



Virtual 3MT Handbook 2021



Contents



Contents

About 3MT	3	Rules	5
History	3	Judging Criteria	5
Why participate?	3	Virtual 3MT Preparation - Competitors .	6
Prizes.....	3	3MT Writing	6
Progression	4	3MT PowerPoint Slide	6
Virtual Wildcard Competition.....	4	3MT Presentation	7
Virtual Asia-Pacific 3MT Sponsors.....	4		
Eligibility.....	5		

The 2021 Virtual Asia-Pacific 3MT

About 3MT

The Three Minute Thesis (3MT) competition celebrates the exciting research conducted by Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) students. Developed by The University of Queensland (UQ), 3MT cultivates students' academic, presentation, and research communication skills.

The competition supports their capacity to effectively explain their research in three minutes, in a language appropriate to a non-specialist audience.

History

The idea for 3MT came about at a time when the state of Queensland was suffering severe drought. To conserve water, residents were encouraged to time their showers, and many people had a three minute egg timer fixed to the wall in their bathroom. The then Dean of the Graduate School, Emeritus Professor Alan Lawson, put two and two together and the idea for the 3MT competition was born.

Timeline

2008: The first 3MT competition was held at UQ with 160 Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidates competing.

2009: The 3MT competition was promoted to other Australian and New Zealand universities and enthusiasm for the concept grew.

2010: A multi-national event was developed, and the Inaugural Trans-Tasman 3MT competition was held at UQ.

2013: The first Universitas21 (U21) Virtual 3MT competition was held with several universities from around the world competing.

2016: The Trans-Tasman 3MT competition expanded to include universities from South-East and North Asia regions and was renamed the Asia-Pacific 3MT competition and is hosted annually by UQ.

2020: 3MT moves to a temporary virtual format due to COVID-19.

2021: 3MT continues to be held around the world in either a virtual or live format (depending on local COVID-19 restrictions).

Now: 3MT is held in over 900 universities across more than 80 countries worldwide.

Why participate?

Skills development for research candidates
Participating in 3MT develops academic, presentation and research communication skills, while developing research candidates' ability to effectively explain their research in language appropriate to a non-specialist audience.

Building research culture in universities
3MT provides a valuable opportunity for HDR candidates to come together (live or virtually), get to know one another and talk about their research. It also provides a supportive environment in which schools, institutes and universities can provide presentation skills training.

Building external relations for the university
3MT winners may go on to represent their university at national and international 3MT competitions which provides an excellent networking and professional development opportunity. Previous 3MT finalists have benefited from invitations to a variety of other networking events following their participation in the competition.

Prizes

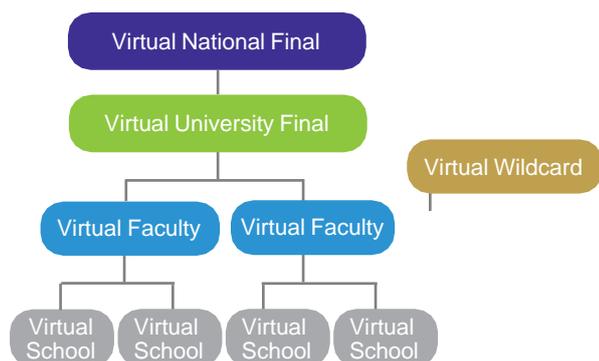
First prize \$3,000 plus entry into the 2020 Asia-Pacific Competition at the University of Queensland as well as the U21 final, a virtual event with judges watching video entries rather than live presentations
Runner-up prize \$1,500
Third prize \$500



The 2021 Virtual Asia-Pacific 3MT

Progression

The following chart outlines the progression of competitors throughout the 3MT competition.



The winner of each heat or final is expected to represent their school/faculty/university at the next stage of the competition. If the winner does not wish to proceed with submitting a video, the runner-up video will proceed to the next round of the competition in their place.

Virtual Wildcard Competition

The Virtual Wildcard Competition is an optional level, where the People's Choice winner (audience voted) from each Faculty Final is given the chance to compete for a place in the University 3MT Final (If the faculty winner was also the people's choice, the runner-up proceeds to the Wildcard competition).

Virtual Asia-Pacific 3MT Sponsors

The 2021 Virtual Asia-Pacific 3MT competition is proudly sponsored by our Platinum Sponsor, Springer Nature, a global publisher dedicated to providing the best possible service to the whole research community.

SPRINGER NATURE

The 2021 Virtual Asia-Pacific 3MT competition is also proudly sponsored by our Gold Sponsor UniBank, a bank for the university sector.

UniBank

Virtual Competition Guidelines

Eligibility

Active PhD and Professional Doctorate Research (program composed of at least 2/3 research and eligible for RTP) candidates who have successfully passed their confirmation milestone (including candidates whose thesis is under submission) by the date of their first virtual presentation

are eligible to participate in 3MT competitions at all levels, including the Asia-Pacific 3MT competition. Graduates are not eligible.

Please note: Students enrolled in any of the following programs are not eligible to enter the Virtual Asia-Pacific 3MT Competition:

- Masters (MPhil and coursework); and
- Professional Doctorate (coursework).

Rules

- Presentations are limited to 3 minutes and competitors exceeding 3 minutes are disqualified.
- Presentations are considered to have commenced when a presenter starts their presentation through speech (timing does not include the 3MT title slide and commences from when the competitor starts speaking, not the start of the video).
- A single static slide is permitted in the presentation (no slide transitions, animations or 'movement' of any description).
- No additional props (e.g. costumes, musical instruments, laboratory equipment and animated backgrounds) are permitted within the recording.
- Presentations are to be spoken word (e.g. no poems, raps or songs).
- No additional electronic media (e.g. sound and video files) are permitted within the video recording.
- The decision of the adjudicating panel is final.
- Entries submitted for final adjudication to Wildcard or University Final are to be submitted from the School/ Faculty/Institute 3MT Event Coordinator. Competitors should not submit their videos directly to 3MT.

