



Submission Guidelines

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1. Introduction

Congratulations on your abstract acceptance to the Midwest SAS® User Group (MWSUG) conference! This document provides submission guidelines and resources for contributed and invited authors.

This resource will give guidance on formatting your final paper, if you need to submit one. This document also gives instructions on producing your final presentations slides or E-Poster file. All presentations at MWSUG will have an online, published component as either a final paper or presentation slides. Papers are required for specific types of presentations, but besides these it's the author's choice to provide a final paper **or** conference slides.

People on the MWSUG conference committee are available to assist you with preparation of your paper and presentation or e-Poster, including section chairs, mentors, and peers. If desired, you can send them a copy of your draft, and they'll make recommendations or suggestions to help you get the most out of your experience.

1.1 Important Conference Dates

Below is a list of important dates for presenters; these dates can also be found on the conference website: <https://mwsug.org/2026/dates>

Event	Date
Registration • Registration opens • Early registration closes	• August 3, 2026 • October 26, 2024
Submissions due • Copyright grant form • Final Papers • Final Presentations/E-Posters	• October 15, 2026 • October 15, 2026 • November 1, 2026
Conference • Opening Session • Closing Session	• November 15, 2026 • November 17, 2026

1.2 Summary Checklist

After reading this Author Guide, use this checklist to remember important details.

- ☐ Profile and biography information in the SoftConf System is complete.
- ☐ Sign the copyright grant form.
- ☐ If submitting a paper, review guidelines for paper content, including:
 - Use the template.
 - Use the tips in [Section 3.2](#).
 - Upload by deadline in [Section 1.1](#):
 - Save final paper in portable document format (PDF).

- ❑ Review guidelines for presentation or e-Poster content, including:
 - The presentation template.
 - The recommended number of slides for your presentation.
- ❑ Upload final presentation/e-Poster by deadline in [Section 1.1](#).
- ❑ Practice delivery of your presentation or e-Poster
- ❑ Bring a backup copy of your presentation or e-Poster to the conference on a USB/flash drive.
- ❑ Share the news that you're presenting at MWSUG on social media!

1.3. SoftConf Paper Submission System

Use SoftConf submission system to submit all your important documents to the conference, such as the presentation or e-Poster, the copyright grant form, and optional final paper in PDF: www.softconf.com/g/mwsug2026.

2. Copyright grant form

1. Completion of the copyright grant form is required of all paper presenters.
2. The copyright grant form is on the MWSUG website, under Presenter Resources.
3. The copyright grant agreement gives MWSUG a non-exclusive right to publish your paper or presentation slides in the conference proceedings and to reproduce your work in sales & marketing literature.
4. Please ensure the title appears on the copyright grant form exactly as it appears on the presentation or final paper. In the event of discrepancies between title wordings, the copyright grant form title will take precedence.
5. Signing the copyright grant form agreement confirms your approval to attend the conference and present your accepted material. If you will not be able to attend the conference as scheduled, please notify your Section Chair immediately. If you have arranged for someone else to present your paper, provide the name of your substitute to the Section Chair at that time.
6. Upload the copyright grant form to the Abstract Submission Website.
7. Signed copyright grant forms are due by the deadline indicated in [Section 1.1](#).

3. Paper Details

Papers are **required** of MWSUG presenters for 10-minute and 20-minute presentations only. For 50-minute presentations, 60-minute Live demos, and 75-minute and 90-minute Hands-on Workshops, papers are not required.

Final papers should use proper style, capitalization, terminology, formatting, and scope. Refer to the MWSUG 2026 Sample Paper on the website, or "Best Papers" from past MWSUG conferences as a guide on the proper use of these concepts.

3.1 Required Paper Attributes

All papers will be reviewed by the Section Chairs, Publications Coordinator and Webmaster for the required attributes. Papers without these attributes will be returned to the author for editing. Many of these attributes are part of the paper template.

