



SPARK Poster Presentation Tips and Checklist

Before SPARK: Here are some helpful tips as you prepare your poster

Poster Content & Structure

- Clear, concise title that reflects your study
- Author names and affiliations are included
- Organized layout (typical sections): Introduction • Methods • Results • Discussion • Acknowledgments • References
- Here are some reflective questions to help guide your preparation:
 - Introduction – What is this project and why does it matter?
 - Context/Background – What led to this work?
 - Methods/Process – What did you actually do?
 - Results/Data – What did you find? What does the data mean?
 - Conclusion – What should the audience remember?
 - Growth & Implications – How did this shape you? What comes next?
- Use bullet points, not paragraphs
- All graphics (tables, figures, images) are high quality (clear, not pixelated, appropriate font size) and labeled
- Key takeaways are obvious (readers should grasp your study in < 1 minute)
- Spell out acronyms on first use

Design & Visual Quality

- Clean, professional template with logical flow (left → right, top → bottom)
- Font sizes readable from 3–5 feet (Title ~72–100 pt, Headers ~36–48 pt, Body ≥ 24 pt)
- High-contrast color scheme; accessible for color-blind viewers
- Adequate white space (avoid clutter)
- Consistent formatting throughout (fonts, colors, spacing)
- Figures are clear: axes labeled, units are included, legends are readable

Prepare Your Pitch

- Prepare a 90-second elevator pitch summarizing your project
- Practice explaining your methods and results in simple terms
- Anticipate 3–5 likely questions
- Be ready to describe:
 - Why this topic matters

- Who it impacts
- What your findings mean for practice, policy, or other outcomes

Day of Tips: These tips can help ensure a strong professional presentation

Poster Presentation

- Stand on the left side of your poster so others can read from the right
- Maintain good posture and engage with a friendly greeting
- Invite viewers: “Would you like a quick overview of my project?”
- Speak clearly and conversationally, avoid reading directly from the poster
- Use your finger or a pen to guide viewers through figures
- Tailor depth of explanation based on the audience (students vs. professionals)
- Have a brief version and a more detailed version ready

Handling Questions

- Listen fully, then answer concisely
- If you don’t know the answer, say so and offer how it could be explored
- Thank the person for their interest

Professionalism & Logistics

- Arrive early to set up
- Ensure the poster prints correctly (no pixelation or formatting errors)
- Bring business cards or QR codes linking to your project
- Dress in professional or business casual attire
- Stay for the entire poster session

After the Session

- Thank attendees
- Note helpful feedback for future revisions
- Take a photo of yourself with your poster (for portfolios, marketing, newsletters!)