Enhance how you present your research
Helping everyone understand your work

AIMS-2-TRIALS Workshop Practical Guidance Sheet
by Scarlett Li-Williams, Eleonora Tilkin-Franssens and Rosie Holt

POSTER PRESENTATION
How to create a better poster presentation and experience, and have impact, for you and your audience.

Considerations:
- What do you want your audience to take away from your poster?
- What are the main points you want to communicate?
- Is the language accessible and in line with the preferences of autistic people?
- Can this be seen easily by your audiences
- Are the visuals clearly visible and not overwhelming?
- Think outside the box and consider – is there a better way to approach this?

Ask yourself:
- How does your research align with the research priorities of the autistic community?
- What question does your research seek to answer?
- What is your motivation for researching this specific topic?
- For whom are you doing this research (Scientific community, funder call, community priority or impact)?
- In which broader context is your research situated?

Who benefits from your research?
- How will your research benefit the population it includes?
- Are there any future potential benefits to consider?
- What impacts could your research have and how can you improve the possible impacts?

What can the attendees do?
- Where and how can they find additional information? For example research paper/ website/QR code.
- Consider user experience (UX) design, and think about all aspects of the viewers interactions.
- How can you engage each other?
- Are there opportunities to collaborate?

Consider and visualise your poster in the physical space including:
- Are there are too many visuals on the poster? As this can cause visual overwhelm or visual overstimulation.
- Explicitly show if you're open to networking or not
- Sensory accessibility – balancing making a visually attractive poster without too much visual noise.
- Think about what you have enjoyed in a museum, public space, or tourist spot and consider how this can be applied and/or reproduced during your presentation

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POWERPOINT & SLIDE PRESENTATIONS FOR RESEARCHERS

There is no single correct approach to designing effective and presentation slides. The following guidance is intended to support slide design where helpful and should not be interpreted as prescriptive or fixed rules. These tips can be adapted to suit your content and/or audience.

In general, it is good to remember that good slides:
- Slides are there to support what you're saying, not to say everything for you.
- Highlight structure and key ideas in a clear and logical way
- Are readable, accessible, and intentional to your specific audience
- The goal isn't to hit a specific number of slides, words, or visuals used, it's to make your slides easy to read and your message easy to follow

Some tips for presentation design
(N.B: May not always be suitable but general tips)

- Minimum 30-Point Font Rule: To ensure everyone in a room can see the information, make font 30 font size. This increases the likelihood that everyone in the room will be able to read it.
- High contrast: To ensure readability, have high contrast between text and background (e.g., dark text on a light background or vice versa).
- Consider the 5–5–5 & 6×6 rule: To improve readability, try to limit the amount of text on each slide. The 5-5-5 rule is having no more than five words per line, a maximum of five lines of text per slide (or bullet points) and having no more than five consecutive text-heavy slides. The 6x6 rule is use no more than 6 lines of text per slide, with no more than 6 words per line.
- Colour blind check: Make sure your visuals are readable for people with colour-vision differences. Avoid relying on colour alone to communicate meaning, and ensure there is sufficient contrast so colour can be distinguished.
- Font check: Choose fonts (and contrast levels) that are accessible and easy to read, including for people with dyslexia
- One Idea Per Slide: Try to limit one core message per slide to ensure the audience has one central point to focus on.
- Tell a Story: Structure your presentation with a clear beginning, middle, and end. This does not have to follow the traditional scientific format (introduction, methods, results, and conclusion). Consider whether a more engaging narrative structure would better support your key message and help your audience follow the story of your research.

Considerations for your presentation:

- Will adding this visual make things easier to understand?
- Are these appropriate colours?
- Have you considered visual hierarchy?
- Are there accessible words or do they need rephrasing?
- Does language meet community preferences?
- Are there numbers and labels clear and readable?
- Is this visual informative and interesting for your audience?
- Are any figures transparent and easy to understand?
- See resources and links on page 3 for more information

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GENERAL IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS FOR SCIENCE COMMUNICATION VISUALS

(in presentations and posters)

Ask yourself when designing:
- What am I trying to communicate? In 1-2 sentences.
- Who is your audience? (scientists, public, community, mixed)
- How can I adapt what I want to communicate to that audience?
- What do you want them to take away from it [presentation/poster/talk]?
- Is it visually clear? Are there any jargon or words that someone may not understand who is in a different field?
- Is there a visual hierarchy?
- Is there any over cluttering?
- Is what you are communicating accessible and understandable to that audience?
- If applicable: Do your visuals use language that is thoughtful and respectful of the community being discussed? Would you feel comfortable explaining your message and showing your visual to a member of that community?
- Is this [presentation/poster/talk] providing what my audience may be interested in, or is it what I found interesting? For example, some audiences may be less interested in complex statistics of find this difficult to understand.
- Is the colour scheme accessible? Consider using soft pastels to reduce glare and visual stress.

RESOURCES AND LINKS:

- Community engagement resources: https://www.aims-2-trials.eu/autism-community/resources/
- Posters: https://osf.io/3dgey/ and https://guides.nyu.edu/posters
- Communicating to the public: https://www.aaas.org/resources/communication-toolkit
- Data and infographics: https://informationisbeautiful.net/
- Website: https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/helping-people-to-use-your-service/understanding-wcag
- Language: https://www.aims-2-trials.eu/language/

Did you know in the United Kingdom that website accessibility is a legal requirement?
Please ensure to follow The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (known as WCAG)

Find out more about the EU's standard on website and digital accessibility here