1. Paper number is included above the title ([Section 3.4.1](#)) and is correct.
2. Title is centered and properly capitalized ([Section 3.4.1](#)) and appears exactly as written on the copyright grant form.
3. Author and affiliation are beneath the title and are separated by a comma. Multiple authors are separated by semicolons, as described in [Section 3.4.2](#), Item 2.c.
4. The paper is formatted as a final paper; draft papers are not allowed.
5. Appropriate trademark symbols (® or ™) appear after the first reference to a SAS product in paper ([Section 3.4.2](#), Item 4) or any other trademarked product.
6. The SAS Trademark Citation is included on the final page of the paper ([Section 3.4.2](#), Item 5).
7. Final paper must be in PDF format with the appropriate properties ([Section 4.1.1](#)).

3.2 Paper Tips

If you are solving a common problem, focus on your solution and the results of your experience. Emphasize how your techniques can be used by others for similar applications. If you are presenting a novel solution, focus on what makes your solution unique from past solutions, and why others should consider your solution. Authors are recommended to conduct a literature review to provide examples or references to prior authors who may have solved a similar problem.

3.2.1 Paper Examples

For examples of good papers, you can browse the best papers from previous MWSUG conferences on [Lexjansen.com](#) or review the sample papers on the MWSUG website. For other examples, you may contact the Paper mentorship coordinator, Mentoring@mwsug.org

3.3 Capitalization, Terminology, Code, References

3.3.1 Capitalization

Use the following SAS conventions for capitalization:

1. When you are referring to the Data step in text, the word DATA is always uppercase.
2. When referencing SAS code in the text, use all caps for names of procedures, statements, options, keywords, functions, commands and steps. At the first mention of a procedure, its name followed by the word “procedure” should be used (e.g., “the PRINT procedure”). Any subsequent reference to the procedure in the text can use the SAS code notation (e.g., “PROC PRINT”).

3.3.2 Terminology and Trademarks

Use the following conventions for terminology:

1. Use complete names when referring to trademarked product names, for example, use “Enterprise Guide” instead of “SAS EG” or “EG”. For a list of SAS product names, see https://www.sas.com/en_us/software/all-products.html#all-products-a-z).
2. Write “data set” as two words, but “database” as one word.
3. For a list of commonly used terms and phrases that will help make your text more easily translatable and understood by an international audience, Refer to the following: https://documentation.sas.com/doc/en/pgmsascdc/9.4_3.5/pgmsasgl/glossary.htm
4. Use this resource for proper use of trademarks: https://www.sas.com/en_us/legal/editorial-guidelines.html

3.3.3 SAS Code

Do not bury SAS code in body of the text. Set it off from the text as shown in the paper template ([Section 3.4.2](#)).

Use this resource to properly cite the SAS software used for your analysis: https://www.sas.com/en_us/legal/editorial-guidelines.html

3.3.4 References

1. All published work that is cited in your paper must be listed in the **References** section.
 - a. The reference format for sources published in hard copy: Author(s). Date of publication or last revision. *Title of Reference*. City, State of publisher: Name of publisher.
 - b. The reference format for sources published on the Web: Author. "Title of Document" Title of Complete Work. <Web address> any additional directions for retrieving source (access date).
2. If you include text or visuals that were written or developed by someone other than yourself, you must cite the sources.
 - a. If the source is copyrighted material:
 - i. You must mention that you have permission from the copyright holder or the publisher. The copyright holder or publisher may require you to include a copyright notice. For example: Reprinted with permission of XYZ Company from <Book name>. Copyright 2004. XYZ Company Inc.
 - ii. To use materials from SAS that are copyrighted you must receive permission from SAS. Complete the Request for Permission to Use Copyrighted Materials at https://www.sas.com/en_us/contact-forms/copyrighted-materials-request.html
 - b. If the source is not copyrighted material
 - i. Cite the source in parenthesis after the direct quote or image. For example: “The minimum variance method defines the distance between clusters (Ward 1984, p.23).”

3.4 Formatting Requirements

Manuscripts meeting the formatting requirements below will be published in the *MWSUG Proceedings*.

