Best Practices for Designing a Scientific Poster

Content

A poster is a visual presentation of your research or clinical project. Use schematic diagrams, graphs, tables and other strategies to direct the visual attention of the viewer, rather than explaining it using text as you would in a journal article.

A poster addresses one central question. State the question or hypothesis clearly in the poster and use your presentation to provide a clear and explicit take-home message. Posters usually have a similar structure to a research paper or journal article: an abstract, introduction (i.e., brief rationale or review of relevant research), methods section, results section, and a conclusion or summary. If your poster is more clinically oriented, you may elect to use a different format, but breaking things down into clear sections with headings will help your colleagues understand your poster easily and quickly.

In the busy and crowded environment of a poster session, most people do not have the ability to read and process long sections of text. Therefore, keep text to the bare essentials and stick to the most important ideas. You can convey details via discussion when you are standing by your poster.

Format

- Use bullet points to simplify sections like the introduction and conclusions.
- Use large type, such as 36-point type for section headings, and 24-point type for text. Never use type smaller than 18-point.

This is 18-point type.

- Make effective use of underlines and boldface.
- Use graphs and figures whenever possible.
- Make your poster visually pleasing and attractive.
- Include your name and title in a large font on your poster so attendees can easily locate your abstract.

We look forward to seeing your poster!