2017 Student Poster Competition

Suggestions and Guidelines for Producing a Poster

1) **Planning:** Plan a rough draft of your poster so that you can check the flow ideas and the balance of different elements at a glance.

2) **Content:** Break down your paper into its salient elements. A good way to do this is to summarize as much as possible using bulleted lists and headlines. Whenever an explanatory paragraph is needed, make sure that it is as clear and concise (e.g. six lines or less) because a lot of your text will need to be seen at a glance. Never mount the whole text of your paper as a poster. If you have a full paper of which the poster is a visual presentation, then leave printed copies of your paper to be taken by those who are interested.

3) **Visuals selection:** While a poster should be as visually and graphically rich as possible, using the bare minimum of these visuals is best. It is generally better to use a large visual than several small ones. Consider what is needed to communicate your ideas best. Can representational photos be used to illustrate points being made? Or do arbitrary visuals, like diagrams, flow charts, tables communicate your message better? Or both? If diagrams or charts have legends, make sure that they are very visible and use colours that will contrast well with the background.

4) **Visuals production:** Avoid hand drawn posters. A number of desktop publishing programs are available to the home user, like Microsoft Publisher for PC users, and Pages for Mac users

5) **Poster printing:** It is best is for the poster to be printed on one large sheet – this is the first step towards avoiding untidiness. Avoid printing separate sheets on your home or office inkjet printer or colour laser printer and collating them on a backdrop or on the board itself. Unfortunately there is a certain cost involved with printing one large poster presentation. However, you can save an electronic copy of your poster on a USB and have it printed by Staples, Kinkos, or another service provider. Having the poster laminated guards somewhat against tears, particularly since you need to travel with it.

6) **Fonts:** Remember that a poster is normally seen from about one metre away. This means that for normal paragraph text you cannot have fonts that are smaller than 18 pt. Logically, the title of the poster presentation, name of author(s), affiliation, etc. need to be much bigger, normally in that sequence in descending order. There is no problem with using fonts as large as 60 pt for the title. The main point is that the text needs to be visible from a distance. Sans serif type faces (like Arial and Helvetica) are more visible, so best suited for titles and headlines, while serif type faces (like Times and Palatino) are more legible, so better for body text. But make sure you do not use more than a maximum of two typefaces per poster (one font for headlines, one font for body text).

7) **Background:** Contrast is of the essence for the background of the poster – as a result, avoid white or light backgrounds where possible. If your visuals are very colourful, they need to stand out against a contrastive background. Text is best left black, though you can be a little creative with the titles when it comes to colours.

8) **Images:** Images need to be of a high enough resolution to print well at the poster's final size. For this reason, it is recommended that if possible, generate your own images (diagrams and charts) and take photos yourselves with a good sized megapixel digital camera. Anything taken off the Internet is likely to be broken and pixelated.

9) **Sequence of information:** Your ideas should be presented in a very clear sequence. Do not overdo the boxes and frames, but they can help you make the main points of your argument clearer. Work top to bottom, left to right. The larger the element in your poster, the more of a focal point it is. Make sure that it leads logically to the step that follows it. Your conclusions should be very clearly marked at the bottom, right hand corner of your poster.

10) **Takeaways:** Having small (8.5 in x 11 in) versions of your poster close to the poster itself is useful for those who are interested to take a reminder of your work with them. Remember, this is where the poster is superior to the paper — it can be read at a glance and easily remembered.

Source: International Conference on Information Communication Technologies in Education. (2012). Producing a Poster [Suggestions and Guidelines]. Retrieved from http://www.icicte.org/ICICTE2012 poster guidelines.pdf