



Hydrology Days - Student Showcase Judging Criteria

Presenter: _____

Reviewer: _____

Title and Place of Employment of Reviewer: _____

Purpose: The student showcase features 4-minute 'lightning talks', bite-sized bits of science that showcase the essence of a student's research. Students are tasked with presenting an engaging snap-shot of their research, prepared for both a broad, non-academic audience including consultants/private industry, municipalities/utilities, government, and non-profit organizations working across the Food-Energy-Water sector, as well as traditional academic researchers.

1. How much did you take away from the presentation? What?

Nothing 1 2 3 4 5 6 A lot

What exactly? _____

2. Was the presenter clear about why their research matters to real-world concerns?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very

How exactly? _____

3. How engaging was the speaker?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very

Why exactly? _____

4. Did the presentation tell a clear story?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very

Why or why not? _____

5. Do you have an additional feedback (e.g., utility in your work, missing considerations, etc.)?



What makes a good lightning talk?

- Who is your audience? Adjust the presentation so that it is understandable by the folks who are listening. It is usually best to avoid jargon and technical terms unless you know that your audience will recognize those words.
 - *Hydrology Days evaluators include **BOTH non-academic audiences** (e.g., consultants/private industry, municipalities/utilities, government, and non-profit organizations working across the Food-Energy-Water sector), and **traditional academic researchers**.*
- Remember: less is more! Think about the “big picture” when selecting visuals and communicating the research.
- Focus on these four questions: *What was the motivation for conducting your research? What did you do? What did you or do you expect to find? Why does it matter (real-world implications or advice)?*
- Think about the flow of your talk. Does it tell a short, compelling story?
- Include only one major point per slide.
- Limit your use of text and use simple visuals.
- If you include text, make it clear and large enough to be viewed from a distance.
- You may have one of your slides up for only 30 seconds. Ensure that your visuals are simple and easy to interpret in a short amount of time.
- Ensure that the length of your presentation falls within the specified time limit (**4-minutes**).
- Keep in mind that you may have audience members that are color blind and cannot distinguish certain color differences, such as red and green.
- Prepare in advance: **Practice, practice, practice!**
- Practice with a family member, a colleague, and a friend with a different major to ensure your talk is approachable to a broad audience.



What Does a Lightning Talk Typically Include?

1. Title, Authors, and Affiliations (Slide 1)

2. Background

- Hook the audience in! Start with something that makes them want to hear more (e.g. a quote, a statistic, a question for the audience).
- Set the stage: Identify the issue you are addressing.
- Specify the study's motivations—hypothesis and objective(s)

3. Methodology

- Describe how you approached your research question.
- Remember, only include information that is absolutely necessary for the audience to understand your project.

4. Major Findings

- Identify the key findings.
- You may want to use simple diagrams, graphs, and figures to tell this part of your story.

5. Conclusions and Implications

- Identify the significance of your findings.
- Describe why this is useful to the community (e.g., real-world applications, future directions).

Check out this 18-minute workshop for more tips:

<https://academicaffairs.oregonstate.edu/research/lightning-talk>

Other Helpful Links:

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-01674-9>

<https://sites.bu.edu/urban/current-students/lightning-talk-tips/>

<https://ii.library.jhu.edu/tag/lightning-talks/>



Hydrology Days
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY



ONE WATER
SOLUTIONS INSTITUTE
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY





Know Your Audience

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Invited Community Members & Stakeholder Organizations

In addition to the traditional faculty and staff attendees, the following organizations have been invited to participate in evaluating the Student Showcase:

- CSU Extension
- CSU Provost
- CSU SoGES
- Colorado Collaborative for Healthy Soils
- Aspire Sustainability
- Brendle Group
- Carollo Engineers
- City of Fort Collins (Mayor Arndt; City Council members)
- City of Fort Collins Utilities
- Colorado DNR
- Denver Water
- Colorado Water Conservation Board
- EPA National Exposure Research Laboratory
- Larimer County
- National Renewable Energy Laboratory
- State of Colorado
- USDA ARS (Plains Area)
- The Water Research Foundation
- Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
- The Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research
- Trees, Water, & People
- JBS Greeley
- Leprino Foods
- New Belgium Brewery
- Nutrien Ag Solutions
- Occidental Petroleum
- Wright Water Engineers, Inc.
- Republican River Water Conservation District
- City of Westminster Utilities

Concluding remarks should identify the significance of your findings. Specifically, **describe why your research is useful to the community** (e.g., real-world applications, advice, future directions).