3.4.1 Paper Number and Title

On the first page, **use the paper number and exact title from the copyright grant form.**

3.4.2 Use of the Paper Template

It is recommended that you use the provided paper template. The template is available in the [Presenter Resources](#) section on the MWSUG 2026 website and contains all the sections needed in your paper, suggested fonts and type sizes for the headers and text in the body of the paper.

You can save yourself much work by using the paper template; it already incorporates most of the formatting that you need. However, if you do not use the template, please ensure your paper conforms to the following guidelines:

1. All **margins** should be 1 inch.
2. On the **first page**:
 - a. Center the number of the paper about 1 inch from the top of the page,
 - b. Center the title about ¼ of an inch under the number of the paper,
 - c. Center the names of the author(s) and the company affiliation(s) under the title and
 - d. Begin the text about a ½ of an inch down from the name of the last author.
3. On all **following pages** center page numbers about 3/8 of an inch from the bottom of the page.
4. **Trademarks**:
 - a. Insert the appropriate trademark symbols (® or ™) for the first reference of SAS or other trademarked product. A list of SAS products and their appropriate symbol can be found at the URL listed below https://www.sas.com/en_us/legal/trademarks.html.
 - b. Use the appropriate trademark symbol the first time you mention a SAS trademarked product in your paper and in each slide. Subsequent references to the same product do not receive trademark symbols in papers. If a trademark appears in the title, this counts as the first appearance.
5. The **Final page** should contain the following SAS Trademark Citation if your paper refers to SAS software.

SAS and all other SAS Institute Inc. product or service names are registered trademarks or trademarks of SAS Institute Inc. in the USA and other countries. ® indicates USA registration. Other brand and product names are registered trademarks or trademarks of their respective companies.

6. **Body text** should be:

- a. Single-spaced
- b. Consistent in size with the font sizes in the template. The font sizes in the paper template are summarized in the table below.
- c. If readable and professional, body text can be in a different font face.

	Element	Font	Case	Size
1	Paper Number	Arial Bold	Proper Case	10
2	Title	Arial Bold	Proper Case	13
3	Author(s) Name and Affiliation	Arial	Proper Case	11
4	Header 1 (e.g., Abstract)	Arial Bold	Heading 1 Style or UPPER CASE	11
5	Header 2 (e.g., sub-header)	Arial Bold	Heading 2 Style or UPPER CASE	10
6	Body	Arial	Sentence case	10
7	SAS Code	Courier New	lower case	10

4. PDF files

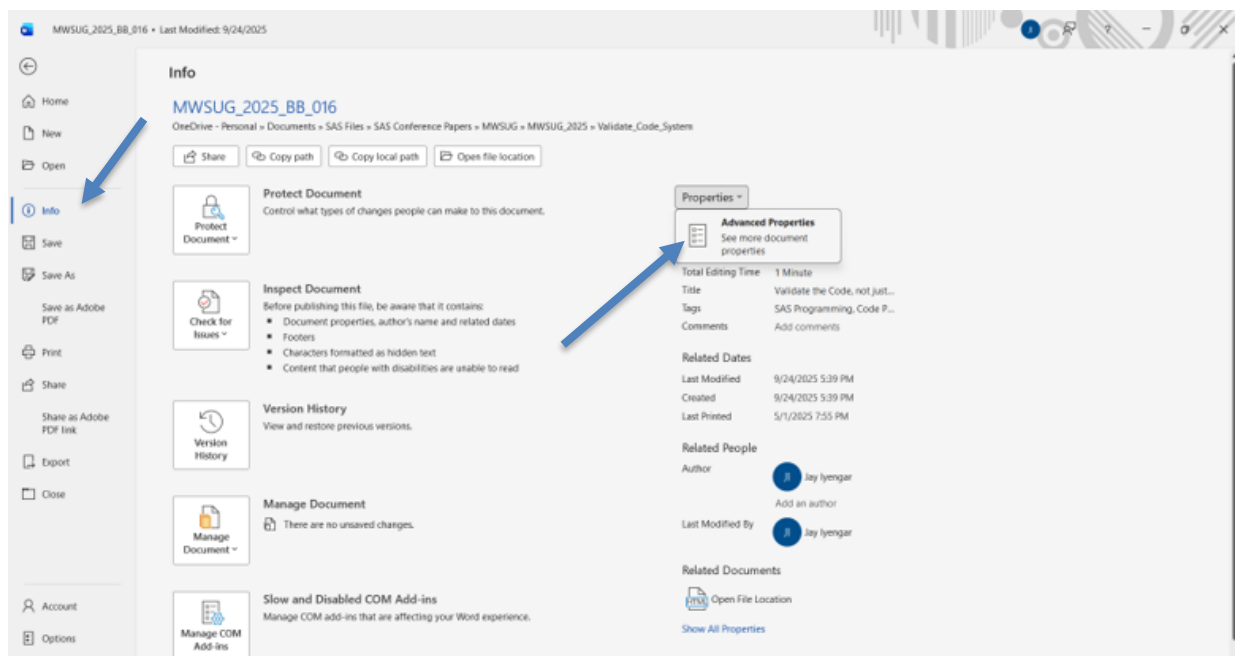
Conference slides or final papers must be uploaded to the SoftConf Submission System listed in [Section 1.3](#) by the deadline indicated in [Section 1.1](#).

