

Guide to Writing a Poster Abstract for the SOCRA Annual Conference

Poster abstracts submitted to SOCRA should serve as the initial report of knowledge, experience, or best practices in the field of clinical research. Submissions are reviewed in a peer-review process and are evaluated by a committee of experts. A well-written abstract is more likely to be considered as a finalist, and ultimately for the special recognition award. To expedite the review process, to assure effective communication, and to elevate the work toward the special recognition award, abstracts should follow a standardized format.

Writing an effective abstract is best learned with guidance by an experienced mentor. If such a person is not available, we suggest seeking input from a colleague who would review and critique the poster abstract prior to its submission.

General suggestions

The following are some suggestions about poster abstracts that assist in increasing the readability and quality of the submission.

- Check for proper spelling and grammar.
- Use a standard typeface such as Times Roman with a font size of 12.
- Begin sentences with words (not numbers).
- Standard abbreviations may be used without definition, but nonstandard abbreviations/acronyms should be placed in parentheses after the first use of the terminology. It is important to keep nonstandard abbreviations/acronyms to a minimum, to allow for readability and understanding.
- Use generic names when referring to medications.
- Do not include tables, figures, or graphs in the abstract. Such content is appropriate for the poster.
- Limit the abstract to 500 words.
- Try to organize the abstract with the following headings where appropriate, as explained below; purpose, methods, results, conclusions.

Title

The abstract title conveys the content/subject of the poster. The title should not be misleading and should pertain to the purpose, methods, results and conclusions. The title may be written as a question or the title may be written to suggest the conclusions, if appropriate. A short concise title may more easily catch a reader's attention. Try to not use abbreviations or acronyms in titles.

Purpose

The introductory sentence(s) may be stated as a hypothesis, a purpose, an objective, or as current evidence for a particular finding.

- Hypothesis is a supposition or conjecture used as a basis for further investigations
- Purpose is a statement of the reason for conducting a particular project or reporting on a particular program, process or activity.
- Objective is the end result that the author is trying to achieve by conducting a particular project, program, process or activity.

Methods

Briefly describe the methods of the project to define the data or population, outcome variables, and analytic techniques, as well as data collection procedures and frequencies. A description of statistical methods used may be included if appropriate.

Results

The results should be stated succinctly to support only the purpose, objectives, hypothesis, or conclusions.

Conclusions

The conclusion(s) should highlight the impact of the project, and follow the methods and results in a logical fashion. This section should not restate results. Rather, the utility of the results and their potential role in the management of the project should be emphasized. New information or conclusions not supported by data in the results section should be avoided.

Important note

Poster program finalists are determined following evaluation of each actual poster by the review committee. Finalists will be notified by a call to their cell phone on the Friday evening of the Annual Conference. Authors should assure that they include a cell phone number on their application, as they will be asked to give an oral presentation on Saturday morning. On-site contact information is critical to participation as a finalist in the annual conference poster program.