

Creating a Linguistic Anthropology Poster Presentation

or, How to rock the 2025 SLA Poster Plenary

By Judith M.S. Pine and the SLA Conference Committee

[“Imagination, Creation, Critique”](#) | The 2025 Society for Linguistic Anthropology Biennial Conference | Chicago | May 29–31, 2025

Congratulations! Your poster has been accepted to SLA 2025. Especially if you’re a linguistic anthropologist, you might be wondering how to share your research in this genre. Below you will find guidelines for both physical and digital poster presentations, as well as some tips that will make good use of the particular affordances of the genre. Other questions, concerns, or clarifications? Contact us at help@2025slaconference.org!

Logistics

The Poster Plenary will take place on **Friday, May 30, 5:30–8:30 pm CDT**. During the session, we ask that you stand by your poster and enjoy the opportunity to interact with your audience! The Poster Plenary will be the main event at the conference, fulfilling a function traditionally served by a keynote or distinguished lecture. It is the only research-focused event that will be scheduled with no competing concurrent sessions, and will feature hors d'oeuvres, beverages, and a lively atmosphere.

Visual Design and Format

Poster presentations are a marvelous way to present complex, multimodal research. This format is well-suited to linguistic anthropological projects. This guide is designed to help you use the format to its full potential.

Software and Templates

If you’re looking for a more advanced software package, you can use the [Adobe Creative Suite](#) (we recommend Adobe InDesign, Illustrator, or PhotoShop), though the subscription fee is quite high if your university doesn’t already subscribe. For an intermediate and **free** option, try [Canva](#).

For an option with a shallow learning curve, you can use PowerPoint! We've prepared PowerPoint templates in two sizes. One is 94 inches wide by 46 inches high (8 feet x 3.8 feet or 238 cm x 116 cm);¹ the other is 48 inches wide by 36 inches high (4 feet x 3 feet or 121 cm x 91). **The folder is view-only to prevent anyone from accidentally editing the original.** You can save a copy of the files in [this Google Drive folder](#) or download and edit on your computer.

Size Guidelines and Printing

Your poster can be any size **up to 94 inches wide by 46 inches high** (8 feet x 3.8 feet, 238 cm x 116 cm) since this is the size limit for the display boards we will provide for you to mount your poster. Recommendations for font sizes and other formatting are available at the [AAA Poster Guidelines site](#).

The physical poster should be designed to start a conversation. Don't include large blocks of text. Provide handy bullet points that can guide your conversations with your audience as they engage with your work. [These guidelines from AAA](#) will be very helpful as you create your poster presentation, regardless of modality.

You will need to create a digital file for your poster and have it printed on paper by your favorite copy service (please check their printing capabilities with respect to size in advance). You can print before you attend the conference in Chicago or after your arrival. The [University of Chicago's PSD Graphic Arts](#) offers next-day printing services for \$95/print (please note: to use this printing service, you'll need to send the print-ready file via email, **not** the online form: graphicarts@uchicago.edu). Finally, [FedEx Kinkos on 57th Street](#) (and elsewhere in Chicago) offers affordable large-format printing, and many universities receive discounts.

You will be assigned a space to display your poster during the scheduled poster session in the **Cloister Club**, located on the ground floor of Ida Noyes Hall, the main conference venue. You will be given a foam backing to tack your poster to and an easel to set the foam-backed poster on (with tacks that we will provide). Please note that if you bring handouts or a portable device of any kind (e.g., a laptop or tablet), you will need to be prepared to physically hold the materials and/or device, as we cannot guarantee table space. If a table or other accommodation will be necessary to ensure your full participation in the Poster Plenary, please contact Steven Black, SLA Conference Accessibility Advisor (slaaccessibilitycoordinator@gmail.com).

Embedded Multimedia

You can use QR codes to link to documents, digital media, and other audiovisual illustrations. Please note that if you plan to share audio material, you *must* provide headphones, not speakers. You can also host the audio on your own online platform (i.e., Google Drive, Dropbox,

¹ Please note: because of limitations in PowerPoint, the large poster is scaled to 0.5x the final size. When you print, please instruct them to print it at 2x size.

personal website, etc.) so attendees can listen through their own devices and headphones.

General Recommendations

The key points below are designed for linguistic anthropologists to make the most of the unique characteristics of poster presentations.

1. **Poster presentations are not linear.** A traditional oral presentation starts at point A, and, if you are lucky, gets to the conclusion by the end of your 12–15 minutes. However, neither you nor your audience is constrained to a single path with a poster. For this reason, you can build your poster with this in mind. Don't write a summary of a paper on a big surface - create a presentation of your work which can be entered at multiple points. You can be creative with a poster - you do not need to have one printed out, you can create your poster in ways that work best for you -- paying attention to the accessibility guidelines below.
2. **Poster presentations aren't papers, but they can include papers—and multimedia.** You might choose to have handouts (or links to digital documents) that your audience can take with them or not. You can also have a sign-up sheet or digital form to collect email addresses for people interested in receiving a copy of the paper version of your poster, if one exists.
3. **Poster presentations must be accessible.** The American Anthropological Association has detailed guidelines for ensuring that everyone in attendance at the SLA conference is able to fully participate in the event. Don't lock folks out of your work: follow the guidelines under the heading "[Poster Accessibility](#)."
4. **Poster presentations are a two-way dialogue from start to finish!** You don't just need to talk to your audience: you can also take notes about the questions that your audience asks as they work through your poster. You might also consider including a URL or QR code linking to a digital comment card. You might even include specific prompts on your poster with requests for specific kinds of feedback.

Additional Resources

Looking for a tutorial and further guidelines? The NYU Libraries have a very helpful site on the creation of research posters [here](#).