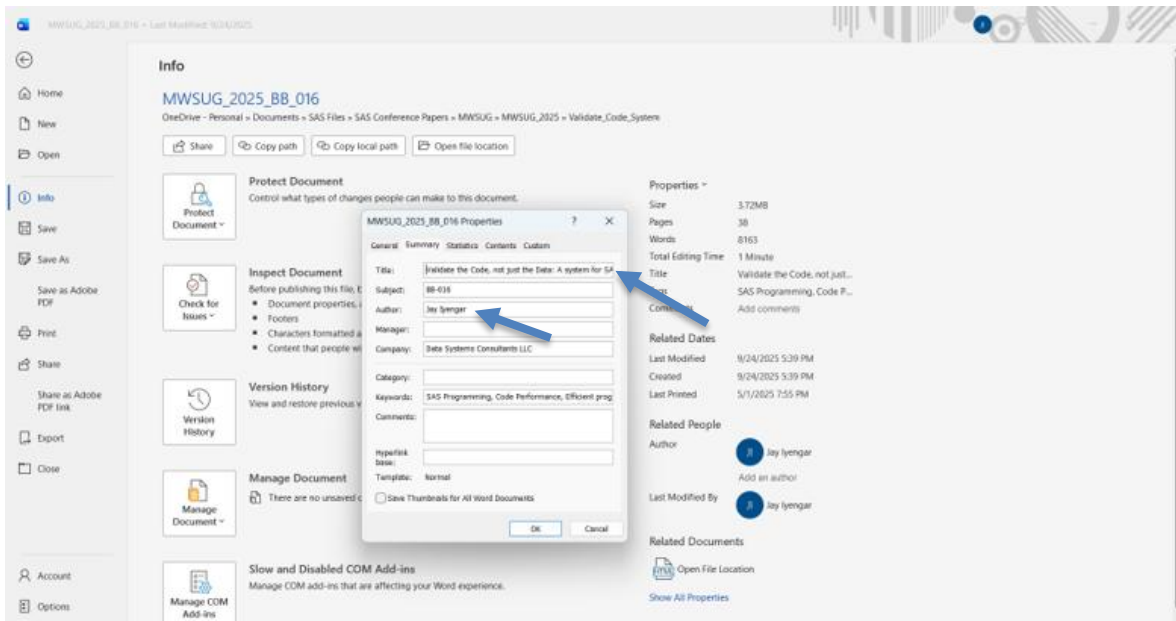
4.1 PDF Creation

4.1.1 Document Properties

When saving your Word or PowerPoint document as a PDF file, it is **required** that you insert the document properties.

