Most professional organizations have guidelines for poster sessions, and you should consult those guidelines and discuss your poster with your advisor. The list below contains some general guidelines that are best practices to follow:

- **Font Size**: Text should be readable from 5 feet away. Choose for size and clarity, and do not have more than three font changes on the poster. Do not use Gothic, Script or complex fonts, and limit the number of colors you use.

- **Word Limit**: Keep your text to one or two sentences for each section so that it does not overwhelm the viewer. A science poster might use less text than a history poster, but neither should be cluttered information.

- **Visuals**: Make sure your visual presentation is clear, appealing and proofread. Use images that are large enough for viewers to see and make sure visuals are clearly connected to your subject. Size and pixilation are important. Do not over-enlarge photographs or images that blur as a result.

- **Flow of the poster**: Have a logical flow (usually from left to right) so that viewers can follow the thesis and the information you are presenting.

- **Define your key terms**.

- **The oral presentation 1-minute rule**: explanation that sums up the point of your poster and then you can answer questions.

**The Intelligent Martian Rule**: How complex should your poster and oral presentation be? Imagine you are meeting an intelligent Martian who is probably smarter than you, but who lacks knowledge of your discipline and your research. Explain only as much as the Martian needs to know to understand your presentation. Never condescend—remember, the Martian is intelligent! Be clear and concise.

- **Professionalism**: If your poster is readable, clear, neat, informative and proofread, you are all set!


American Historical Association Guidelines: [https://www.historians.org/annual-meeting/future-meetings/submit-a-proposal/poster-session-general-information](https://www.historians.org/annual-meeting/future-meetings/submit-a-proposal/poster-session-general-information)