

# Intro to Posters and presenting them

Alexander van der Horst

---

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

---

WASHINGTON, DC

CCAS Research Showcase – Poster Workshop  
22 March 2024

# Introduction to Poster Presentations

- Poster = visual medium
- Poster objective = communication
- Posters are advertisements of research, scholarship, etc.
  - More than providing information or a conversation starter
  - Should be visually attractive / appealing from a distance
- Key ingredient = preparation (for poster and presentation)
- Limitation is important (i.e., less is more)
  - Important to have a clear message
- Enjoy the presentation
  - Enthusiastic presenter → enthusiastic audience

# Preparation for Poster Presentations

- Know who is in the audience
  - What do they already know?
  - What would they be interested to learn?
- Determine the take-away point of the poster and presentation
  - What do you want the audience to remember?
- Prepare talking points (not a fixed script) for a short presentation
  - Prepare for a broad audience and interruptions
  - Time your presentation when you practice
- Check that your poster is easily readable
  - Print out scaled to Letter size to check readability
- Show your poster to others and practice your presentation
  - Ask for feedback on all aspects of the poster and presentation
  - Include a round of questions while practicing your presentation

# Poster Content & Structure

- Title, authors and affiliations
  - Include logo(s) and possibly author picture
- Context / motivation
  - Can include some references
- Methodology / framework
  - Can include some references
- Results / findings (can be preliminary / anticipated)
- Discussion (can include future work for you or the field)
- Conclusions
- Acknowledgements & reference list
  - Can be in smaller font
- *Do not include the submitted abstract on the poster*

# Poster Technicalities

- Poster creation options: Powerpoint, Google Slides, Canva, etc.
  - Can use GW or another template, or create your own
  - Start with the appropriate dimensions (e.g., 4x3 or 3x4 feet)
- Start by sketching a design / lay-out
  - Think about all main design and content elements
- Aim for a balance between text and visuals
  - Use bullet points instead of paragraphs
  - Consider diagrams to describe processes, relationships, etc.
- Everything should support the message
  - Need to explain figures, tables, etc.
  - Effective poster figures may differ from figures in papers
- Think carefully about color schemes & backgrounds
  - Keep color blindness in mind

# Poster Presentation

- Speak clearly, slowly, with variation & articulation
  - Be aware of non-native speakers in the audience
- Show enthusiasm & confidence
- Strong position & posture
- Make eye contact with audience
- Use visuals to your advantage
- Listen carefully to questions being asked
  - It is ok not to know the answer to every question
- Practice, practice, practice!