**Posters 101:**The National Conference on Higher Education in Prison   
Saint Louis, November 2019

**How Does the Poster Research and Design Process Work?**The research and design of your poster are the most important steps to complete prior to presenting it at the NCHEP conference this November in Saint Louis. Please keep in mind you’ll want to have your poster designed and finalized by the middle of October for this process to work best.

1. **Take your research and turn it into a compelling visual design**! This can be a complicated process, and there’s no single pathway to creating an effective poster. We’ve included some ideas and helpful resources below to help get you brainstorming some ideas! Just remember--if you’d like the Alliance to take care of the printing (see below), designs will be due by October 25, so it’s never too early to get started.
2. **Consider using one of our templates (.pptx, .pdf) once you’re ready to start the digital design**. Good design takes time. Make sure you get an early start...use our templates to help jumpstart some thinking or potential approaches. The PDF and PowerPoint include four template samples.
3. **Make sure to leave time for soliciting and integrating feedback.** Once you get your design ready, solicit some feedback on its design elements. Allow plenty of time for feedback and integration of feedback.

**With the design finished and ready to print by October 25, then what?**The Alliance for Higher Education in Prison is pleased to announce that it will be working in partnership with [The Ink Spot](https://www.theinkspot.com/), Inc., a Unionized printer based in Saint Louis, to support poster presenters at the 2019 NCHEP. Through this partnership, poster exhibitors are invited to have their printing costs covered by the Alliance. Here’s how the printing process will work.

1. **By October 25 (and no later), and using The Ink Spot’s portal, log-in to supply your design**. The portal will allow downloads of PDF designs. You’ll also have the option of choosing either the glossy or matte printing option at this stage. Please only upload a PDF design.
2. **Leave the bill to us**. Logging in and completing the submission process will automatically bill the cost of printing the poster to the Alliance--poster exhibitors will not be charged.
3. **Rest easy--the Alliance will deliver your poster to the conference**. InkSpot has agreed to print the posters prior to the conference start. The Alliance will arrange to pick up your poster from InkSpot and deliver it to the Exhibit and Resource Hall by the time you arrive in Saint Louis.
4. **Set up your poster once you arrive**. When you arrive in Saint Louis and get checked into your hotel, please make your way to the Exhibit and Resource Hall to complete the installation of your poster. There will be resources on hand to help with the display. (A few of the options that will be available are spelled out below).

**Style Sheet**

* **Sizing:** All posters should be designed at either 36” x 24” or 48” by 36”. These are the only two poster sizes that can be printed by the Ink Spot (our selected printer for this project).
* **Consider these templates as your starting points or as final designs!** All templates can be edited: You can change the layout, colors, fonts, and font sizes. As you are making your edits, you should consider suggestions for content, font size, and resolution of photos and graphics, which we provided with each template. The templates are set to 48” x 36” but you can certainly modify the size to make a smaller poster (36” x 24” is the other option).
* Whether you are using PowerPoint or other software to design your poster, make sure to save them also in PDF format, which you will then send to print. Check out [this resource](https://support.office.com/en-us/article/save-powerpoint-presentations-as-pdf-files-9b5c786b-9c6e-4fe6-81f6-9372f77c47c8) for instructions on how to convert PowerPoint to PDF. Your poster must be submitted to Ink Spot as a PDF.

**Tips/Suggestions/Best Practices**

* You might approach your poster as a networking tool. It’s a conversation starter--a preview of your amazing research, and an invitation to have people ask you more about it. Make sure the poster has ways for people to both meet you and contact you.
* Briefly title your poster and put the short title somewhere prominent (at the top?). This might be the only title you incorporate.
* Consider including a narrative introduction--if you do, write the introduction for those relatively unfamiliar with your research. An abstract is usually not necessary for the poster. Think of the poster itself as the abstract for your work.
* Somehow introduce the central question or problem the research explores
* Find a way, if possible, to visually represent your major findings
* List the published materials that went into the poster research; acknowledge any additional research, collaborative, or funding support
* Viewers may only give your poster a few minutes of their undivided time. Try to keep text to a minimum (500-1,000 words total…for the entire poster). An overly wordy poster will distract from your design and major findings.

**Suggested Timetable**

August Complete the poster research and early draft of design

September Solicit feedback and provide integration of feedback into design

October Fine polish of design--consider presenting final design to Ink Spot

October 25 Deadline for submitting post for printing @The Ink Spot in Saint Louis (The Alliance will cover the cost of all posters submitted on/before October 25)

November 1-7 Posters printing in Saint Louis

November 14 Posters available for set up in Saint Louis

**Additional Resources**

[**“Making Posters With PowerPoint”**](https://undergraduateresearch.as.ua.edu/presenting-your-work/making-posters/)University of Alabama, College of Arts and Sciences  
  
[**“Better Poster”**](https://osf.io/6ua4k/)An online template for consistent and easy-to-create academic posters.   
  
[**Designing Conference Posters**](https://colinpurrington.com/tips/poster-design/) by Colin Purrington

Written for those in the sciences, but with important lessons for researchers in the humanities and social sciences as well. The section on “How to Make Your Poster More Engaging” will be worth your time.

[**“How to Design an Award-Winning Conference Poster”**](https://www.socialsciencespace.com/2018/05/4-steps-to-designing-an-award-winning-poster/) by Tullio Rossi   
Social Science Space