

# Recruitment Poster Design Considerations

When creating recruitment posters, here are a few things to keep in mind in order to create effective, accessible communications. These tips come from accessible design principles, accessibility requirements found in Manitoba's *Accessibility Standard for Information and Communication*, and recommendations brought forth by the Research Advisory Council (RAC) and the Research Advisory Council for Youth (RACY). Keep in mind this is not an exhaustive list of requirements. It is also recommended to review the *UM Human Research Ethics Guidelines for Participant Recruitment*.

## Accessibility & Design

### Active Offer

At the bottom of your poster, make sure to include CHRIM's active offer: If you require this material in an alternative format, please visit [chrим.ca/accessibility](http://chrим.ca/accessibility). An active offer is a proactive statement that ensures information is accessible to everyone and is required by law.

### Alignment

When writing paragraphs longer than a few lines, it's best practice to align text to the left. Research has shown that it's easier to read because the eye can better predict the beginning of the next line. The opposite would apply if you were designing in a language that writes right to left!

### Contrast

When using text over a coloured background, make sure that there is sufficient contrast! The closer the background colour is to the text colour, the harder it is to read. If you're creating a poster or graphic that will be on the web, the ratio is required to be at minimum 4.5:1 for small text and 3:1 for large text to comply with accessibility law.

### Font Size

Don't make your font too small! While you may be able to read it, many individuals do not have perfect eyesight. In general, regular printed body text should be around 9-14pts depending on the font. Legal text can be around 6 to 8pts, again depending on the font. Body text on the web should be no smaller than 16px to comply with WCAG 2.1 AA standards.

### Headings

Not everyone has the time or ability to read a complicated poster. To reduce cognitive load and improve the visual hierarchy of information, use headings to organize your content. Information presented in a clear manner assists viewers in processing information.

### Images & Graphics

All graphics and photos should complement the poster and represent the study well. Avoid using stock images when possible.

### Margins

Use margins! On an 8.5 x 11 inch page, a good amount is 0.25 or 0.5 inches. Do not put text or important elements outside your margins. This helps with readability, and also helps prevent anything getting cut off if you need it put up in the hallways or elevators.

## Posters on the Web

If putting your poster on your website, there must be a text version of the poster. A screenreader will not be able to detect text in images. As a rule, all images used on the web should have an accessible text option unless purely decorative. If your poster has a QR code, create a version without the QR code and instead put a direct link to the webpage users can click.

# Wording & Labelling

## Contact

It can be intimidating having to cold call or email a stranger. Consider using a QR code linking to a recruitment or contact page instead. You should also explain who the person the individual will be contacting is in plain language. Not everyone will know what PI stands for.

## Empowering Language

Try to use strengths-based language when possible instead of using negative or deficit-based language. When possible, language should be reviewed from a health equity lens.

## Expectations

Be specific about what you are looking for – what are the expectations of participants and what will they be doing? Be clear about how exactly to sign up, and WHO is signing up. Be clear about time expectations.

## Incentives

Be clear about incentives for participating. Will it provide better outcomes for children and families? Will there be compensation? If providing compensation, make sure you include a dollar sign (\$) beside the word honorarium so it's clear – not many youth are familiar with this term. Alternatively, just use the phrasing “financial compensation provided” or “payment provided”.

## Jargon

When creating a poster for the general public, use lay language and avoid using research jargon. While it may be clear to you, many are not familiar with clinical and research terminology. Consider standardizing the usage of terms like patient partner, patient participant, and research participant.

## Labelling

Label your poster in the top left or right indicating it is a recruitment poster, or consider using a standardized recruitment poster title consistently. This will help create consistency over time and make it clearer that it is a recruitment poster. Consider creating a template that you can re-use.

## Target Demographic

Make sure it is very clear who the poster is addressing. Parents? Youth themselves? Be consistent throughout the poster. The target demographic can also help you make design decisions. Consider making two different versions of a poster, one targeting and recruiting teenagers in addition to a poster directed to parents.

*If you require this material in an alternative format, please visit [chrим.ca/accessibility](http://chrим.ca/accessibility). There is also a text-based version of this poster on the CHRIM website at [chrим.ca/recruitmentposters](http://chrим.ca/recruitmentposters).*