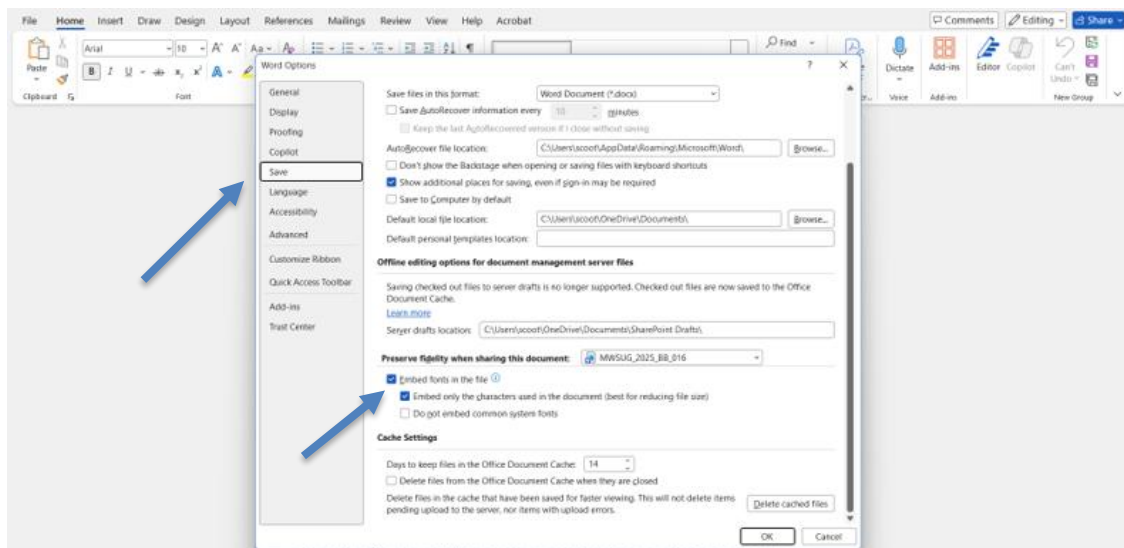
1. In Microsoft Word or Power Point, click on **File**, then **Info**.
2. Click on the **Properties** drop-down arrow, and choose **Advanced Properties**
3. The **Properties** dialog box will be displayed with several fields
4. Type in the **Author** (first author), **Keywords**, and **Title**, in the corresponding fields of the document **Properties**.
5. In the **Subject** field, type in the paper number in the following format: **SSnnn - MWSUG 2026**, where SSnnn is your presentation number. “SS” corresponds to the two-character section code and “nnn” corresponds to the abstract number assigned by the SoftConf Submission System.





4.1.2. Embedded Fonts

1. To prepare your final paper PDF, you need to embed fonts in the file.
To Embed Fonts, click **File**, then **Options**, then click **Save** in the menu in the left pane.
2. Make sure the check box for 'Embed fonts in the file' is checked and that the check box for 'Do not embed common system fonts' is unchecked. *For PowerPoint, select the top option, "Embed only the characters used in the presentation".*



4.2 Checklist for Final PDF File

Before uploading your PDF, ensure:

1. The title matches the title on the copyright grant form.
2. The file has been saved with the fonts embedded.
3. If a paper:
 - a. The assigned presentation appears at the top.
 - b. Nothing except the page number is within the 1" margins.
 - c. The page numbers are at the bottom of each page.

If you have any problems creating or uploading your PDF file, contact your Section Chair for assistance.

4.3 Supporting Materials

If authors feel the need to provide supporting materials, they should consider uploading them to an online repository and mentioning this in their presentation or paper. Handouts may be used if necessary. Handouts should be used for information such as example code, graphics, or other supporting material.

