PSLLT 2012: GUIDELINES FOR POSTERS AND ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Preparing an Effective Poster

The key to preparing a good academic poster is to create a 'stand-alone' description of your work that is readable from 1 to 2 metres away. The most common beginner's error is to cram in too much information so that the audience is unable to grasp the major points. Resist the temptation to include excessive detail. You poster should highlight the most important aspects of your work and should not appear cluttered. Also, remember that posters are interactive. Part of the experience of delivering a poster is answering your readers' questions and hearing their (often very valuable) feedback.

Elements of a poster

Most research posters should have the following basic elements. All except the title should be labelled with a prominent heading. Of course, if the nature of your work does not lend itself to inclusion of one of these elements, you can omit it or modify it as needed.

- *Title and Authorship*
  Use a large font – at least 70 points for the title. Author names and affiliations should appear in a smaller font immediately below.
- *Background*
  Contextualize your work by providing a brief introduction. Do not write paragraphs; use point form.
- *Research Questions and/or Hypotheses*
  Provide no more than 2 or 3 of these to help the reader understand the purpose of your work.
- *Methods*
  Provide only the most essential information about your participants, materials, and procedures. Point form is best.
- *Results*
  Keep text to a minimum. Instead, make effective use of visual representations such as figures, photos, or diagrams. These should be large and eye-catching. Provide a short caption for each, label all axes, and provide legends as needed. Tables are usually **not** a good way to present your data in a poster. If they are really necessary, keep them simple, and use a large font.
- *Conclusions (and Recommendations for Future Work)*
  Point form is best. Do not write paragraphs.
- *References*
  Keep these to a bare minimum. You might choose to provide a reference list as a handout.
- *Acknowledgments*
  Be sure to identify funding sources and people who assisted you.

Layout

The maximum poster size for PSLLT is A0 format (technically 841 mm high × 1189 mm wide or 33.1 in high × 46.8 in. wide. It is acceptable to increase this to 36 in. x 48 in. if your printing service uses that format. Pins for mounting to tackboards will be provided.

It is common to prepare posters using MS Powerpoint; templates are freely available on the internet. While posters are usually printed on a single large sheet, you may prefer to use more than one smaller sheet. However, the total area of your displayed poster must not exceed the size limit described above. Sans serif fonts (e.g., Arial and Calibri) are strongly recommended because of their readability. Avoid serif fonts such as Times and Times New Roman. Use a minimum 40-point font size for the headings and a slightly smaller font for the rest of the text. A good poster always includes some "white space" to enhance readability. Resist the temptation to fill up every available area.

Presenting your poster

Be prepared to take your audience through your poster with a brief oral overview and to answer questions they might have. Practice your overview in advance. You may wish to prepare a handout (in either hard copy or electronic format on a website) for readers who are interested in your work. Display your email address in a prominent place, or include a qr code on the poster to provide contact information.

Delivering an Oral Presentation

Each oral presentation is assigned a time slot of 25 minutes, which includes 5 minutes for questions. In fairness to other presenters and attendees, you are not permitted to exceed the time limit. Introduce yourself to the chair before your session starts.

Structure your presentation into logical sections: introduction, research questions, results, conclusions and acknowledgments. When preparing your slides, keep text to a minimum and use a large font. Do not bore your audience by simply reading text that you display on the screen. (If viewers can read your presentation from the slides, what is the point of giving an oral presentation at all?) Instead, make effective use of figures, charts, images, and audio materials. Label these with appropriate captions. Slides should be uncluttered and designed so that the viewer can grasp the key points in a few seconds. Use point form whenever possible. Displaying slides packed with text, such as complex data tables and reference lists, is a very poor strategy for presentations.

Computers, LCD projectors, and audio amplification will be provided in the presentation rooms. You are welcome to use your own laptop computer; however, you must ensure that you have the appropriate VGA adapter. Should you require other equipment, you must notify us at least 2 weeks before the conference. A charge may apply.

You can expect an audience of up to 50 at your presentation. Paper handouts should be used only if they are absolutely necessary. Please consider offering a link to an electronic version of your handout instead of printing material that will be discarded immediately after the conference. You might also wish to display your contact information on the screen during the question period.