

# How to Create a Business Research Poster

## Step 1: Build an Outline

Read through your paper and write down the main points. These points will help build an outline that will become individual slides for your research poster.

Prepare a list of possible questions regarding your research in advance (based on the audience) and write out corresponding answers. By recognizing areas that may need clarification, you can help add valuable content to your poster and feel more comfortable with your presentation. Think of your audience in four different ways: academics familiar with your research (i.e. your supervisor); post-secondary persons not familiar with your research (i.e. students in another specialization/discipline); non-specialized persons familiar with your research (i.e. family members); and non-specialized persons who are not familiar with your research (i.e. public).

Your main points should be simple, concise and clear bullet points. Ask yourself - can I say less without losing context? This will help fit your content into a typical research poster. Begin putting your points into categories such as: introduction, business context, objective, study design/data/analysis, results, and conclusion to form an outline. Aim for 5-8 categories that will become your individual slides. Your outline should include:

- **Short research question or title** that fits on 1-2 lines (Tip: your title doesn't have to be the title from your abstract but something that will catch your audience's eye and interest!).
- **Brief introduction, business context and objective** of your research (what are you studying, why is it important, how will your analysis add to the existing literature). Do not write out your abstract on your poster.
- **Study design/methods/data** (as appropriate, list details on when, where, who and how the data was collected/analyzed).
- **Results or summary** showing 3-5 key research findings or key points you want to make. You might have supporting graphs, figures, or tables.
- **Conclusion** with optional **statement on future research** studies. Aim for 1-2 bullet points.
- **Research citation** or abstract title that includes author names, affiliations (also list locations), and as an option to add acknowledgements such as funding and/or mentors and/or institutions. Research posters do not have the space to add references, so please do not include them.

## Step 2: Create your Slides

Now that you have the content for your research poster, you can put these into individual powerpoint slides. Aim to use as few slides as possible to convey your message in an accessible tone/format for all audiences.

Below are some design tips:

- **Slide Template:** Use the School's [powerpoint slide template](#). Based on the number of slides you have created and the size of the poster, you can either choose a letter, legal or ledger size slide to work on. For conferences outside of the University, the University's [poster presentation templates](#) are available.

## How to Create a Business Research Poster

- **Font Style:** Use only two fonts throughout your poster. Arial for your Title and Headings and Times New Roman for your text. Avoid 'fancy' fonts and italics as these are hard to read.
- **Font Size:** Audiences should be able to read your poster from 1.5 meters away. Optimal font sizes are 66-80 point type for Titles, 36-54 point type for Headings and 24-36 point type for Text.
- **Font Color:** Black is best or choose a dark color font that is easy to read. Avoid light colors. The School of Business has specified its [official colours](#) to use in its visual brand guideline.
- **Headings:** Use all caps or initial caps, bold font, and either flush left or center. Be consistent with your chosen style throughout the poster.
- **Text:** Use bullets or lists so that audiences can quickly identify your main points. Avoid long written sentences.
- **Visual Elements:** Use simplified graphs, charts, and/or images to help tell your research story. Do not copy and paste visual elements from your paper as these can be data heavy, but rather highlight your findings in a simplified and visual way. Remember to add the source to photography/images displayed.

### **Step 3: Assemble your Research Poster**

Before you print your slides, review these again on your screen to ensure your content is clear, the layout in each slide is consistent and there are no spelling mistakes.

Materials needed to assemble your research poster include printed slides, cardboard display stand, and two sided tape.

Print your slides through your Program office or on campus. Colour with glossy printing is more expensive so check the prices before you go to print. Black and white on matte printing may be sufficient depending on the event. Campus print services are located at:

- [Campus Print & Design Solutions](#), located in the basement of Cameron Library
- [SUBPrint](#), located in the basement of the Student Union Building

Cardboard poster display stands used at the Alberta School of Business are typically 3 x 4 feet (1.0 x 1.3 m) and can be requested for use at the PhD Program Office. These, as well as poster tubes for travelling purposes can also be purchased at the print service locations above.

Lay your cardboard display stand flat and, without tape, place your slides in order starting from top left corner to bottom left, top middle to bottom middle and finally, top right corner to bottom right. Title slide of course is located at the top centered on the display. Make sure to create a bit of white space in between each slide so that it doesn't look cluttered and too busy.

Once you have the preferred layout, adhere double sided tape to the back and outside edges of each of the printed slides and mount these onto the display stand.

You might want to have a small number of one-page handouts with your title and abstract to give out at the conference.