Please note: competitors *will not* be judged on video/ recording quality or editing capabilities (optional inclusions). Judging will focus on the presentation, ability to communicate research to a non-specialist audience, and 3MT PowerPoint slide.

Please note: After each competition round competitors have the option to either submit their current presentation or re-record and submit a new presentation for entry into the next round.

Judging Criteria

At every level of the competition each competitor will be assessed on the judging criteria listed below. Each criterion is equally weighted and has an emphasis on audience

Comprehension and Content

- Did the presentation provide an understanding of the background and significance to the research question being addressed while explaining terminology and avoiding jargon?
- Did the presentation clearly describe the impact and/or results of the research, including conclusions and outcomes?
- Did the presentation follow a clear and logical sequence?
- Was the thesis topic, research significance, results/impact and outcomes communicated in language appropriate to a non-specialist audience?
- Did the presenter spend adequate time on each element of their presentation - or did they elaborate for too long on one aspect or was the presentation rushed?

Engagement and Communication

- Did the oration make the audience want to know more?
- Was the presenter careful not to trivialise or generalise their research?
- Did the presenter convey enthusiasm for their research?
- Did the presenter capture and maintain their audience's attention?
- Did the speaker have sufficient stage presence, eye contact and vocal range; maintain a steady pace, and have a confident stance?
- Did the PowerPoint slide enhance the presentation - was it clear, legible, and concise?

Virtual Competition Guidelines

Virtual 3MT Preparation - Competitors

Even the world's best presenters prepare before important presentations. To assist your competitors with their preparations, please find below suggestions that will help them in writing their presentation, creating their slide, as well as practising, recording and submitting their presentation.

3MT Writing

Write for your audience

One of the judging criteria looks for evidence that you can explain your research to a non-specialist audience. To do this you may like to:

- Avoid jargon and academic language;
- Explain concepts and people important to your research (you may know all about Professor Smith's theories but your audience may not);
- Highlight the outcomes of your research, and the impact it will have;
- Imagine that you are explaining your research to a close friend or fellow student from another field; and
- Do not devalue your research, what you are doing is exciting and you should convey enthusiasm for your subject.

Tell a story

You may like to present your 3MT like a story, with a beginning, middle and an end. It's not easy to condense your research into three minutes, so you may find it easier to break your presentation down into smaller sections. Try writing an opener to catch their attention, then highlight your different points, and finally have a summary to restate the importance of your work.

Have a clear outcome in mind

Know what you want your audience to take away from your presentation. Ideally, you would like the audience to leave with an understanding of what you're doing, why it is important and what you hope to achieve.

What not to do

Do not write your presentation like an academic paper. Try to use shorter words, shorter sentences and shorter paragraphs. You can use humour, however be careful not to devalue your presentation.

Revise

Proof your 3MT presentation by reading it aloud, to yourself and to an audience of friends and family. This allows you to not only check your style, but it will allow you to receive critical feedback. Ask your audience if your presentation clearly highlights what your research is and why it is important.

3MT PowerPoint Slide

Before you start work on your slide, you should take the following rules into account:

- a single static PowerPoint slide is permitted;
- no slide transitions, animations or 'movement' of any description are permitted; and
- no additional electronic media (e.g. sound and video files) are permitted.

An engaging visual presentation can make or break any oration, so you want your slide to be legible, clear and concise. You may like to consider some of the following suggestions.

Less is more

Text and complicated graphics can distract your audience – you don't want them to read your slide rather than listen to your 3MT.

Suspects, Science and CSI
Slide: Matthew Thompson, 2011



Personal touches

Personal touches can allow your audience to understand the impact of your research.

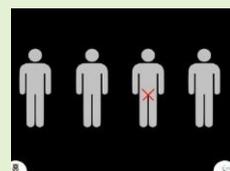
Ocker or Oriental? Asian Australians and the Denial of National Identity
Slide: Michael Thai, 2013



Creativity drives interest

Do not rely on your slide to convey your message – it should simply complement your spoken oration.

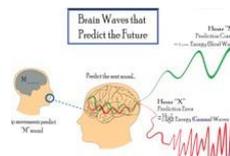
The Fourth Man
Slide: Ryan Stafford, 2011



Work your message

Think about how your slide might be able to assist with the format and delivery of your presentation – is there a metaphor that helps explain your research?

Brain Waves that Predict the Future
Slide: Tim Paris, 2012



Virtual Competition Guidelines

3MT Presentation

Practice, practice, practice

Before you record your presentation it is important to practice so you can present with confidence and clarity.

Vocal range

- Speak clearly and use variety in your voice (fast/slow,loud/soft).
- Do not rush – find your rhythm.
- Remember to pause at key points as it gives the audience time to think about what you are saying.

Body language

- Stand straight and confidently.
- Hold your head up and make eye contact.
- Never turn your back to the audience.
- Practise how you will use your hands and ensure your presentation is recorded/delivered from a single position.
- Do not make the common mistakes of rolling back and forth on your heels, pacing for no reason or playing with your hair as these habits are distracting for the audience.

Dress

- While there is no dress code, if you are unsure of how to dress you may like to dress for a job interview or an important meeting.
- Do not wear a costume of any kind as this is against the rules (as are any props).



Graduate School



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA