a poster](#) (one even shows [how to work within PowerPoint](#) and adjust an organizational template). Our guidelines supercede theirs, but these videos offer a great general approach to poster development.