

# Poster Presentation Guidelines

Poster presentations are a common method of presenting data at international and national meetings. The main advantage of a poster presentation is that it allows the author to interact directly with interested members of the audience. The ability to present complex methodology and all of the data at one time allows for the presentation of complex and difficult material. This format can be extremely useful for the author to gain information from the audience.

Poster presentations are most appropriate when:

- (a) Material presented is complex
- (b) Subject matter is highly specialised catering to a smaller proportion of the audience
- (c) Feedback from informed members of the audience is desired
- (d) Comparisons between studies on the same topic are desired

Poster presentations are not an inferior form of presentation compared to an oral communication.

## GENERAL POINTS ABOUT POSTERS

### 1. How to make a successful poster

A successful poster should be self-explanatory and communicate its message without requiring the author to explain the material. Simple diagrams will frequently explain more than reams of text. Bear in mind that your poster will be viewed from distances of 1 metre or more. Lettering should be at least 10 – 15 mm high and in bold type. Charts, drawings, etc., should be similar to slides, but more heavily drawn and without unnecessary details. Simplicity is the key. Brief captions, clear tables, with fewer rather than greater numbers of lines of data. The sequence of the poster should flow logically of the board.

Most posters can be successfully divided into the following sections:

- ❖ a brief introduction and statement of aims
- ❖ methodology
- ❖ results
- ❖ statements of conclusion

The message the author wants the audience to carry away should be clear. Posters ideally should not try to convey more than one main message.

### 2. Guide for preparation of posters

- (a) Initial Sketch: Plan your poster early. Focus your attention on a few key points. Try various styles of data presentation to achieve clarity and simplicity. Does the use of colour help? What needs to be expressed in words? Suggest headlines and text topics.
- (b) Rough Layout: Enlarge your best initial sketch, keeping the dimensions in proportion to the final poster. Ideally, the rough layout should be full size. A blackboard is a convenient place to work. Print the title and headlines. Indicate text by horizontal lines. Draw rough graphs and tables. This will give you a good idea of proportions and balance. If you are working with an artist, show him/her the poster layout. Ask associates for comments. This is still an experimental stage.

- (c) Final Layout: The artwork is complete. The text and tables are typed, but not necessarily enlarged to full size. Now ask, is the message clear? Do the important points stand out? Is there balance between words and illustrations? Is there spatial balance? Is the pathway through the poster clear?

- (d) Balance: The figures and tables ought to cover slightly more than 50% of the poster area. If you have a few illustrations, make them large. Do not omit the text, but make it brief. The poster should be understandable without oral explanation.

- (e) Typography: Avoid abbreviations, acronyms and jargon. Use a consistent style throughout. If working without an artist, a 24 point Helvetica printed onto A4 sheets and enlarged to A3 size is acceptable.

- (f) Movement: The movement (pathway) of the eye over the poster ought to be naturally down the columns or along the rows. Numbering the panels may be helpful. Arrows, hands, numbers and letters all may be useful. Size attracts attention.

- (g) Simplicity: The temptation to overload the poster should be resisted. More material may mean less communication. Ask yourself, what do I want the viewer to remember?

- (h) Prepare a heading for your poster that runs most of the width of the sheet. Include title, authors and affiliations. Lettering for the title should be approximately 3-4cms in height.

- (i) PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOUR POSTER DOES NOT EXCEED 1.6 M WIDE BY 1 M HIGH. This is the maximum size.

### 3. Display Times

At the conference, each poster board is numbered sequentially. Please note the board number assigned to your poster (advised by email prior to the meeting) and put your poster on this board.

Posters must be put up and taken down on the day on which you are presenting.

Authors should stand by their posters to answer questions from delegates at the times designated in the program.