

Guide to Designing & Printing a Research Poster

Role of the poster presenter:

- Provide a “guided tour” through the poster
- Answer questions about the research

Ways of Making a Poster

- Design and print a large-scale poster (required dimensions: 36” high, 48” wide)
- Software options: PowerPoint (easiest method), Adobe Illustrator, others
- Matte board (traditional way of making a poster):
 - Print out segments on a regular printer and cut/paste them onto matte board
 - Can use any software program (MS Word, PowerPoint, etc.)

What a poster should include:

- Title: project title
- Authors: your name, names of collaborators, institutions
- Purpose (or Objectives or Introduction): State the problem or idea to be discussed
- Methods: Briefly describe the manner in which the study or problem was investigated
- Results or Findings: Briefly describe findings.
- Summary/conclusions: State conclusion or solutions to problems or ideas. Evaluate the relevance of this study to other persons involved in transplantation
- Acknowledgments: Include any sources of funding

How to make a full-size poster using PowerPoint:

- Start PowerPoint and open “new presentation”
- From the menu bar, select File > Page setup.
- In the box that appears, the first section is “size.”
- Next to the heading “slides sized for,” select “custom” from the pull-down menu
- Enter dimensions (width 48”, height 36”). Click “OK.”
- You will see this prompt: “the current page size exceeds the printable area of the paper in the printer.” It will offer three options: cancel, OK, and fix. Click “OK.”
- Set the slide layout to "blank." This is done differently in different versions of PowerPoint. If you are having difficulty, type "layout" in the PowerPoint help menu, and you will find instructions on how to create or change slide layouts.
- You can look at the poster at different sizes. Using a smaller size (e.g. 25%) will allow you to see the whole poster at once. Using a larger size (e.g. 75%) will allow you to read your text more easily.

- If you find it difficult to keep track of what you are doing, create a second PowerPoint file, with a regular sized PowerPoint slide presentation. You can make a series of slides and then copy the text boxes and pictures from those slides into the custom poster file.

Tips for Designing a Poster:

Keep it Simple!

- Arrange your material in a logical progression
- Arrange materials in columns
- Don't try to cram too much on to the poster

Selecting Colors and Fonts

- Use only 2 or 3 colors in the poster: too many colors can be distracting
- Select font colors and background colors to maximize contrast: A dark font on a light background is more easily read than vice versa
- Choose a font size and style that can be read easily from several feet away
- To emphasize a point, use bold or italics rather than underlining as underlined words can be more difficult to read

Text for the Poster

- To add text, click on "insert" on the menu bar and choose "text box." Then click where you want the text box to be, and start typing.
- Text boxes can be resized by clicking on a corner and dragging.
- Avoid large blocks of text and limit or eliminate jargon and technical terms
- Organize and reduce text by using subheadings, key words, bullet points
- A figure or graph often convey information more efficiently than paragraphs of text

Pictures and Photos

- Pictures and photos can be added with copy and paste commands or by importing.
- To import: select Insert on the menu bar, then choose "Picture" or "Photo" (depending on your version of PowerPoint). Select the option that includes the phrase "from file" and then select the file from wherever it is stored on your computer.
- Images should be at least 100dpi and the same size they will be on the poster. A resolution of 150dpi is ideal (smaller resolution will result in a pixelated image, and larger resolution will result in excessive file size).
- Save the image as a "JPG" as this format is easier to insert into PowerPoint.
- Pictures and photos can be edited using the picture tools. Access to the picture tools varies by PowerPoint version -- use the help menu if you are having difficulty finding the picture tools.
- Resizing: click on the corner of the picture/photo and slide the mouse to resize
- Cropping: choose the crop tool and crop from any side
- Framing: click on the picture to select it, then choose "colors and lines" or "border" (depending on which version of PowerPoint you are using).

Graphs

- Graphs can be added with copy and paste commands or by importing (same as pictures)
- Keep graphs simple
- Avoid “chart junk”: 3-d, shadowing, multiple grid lines, labeling every tick mark
- With multiple graphs, combine information (e.g. share axis labels, titles, legends)

How to make a PDF of your power point poster on a Macintosh computer

- With your poster file open, go to “file” on the menu bar and select “page setup.”
- In the size section, you should see the following:
- Slides sized for: custom
- Width: 48 inches
- Height: 36 inches
- Toward the bottom of that window, select “options.”
- From the “paper size” pull-down menu, select “manage custom sizes...”
- On the left, towards the bottom, click “+”
- The word “untitled” will appear in the list above. Double-click on this and rename it “poster.”
- Change the settings as follows:
- Page size: width 36 in, height 48 in
- NOTE: height and width are the reverse of the actual poster. This is because the roll of paper in the printer is 36 inches wide so the poster actually prints sideways.
- Printer margins: top 0 in, right 0 in, left 0 in, bottom 0 in
- Click “okay” in the three pop-up windows to close “page setup.”
- Go to “file” on the menu bar and select “print” (your poster should appear in the window in the correct orientation).
- At the bottom left corner, click on “pdf” and then “save as pdf.”
- Name the document with the “.pdf” extension.
- Open the resulting pdf file and make sure that everything looks the way you intended.

Additional Notes:

Arrangement

- Make your presentation as concise as possible by keeping the number of poster pieces to a minimum.
- Bring your own supply of push pins or Velcro to attach your poster to the display board.
- Do not use glue, tape or staples.



Content

- Include your names, address, and phone number on the poster so that conference participants can contact you for additional information.
- Posters should be readable from a distance of at least 3'. Use a block style font on a white, flat-finish (non-glossy) background.
- Charts, drawings, and illustrations should be kept as simple as possible. Avoid using fine lines or rules. Photographs should be processed with a matte or dull finish. Captions and labels should be brief and concise.
- Indicate by numbers/letters/arrows a preferred sequence that should be followed in studying your poster. The poster should be self-explanatory so that you are free to supplement information and discuss particular points raised by inquiry during poster sessions.

If you have additional questions regarding preparation of your poster, please contact: **abstracts@stsw.org**