

A Step-by-Step Guide to Designing a Conference Poster

Designing a conference poster based on a research or field project involves several steps. Here is a step-by-step guide to help you create an effective and visually appealing conference poster.

1 Understand the purpose and audience

- Define the purpose of your poster. Is it to present your research/project findings, generate discussion, or attract collaborators?
- Identify your target audience. Consider their background knowledge, interests, and expectations.

2 Gather content

- Compile all the necessary content for your poster, including the title, abstract, introduction, methods, results, conclusions, and references. You might also wish to present the literature review in some form, but so long as key texts on which you base your research are listed in your references then you could leave it at that.
- All this will take some time, as you will need to sift through the content, selecting only elements that will 'tell your story'. Make it clear on the poster where further information can be found, then you can focus on the main points.
- Organize your content in a logical and coherent manner, ensuring a clear flow of information.

3 Determine poster dimensions

- Check the guidelines or requirements provided by the conference or event where you plan to present your poster.
- Using the WEDC Conference PowerPoint template available from My WEDC, ensure that the size and orientation of your poster is landscape, 1920px wide and 1080px tall.

4 Create a layout

- Divide your poster into sections. A common layout consists of three columns: left, middle, and right, but you might want to design it in other ways.
- Allocate space for each section based on its importance and content volume.
- Consider the hierarchy of information by placing the most critical elements prominently.

5 Choose an attractive design

- Select an appropriate colour scheme that reflects your research and enhances readability. Stick to a limited colour palette for consistency.
- Use high-quality, relevant images: photos, charts, graphs, or diagrams to visually represent your data or concepts. Don't use them for the sake of it.
- Utilize fonts that are clear, legible, and distinguishable. Avoid using too many fonts and maintain consistency throughout the poster.

6 Create headers and titles

- Clearly label each section with concise headers and titles.
- Use larger font sizes for headings to make them stand out and guide readers through the content.

7 Write engaging text

- Keep the text on your poster concise and easy to understand. Use bullet points, short sentences, and clear language.
- Highlight key findings, important concepts, or main takeaways using bold or italicized text.
- Proofread your content thoroughly to ensure accuracy and correct any grammatical or spelling errors.

8 Visualize data

- Present your data using appropriate visuals you have identified in step 5.
- Ensure your visuals are labelled, properly scaled, and easy to interpret.
- Use colour and design elements to emphasize important data points or trends.

9 Include citations and references

- Include a section for references or citations to acknowledge the sources of your information.
- Use a consistent citation style and provide all necessary information for proper attribution.

10 Review and refine

- Step back and review your poster layout, design, and content for clarity and coherence.
- Seek feedback from colleagues, mentors, or peers to get different perspectives and suggestions for improvement.
- Make necessary revisions and refinements based on the feedback received.

11 Prepare for presentation

- Ensure that your poster is formatted correctly for online display.
- Double-check the dimensions, resolution, and file format required.
- Prepare a concise and engaging oral presentation to accompany your poster should you be invited to do so.

Remember, a well-designed conference poster effectively communicates your project and engages viewers. Keep the visual elements and content balanced, clear, and concise to make a strong impact.