Poster Preparation Guidelines

Poster Format

Dimensions: The maximum dimensions are 122cm x 122cm (4ft. by 4 ft). You may choose to have a square, vertical or horizontal format within that space. You will be sharing a fabric-covered bulletin board with other presenters. Each poster will occupy half of one side of a 4ft. by 8ft. (122cm x 244cm) board. **Please allow a minimum of three inches (7.62cm) to prevent overlapping of the adjacent poster.**

Poster materials: The poster may consist of sheets of 11" x 8 ½" or A4 paper assembled to form a larger composition. Recent advances in computer printing have made larger format printing more affordable, and presenters are welcome to use large format print-outs. Interesting effects may be achieved by printing onto textile or plastic surfaces, but legibility should be the primary concern. **The poster should not be too heavy to attach to a vertical fabric-covered surface with either pins or Velcro (hook and loop fastener).**

You may have a packet of handouts which hangs from the lower edge of the bulletin board (a Tyvek spun-bonded polyester envelope, for example). Otherwise, expect to remain within the boundaries of the board. Handouts may also be placed on the table below the poster.

The poster chairs will provide tacks or pins and emergency supplies, but prepare to bring any materials which you think you will need. There will be an area set aside for you to do last-minute preparation.

Poster Content

Recommended elements:

The text should include the following elements:

1. A title panel (or a banner headline), including the project title, the names of all authors, and their institutional affiliations (if applicable).

2. A small photo of the presenter/author, to permit attendees to identify the author in a crowded conference hall.

3. An introduction, including a short summary, which describes the scope of your project.

4. A description of your methodology, the rationale for your project, and the selection of procedures followed to create your results.

5. Results and observations, for example, survey findings, the experimental data, or the results of a conservation treatment.

6. Conclusions and recommendations for further study.

What is the message of your poster?

- Is it to announce a new discovery?
- Is it to describe a series of events?
- Is it to persuade the audience of the benefits of a procedure or material?
- Is it to compare different techniques or materials?

Poster Design

Conservation is a visual field, and the poster is a visual medium. The poster should not simply be a report pinned to the wall. Please keep the following design elements in mind when creating your poster:

Effective Use of Space: Make effective use of space by presenting the information that best illustrates the message you wish to send. For example, a line graph will show a trend over time, but a pie chart will show proportions within a single set. A proportional bar graph permits comparisons between proportions for several sets (no more than six sets of each). If you use a database program, you may try exchanging the values of the x and y axes to make a chart easier to read.

Photography: Use photographs. Specular illumination shows differences in surface reflectance. Raking light emphasizes surface texture and planar deformations. If x-rays, ultraviolet, infrared or other special techniques will help you to tell your story, include those as well. Effective photographs may show evidence of manufacture, illustrate differences between media, indicate the presence of damage or restorations, or other important information. Avoid using superfluous photos, which do not reinforce the message of your presentation.

Labeling: Labels for illustrations should be large enough to be legible from a 4 ft. (122cm) distance. Use arrows to avoid crowding too much text onto your illustrations.

Use Color: Do not forget to use color. Color should provide emphasis. Use contrast, complimentary colors, and primary colors to convey information in charts and diagrams. Do a trial printing to make sure that the colors look as good on paper as they do on your computer. If you don't have access to a color printer, use professional-quality colored pencils or felt-tipped pens to enhance your charts. If you have a series of charts, use consistent colors in each (e.g. red temperature lines and blue humidity lines).

Fonts: Keep fonts simple. Use no more than two fonts. The best fonts are sans serifs (e.g. Arial, Helvetica, Antique Olive, Tahoma, etc). You may choose a traditional serif font like Times or Palatino, but you may find that you must use a larger size in order to make your text legible. **The font should be legible from a 1.5m distance (about 5 ft.).** The title should be 72-84pt., and the body text should be **at least 18pt.** Using all capital letters does not enhance legibility. Bold type, underlining, or italics will emphasize text where needed.

Samples: If it is practical, you may wish to attach samples to your poster. As AIC cannot guarantee the security of your display, **please do not leave anything valuable or irreplaceable** with your poster when it is unattended.

Limit Text: Remember that your audience may be reading your poster in a crowded room during a coffee break. Resist the temptation to include too much text. Try to have no more than twenty lines per section.

Consider the "Flow": Think of your poster as a whole, not just a group of leaves of paper. Expect that your audience will read the poster from top to bottom and from left to right. Organize your content so that each section flows visually to the next, using color, line, shape, pattern and other applicable design elements. Numbering your headings, tables, and illustrations, helps the audience to follow your sequence.

Use of Negative Space: Negative space is a design element. Use the shape, location, and orientation of blank space to enhance the layout of your poster. Examine the layout of popular magazines to find ideas. (News and science magazines often have good combinations of design and content).

Proofreading: PROOFREAD YOUR TEXT. The "Spellcheck" function of your computer does not automatically know that you used deionized water instead of "demonized" water. Read your text aloud to detect such mistakes. Invite a colleague who knows little about your presentation to read and edit your text. The presenters are likely to project their own experiences onto their attempts to proofread reports of their own projects, missing possible errors or omissions.

Guidelines for posting your Poster on the AIC website

Due to file size restrictions we will only be posting PDFs with a maximum size of 5 MB.   Most of the programs used to create the posters (MS PowerPoint, MS Publisher, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, etc.) allow for images to be compressed and for the file to be saved as a pdf. If your file is small enough to e-mail, it can be sent after the Annual Meeting to Ruth Seyler at annualmeeting@conservation-us.org. If your file is too large to e-mail or you are unable to compress and pdf your file yourself, please let us know and we will discuss how we can assist you.