

RECOMMENDATIONS ON DESIGNING YOUR POSTER(S)

Posters are a special type of presentation. When well designed, they are not simply journal papers pasted onto boards. Nor are they mounted sets of presentation visuals. Rather, posters, when effectively designed, are something in between.

The purpose of scientific posters is to present work to an audience who is walking through a hallway or exhibit. Often the audience has distractions of noise and movement from other people. Given those distractions, a journal article tacked onto a board fails as an effective poster because the audience cannot concentrate for a time long enough to read through the paper. In fact, given the distractions that the audience faces, many in the audience will not even bother trying to read a journal article tacked onto a board. We try to present some general guidelines that would apply to most situations.

The title of an effective poster should quickly orient the audience. Make the title the most prominent block of text on the poster (either centre or left justify at the top). Do *not* typeset the title in all capital letters (such text is difficult to read).

The poster should quickly orient the audience to the subject and purpose. One good test is whether the audience recognizes the subject and purpose within 20 seconds of seeing the poster. Usually, a poster accomplishes this goal with a well-crafted title and with supporting images. Also, make sure that the type is large enough to be read and that enough contrast exists between the colour of the type and poster's background.

Specific sections such as the results should be easy to locate on the poster. Once readers recognize what the work is, they decide how much energy to invest into the poster. For instance, many will read only the motivation for the work, the objectives (or goals) of the work, and then the final results. Others, who have a deep interest in the topic, will try to read the poster from beginning to end. Given these different approaches to reading posters, another characteristic of an effective poster is that specific sections are easy to locate.

Individual sections of a poster should be designed so that they can be quickly read. Given the distractions that occur while reading posters in a symposium, the poster should not contain large blocks of text. Neither should the poster contain long sentences. If possible, the sections should rely on images: photographs, drawings, and graphs.

Here are some short tips for preparing and presenting a poster:

- Keep the presentation well organized and uncluttered.
- Use plenty of white space
- Use effective graphics as much as possible
- Use large font for all text. Should be clearly readable from a few feet/1-2m away.
- Use very large font for heading (Title and Author)-should be readable from many feet/more meters away

Typography and layout recommendations can be found in the poster template.

PRESENTING YOUR POSTER(S)

You are expected to be near your poster during your poster session. Stand to side of the poster, so that you're not blocking it. Be prepared to answer questions, but don't interrupt when someone is reading your poster. Do not leave your poster unattended for a long time during your session. If it is not already on the poster, you can put a photo and/or quick contact information of the presenting author on the poster board so an interested reader can initiate discussion with you also some other time during the conference.