

Three Minute Thesis (3MT[®]) Competition Information

OVERVIEW:

Three Minute Thesis (3MT[®]) is a research communication competition developed by The University of Queensland (UQ). The exercise challenges research higher degree students to present a compelling oration on their thesis topic and its significance in just three minutes.

3MT[®] develops academic, presentation, and research communication skills and supports the development of research students' capacity to effectively explain their research in language appropriate to a non-specialist audience.

BACKGROUND:

The first 3MT[®] competition was held at UQ in 2008 with 160 research higher degree students competing. In 2009 and 2010 the 3MT[®] competition was promoted to other Australian and New Zealand universities and enthusiasm for the concept grew. Due to its adoption in numerous universities, a multi-national event was developed, and the Inaugural Trans-Tasman 3MT[®] competition was held at UQ in 2010. Since 2011, the popularity of the competition has increased and 3MT[®] competitions are now held in over 600 universities across 65 countries worldwide. 2016 also brought an expansion of the Trans-Tasman 3MT[®] competition to include universities in South-East Asia and North-East Asia. This regional event is now called the Asia-Pacific 3MT[®] competition.

3MT[®] is not an exercise in trivializing or 'dumbing-down' research, but challenges students to consolidate their ideas and research discoveries so they can be presented concisely to a non-specialist audience.

RULES:

- A single static PowerPoint slide is permitted (no slide transitions, animations or 'movement' of any description, the slide is to be presented from the beginning of the oration).
- PowerPoint slide should be created using an aspect ratio of 16:9.
- No additional electronic media (e.g. sound and video files) are permitted.
- No additional props (e.g. costumes, musical instruments, laboratory equipment) are permitted.
- Presentations are limited to 3 minutes maximum and competitors exceeding 3 minutes are disqualified.
- Presentations are to be delivered in regular prose (e.g. no poems, slam poetry, raps or songs).
- Presentations are to commence from and remain on the stage.
- Presentations are considered to have commenced when a presenter initiates through movement or speech.
- The decision of the judging panel is final.

JUDGING CRITERIA:

Communication

- Did the presenter use non-verbal communication (i.e. eye contact, voice modulation, body language) effectively?
- Did the presenter use language and terminology that was clear, jargon-free, and understandable to a general audience?
- Did the presentation follow a logical sequence?
- Did the presenter spend adequate time on each element of their presentation? Did they elaborate for too long on one aspect, or did the presentation feel rushed?

Comprehension

- Did the talk help you to understand the scholarly research being undertaken?
- Did the presenter clearly outline the nature and purpose of their research?
- Did the presenter clearly indicate the fascinating or compelling aspects of their research?
- Did the presentation provide an understanding of the background and significance to the research question being addressed?
- Did the presentation clearly describe the impact and/or results of the research, including conclusions and outcomes?

Engagement

- Was the talk engaging?
- Did the presenter capture and maintain the audience's attention?
- Did the presenter convey enthusiasm for their work?
- Was the presenter careful not to trivialize or generalize their research?
- Did the PowerPoint slide enhance the presentation - was it clear, legible, and concise?

PEOPLE'S CHOICE:

An important aspect of the competition is the People's Choice prize. Following all presentations, the audience is asked to vote on who they thought gave the most convincing 3MT® presentation (based on their understanding of the criteria outline above). A finalist can be the 1st, 2nd or 3rd place winner and still receive the People's Choice award.

PRIZES:

- 1st Place Winner - \$750, plus a chance to represent UNBC at the Western Regional Finals (if this event is held in-person, travel costs will be covered by UNBC)
- 2nd Place Winner - \$500
- 3rd Place Winner & People's Choice - \$250