If you decide to print handouts, please adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Do not include price lists, support commitments, promotional data, or other information of a sales nature.
2. Include your name and contact information so that people can contact you if they have questions or want more information.
3. Do not rely on your supporting materials to take the place of good visuals or a well- prepared oral presentation.
4. Bring a minimum of 50 copies.
5. When you check in before your presentation, tell the Section Chair that you have a handout. The Section Chair will have one of the assigned Session Coordinators distribute the handouts as you begin your presentation.
6. Insert the appropriate trademark symbols (® or ™) and citations ([Section 3.4.2](#), Item 4).

5. Presentation Details

MWSUG 2026 has opportunities for 10-minute, 20-minute and 50-minute presentations, in addition to Live Demos (60-minutes) and Hands-on Workshop (75 or 90-minutes).

5.1 Tips for Preparing your Presentation

1. A presentation template is available for downloading from the MWSUG website.
2. Scale your visuals for presentation in a large conference room that seats 50-150 people. Generally, font sizes should be no smaller than 24 points.
3. Divide ideas into groups of three to five, so your audience can more easily grasp information.
4. Prepare notes that compliment your slides – do not read what is shown on the slides. The audience can read faster than you can read them aloud.
5. The opening should be concise, and your purpose clearly stated; get the attention of your audience.
6. Use a closing slide to summarize your main points.
7. Wherever possible, use screen captures, except when performing a live demo.
8. Use a mixture of slides that show text, flow charts, and output. Images such as screen captures can be used to show a product's application in the workplace.
9. When using graphics, mute the colors for readability.
10. Limit the text in your visuals to the main concepts.
11. Receive electronic comments and questions in real time by including the hashtags #MWSUG2026 and #SSnn for your paper in the bottom right-hand corner of your slides, where “SS” is the two-character section abbreviation and “nn” is the two-digit number assigned to your paper.

5.2 Slide Counts

Presentations can be 10, 20 or 50 minutes in length, except for Live Demos and Hands-on Workshops which are 60, 75 and 90 minutes, respectively. A good rule of thumb is that a slide will take 1-2 minutes to present, so if you leave five minutes for questions, a twenty-minute paper should be about 10-12 slides, and a 50-minute paper should be about 30-35 slides. A 10-minute presentation should be 5-6 slides.

5.3 Presentation Requirements

1. Use SAS and other trademarks correctly in your slides. A list showing the proper names and trademarks for SAS products is available at: https://www.sas.com/en_us/legal/trademarks.html.
2. Presentation file should be a PowerPoint *.pptx file. If created using Adobe PDF, it must have the capability of Full Screen Mode display, similar to the PowerPoint display (i.e., same ratio).

5.4 Presentation Examples

Refer to the MWSUG presentation sample on the MWSUG 2026 website.

5.5 Practicing your Presentation

1. Practice your presentation aloud, speaking slowly and clearly. Remember that how you say it is just as important as what you say.
2. Ask others to listen and give you feedback about the volume, clarity, and speed of your presentation.
3. Practice the timing of your presentation, staying within the time allotted.
4. “SAS” rhymes with “glass”, “pass”, “mass”. Please do not refer to SAS products or to the company as “S” “A” “S” that is, pronouncing each letter. “SAS” is one syllable and is no longer considered an acronym.
5. Do not read your slides or paper (if you prepared one). Use an outline of your major concepts to follow when making your presentation.
6. Use plain English to help your audience grasp your message more easily. This is an international audience; English may be a second language for many attendees.
7. Conclude your presentation by repeating your opening theme and main ideas. Answer any questions that you might have raised in your opening and repeat the main point of your presentation.

5.6 Room Setup

Each meeting room at the conference will include a projector and microphone. If you have any additional needs, please notify your Section Chair. The presentation you upload to the SoftConf Submission System will be preloaded on the laptop in the room.

5.7 Delivering your Presentation

1. Note the time and room location of your presentation.
2. Arrive at the correct location at least 20 minutes before the start of your presentation. For new presenters, it's recommended to arrive one presentation before yours.
3. Let your Section Chair know you are there. Either the Section Chair or the Session Coordinator will help you operate the projector and take care of the lighting.
4. Your title and biography slide will be displayed on the screen prior to your presentation.
5. Be sure that everything that you need is in place and working.
6. Stand at the podium if possible. This gives the audience a clear view of both the screen and you.
7. Be aware of the time. Volunteers will help you via flash cards that will show how much time remains, including when your time is up.
8. Do not turn around to read your slides to the audience; it hinders the ability of the audience to hear you.
9. When your presentation is finished, thank the audience for their attendance and ask if there are questions while still at the podium.

10. Q & A time is included in your presentation length. Allow a few minutes of your allotted time for the audience to ask questions, depending on the length of the presentation. It's very common for speakers to get questions; you should consider it a compliment if you do.
 - a. It's recommended to repeat each question. This verifies what the question is, and it also gives you a few seconds to prepare an answer.
 - b. If you don't know the answer, you might offer to get the answer to the question after the presentation.
11. It's recommended to stay at the back of the room a few minutes after your presentation to be accessible for more questions and to get contact information from people for any follow-up questions.
12. If your time is up, and there are still questions, you can answer them outside the presentation room in the hallway. This is necessary to be courteous to the next presenter, and to allow enough time for them to set up their talk.

6. Electronic Poster Details

Electronic posters (e-Posters) are similar to traditional poster presentations but are presented on a large monitor. The e-Poster should be designed so that the topic covered is clear and concise.

6.1 e-Poster Guidelines

1. Use the PowerPoint e-Poster template to create your e-Poster. If you choose not to use the template, please ensure your e-Poster conforms to the following requirements:
 - a. One to eight slides
 - b. 16:9 ratio
 - c. Landscape orientation
 - d. Professional fonts such as Arial, Times New Roman, Calibri
 - e. Font size should ideally be 28 pt or larger; no smaller than 18 pt.
 - f. File size should be 100 MB or less
 - g. Title and author(s) included at the top

Note: If the submitted e-Poster is not the correct size, it will be forced to the correct size, which may cause distortion.

2. No aspect of the e-Poster should be dependent on the internet. It should be self-containing.
3. Any formulas in the e-Poster should be embedded as images and not as actual formulas. This will allow the formulas to display consistently across different platforms.
4. Any animations included will need to work on a timer instead of a mouse click; refer to Kiosk Mode for more information ([Section 6.4](#))

6.2 e-Poster Tips

1. Before you start preparing your e-Poster, ask yourself the following:
 - a. What is the main goal of the e-Poster?
 - b. What do you want your audience to take away?
2. An e-Poster is like an outline, not a novel. Keep the information on the e-Poster simple and easy to follow. Remember that you will not always be there to explain it.
3. Graphs, column charts, box plots, drawings, and other artwork are effective poster enhancements.
4. An example poster can be found on the MWSUG website, under Presenter Resources.
5. For assistance with creating your e-Poster, talk to the [e-Poster Section Chair](#).
6. For some helpful tips on creating a poster, refer to the following websites:
<http://www.swarthmore.edu/NatSci/cpurrrin1/posteradvice.htm>
<https://luponvochs.files.wordpress.com/2008/10/how-to-design-an-electronic-poster.pdf>

6.3 e-Poster Requirements

1. Use SAS and other trademarks correctly in your slides. A list showing the proper names and trademarks for SAS products is available at: https://www.sas.com/en_us/legal/trademarks.html.
2. File should be a PowerPoint *.pptx file. If created using Adobe PDF, then it needs to have the capability of Full Screen Mode display, similar to the PowerPoint display (i.e., same ratio).

6.4 Kiosk Mode

The e-Posters will be done in Kiosk Mode. This means that all the e-Posters submitted will be combined into one master file with a menu and navigation buttons. Each e-Poster will only be accessible from the main menu. In Kiosk Mode, the 'click to advance' feature will be disabled and replaced with navigation buttons. Since the 'click to advance' feature will be disabled, any animations that work on a mouse-click will not function.

6.5 Final e-Poster Submission

Final e-Posters must be uploaded to the SoftConf Submission System listed in [Section 1.3](#) by the deadline shown in [Section 1.1](#).