

Poster Tips

A conference poster is an excellent way of conveying scientific findings which has some advantages over oral presentations and is increasingly being recognised as being of approximately equivalent contribution to a good conference as oral presentations.

Although your poster may be based on a published (or about to be published) paper, the form of presentation is totally different. Too many posters contain far too much information to be read in their entirety. A poster should concentrate on the essentials and present them in a visually attractive way, not explain them in detail. Thus excellent images and a concise, meaningful title are required to grab the reader's attention. Supplementary information can be given in conversation or in A4 handouts (an excellent way of advertising your work and expanding on it).

Some tips for creating a poster follow.

- Viewers should not have to spend more than 5-7 minutes reading through text on a poster.
- Show a clear title, author and funding source.
- A conference poster is itself an abstract, so don't create an abstract of an abstract.
- References or detailed methods, are not really necessary; these can be covered in a hand-out sheet. They should not take up valuable space on your poster.
- Bullet points, one line per idea or item, are usually preferable to prose.
- Keep the typography simple and be consistent with the font styles, size and look of graphs.
- The font size should be 24 point or larger (large enough to be read from 1.5 metres distance). poster reduced to A4 size should still be easily readable, otherwise, the type is too small and there is probably too much text.
- The title should normally be 80 point or larger.
- Accompany your poster with A4 handouts of the poster – ideally with the abstract or supplementary material, such as methodological detail, on the reverse side.
- For a standard AO size poster, limit your words to 500 maximum, and aim for only 150 words. You may be constrained by the conference organiser's prescription (which should be closely adhered to), but if not, A1 or A0.
- Be careful to select appropriate images as they are worth a thousand words. All photos used in posters must be original high quality jpgs/tiffs or bmps.