



Visitor Studies Association

## Call for Posters

2017 Visitor Studies Association Conference  
*New Pathways in Visitor Studies*  
July 18-22, 2017  
Westin Columbus  
310 S. High Street, Columbus, OH 43215

### What is the Poster Session?

The poster session is an interactive and collegial format for displaying and discussing project-based work in a visual format. It offers an alternative for presenters eager to share their work through one-on-one discussion, and may be a particularly appropriate format for presentations where visual or material evidence represents a central component of the project. Posters are often a way to present the findings of an individual project or present preliminary data and gather advice. We expect that most posters for this conference will represent work that is complete, or present initial findings for multi-year or ongoing projects.

**Deadline: April 7, 2017**

### When is the Poster Session?

The poster session will be held on the afternoon Friday, July 21, 2017, at the Westin Columbus, 310 S. High Street, Columbus, OH 43215.

### How to Submit a Proposal

Email your proposal to [vsaproposals@gmail.com](mailto:vsaproposals@gmail.com) with the subject line "2017 Poster" by April 7. *You will receive a confirmation email by April 10, 2017. If you do not receive a confirmation email, send a second email (without attachment) because your proposal may not have been received.* You will receive notification of whether or not your poster has been accepted by the end of April 2017.

Proposals must be submitted electronically (in ONE PDF document) and include:

1. Contact information, including participant(s)' name(s), affiliations(s), email(s), and phone number(s).
2. Title of no more than 10 words
3. Short description of no more than 50 words for the conference program
4. An abstract of no more than 300 words that explains and promotes the project
5. Include a simple one- or two-page visual mock-up of the display (e.g., created in Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Photoshop, or Publisher, etc. and saved as a PDF). Please include a basic layout for your poster and a general sense of what topics will be addressed in each poster element. See examples of mock-ups here: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B85eTZGV0KaxVTF3QUNjYmhrU00>

### How Will Your Proposal Be Judged?

The review committee will consider the persuasiveness of your abstract, the persuasiveness/quality of your visual presentation, and your project's relation to major issues and questions in the field of visitor studies and informal learning.

## What are the dimensions of a poster?

Each presenter will be provided a trifold board and half of a round table on which to set up the trifold board and any supporting materials. The dimensions of the trifold board are 36" x 48". The side panel dimensions are 36"x12", and the middle panel dimensions are 36"x24". Here is a link to an example of a standard trifold board: (<http://www.officedepot.com/a/products/434415/Office-Depot-Brand-72percent-Recycled-Tri/>). Your poster must fit on this board.

*\*Please note that presenters are not guaranteed access to power sources, so please plan accordingly if you will use a laptop or other electronic device. Internet access is not guaranteed, so, you may wish to demonstrate any websites or videos to your hard drive so that you are able to navigate the site without internet access. Due to limited space, projectors and speakers may not be used during the poster presentation.*

## Formatting and Content Advice

A good poster should introduce your topic, research questions or goals, methods, and/or best practices, and what was accomplished and what you learned. Be sure to include the following:

- Give the poster a title.
- Use images to illustrate your points.
- Keep text brief. Edit carefully. The test of a good poster is if someone can read it in **60 seconds** and understand your main points.

## Resources

- Review great posters to see what works in action. <http://p2i.eval.org/index.php/review-other-posters/>
- Review the commentary at Better Posters for some insight about what distinguishes average posters from the excellent. <http://betterposters.blogspot.com/>
- Just getting started? Take 10 minutes to watch this set of YouTube videos about how to construct a poster: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kD\\_zCBT3GUk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kD_zCBT3GUk) . Our guidelines supercede theirs, but these videos offer a great general approach to poster development.
- The Society for Conservation Biology has some very useful advice and suggestions for creating effective posters. <http://www.conbio.org/professional-development/advice-for-students/help-designing-posters>

## What to Expect During the Poster Session

During the exhibition, you should remain at your poster, prepared to give a brief oral introduction to your project and discuss your work. Individual attendees browse among the posters throughout the event and chat with those presenting work of interest to them. If you get caught up in conversation with someone, try to be aware of, and welcome, others who may approach your poster and have questions about your work.

Insider tip: Some people are more timid than others and may walk by and just pick up your handouts or card. A friendly "Welcome" or "Please don't hesitate to ask any questions" on your part can serve as a great icebreaker. If you have business cards, this is a great opportunity to distribute them as well.

## Printing and Shipping Advice

You have a few options for printing and shipping. If you are staying in Columbus, you may print the poster at home, roll it in a poster tube, and ship it to the Westin Columbus. (Include your name in the address line. The mailing address for the Westin Columbus is 310 S. High Street, Columbus, OH, 43215.) You may also print your poster at home and carry it on the plane/train/bus/car. If you do not wish to ship or transport the poster, you may email your poster file to a print shop in downtown Columbus and pick it up there. One option near the hotel is FedEx Office Print & Ship Center (180 N High St, Columbus, OH 43215; 614-621-1100).