How to make a research poster: The basics

University of Toronto Mississauga Library
What is a research poster?

Research posters summarize research to help publicize findings and generate discussion.

The poster is usually a mixture of brief text mixed with tables, graphs, pictures, and other presentation formats.

Concise information and attractive visualizations are essential to a well-designed poster.
Where do I begin?

Answer these three questions:

What is the most important finding from my research project?

How can I visually share my research with conference attendees?

What kind of oral information can I convey that will complement my poster?
What makes a good research poster?

Important information should be readable from about 10 feet away

Title is short and draws interest

Word count of text about 300 to 500 words maximum

Text is clear and to the point

Use of bullets, numbering, and headlines make it easy to read

White space between sections is essential
What makes a good research poster?

Effective use of graphics, color and fonts

Consistent and clean layout

Includes acknowledgments, your name and institutional affiliation

Less text = more attendees

Great visualizations = more attendees

Prepare additional oral notes for questions from attendees
What are some technical specifications?

48 x 36 inch or 36 x 24 dimensions

Title font size: approximately 85 pt font for the main title, 36 pt for subheadings, 24 pt for body text, and 18 pt for captions. No smaller than 18pt!

1 to 2 San-serif fonts only for readability

2 to 3 colours maximum, unless using some images, tables, and graphs

1 to 2 inch margin around the border of your poster

Do not justify text. Align left.
What tools can I use to make a research poster?

**PowerPoint:** A popular, easy-to-use option. It is part of Microsoft Office package. Available through your student Office 365 account.

**Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop and InDesign:** Feature-rich professional software that is good for posters including lots of high-resolution images. Available on some campus computers: https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/iits/services/computer-labs

Open Source Alternatives: **Impress** is the open source alternative to PowerPoint. **Inkscape** and **Gimp** are alternatives to Adobe products.
Where can I print my poster?

Print and Copy Centre

Davis Building, First Floor, Room DV1132

https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/hospitality,copy

Printing takes 2 business days

Can print 48 x 36 and 36 x 24 dimensions
Insert text here to summarize the most important information you want readers to know in 1 to 2 sentences. This is the space for your second sentence, if needed.

Caption of image, graph, table, or visualization

Insert text introducing your research, along with your methods, results, findings, analysis, and conclusions.

- These can be broken up into smaller sections or used as needed
- Information is structured and flows easily for the reader
- Top to bottom, left to right

There should be a progression of information so your reader, ideally, comes to the same conclusion as you have in your research.

Images and text can be structured in a different order.

Caption of image, graph, table, or visualization

Identify important discussion points and analysis.

- Don’t include all of your information
- Provide just enough information to engage readers

Caption of image, graph, table, or visualization

What are your final conclusions?

- Information needs to be digestible
- You want readers to remember your poster
- To remember your research
- And to remember you

Caption of image, graph, table, or visualization

Acknowledgements, funding and other sources go here.
Any questions?

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