3MT® THREE MINUTE THESIS
FOUNDED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

2019 Handbook

For Participating Universities

The University Of Queensland
AUSTRALIA
Graduate School

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Event Overview

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 the Three Minute Thesis (3MT®) competition 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 UQ 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 in 2010.

2013: The first Universitas 21 (U21) 3MT competition was held with several universities from around the world competing in a virtual competition.

2016: 3MT bought about an expansion of the Trans-Tasman 3MT competition to include universities from South-East and North Asia regions. The competition since then has been called the Asia-Pacific 3MT competition and is hosted annually by UQ.

Now: 3MT is held in over 600 universities across more than 65 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 schools and institutes

3MT provides a valuable opportunity for HDR candidates to come together, 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

Prizes are an important incentive for HDR candidates entering the competition. Prizes can vary at the discretion of your institution. Your University/Institution may also wish to seek sponsorship from external providers to fund the competition prizes.

For example, UQ awards winners with the following prizes:

- First Prize: $5000 research travel grant
- Runner-Up: $2000 research travel grant
- People's Choice: $1000 research travel grant

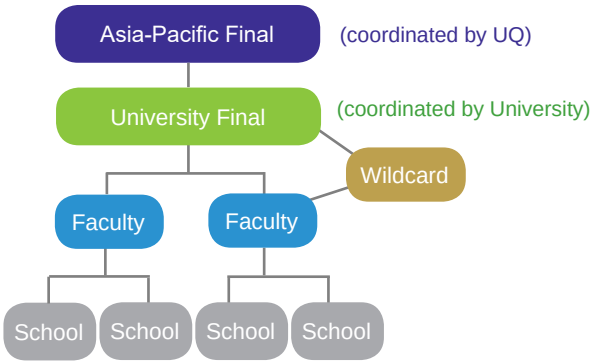
3MT Competitor Guide

Even the world's best public speakers prepare before important presentations. To assist your competitors in preparing their 3MT, please review the 3MT website for suggestions that will help your competitors in writing their presentation, creating their slide and practising their presentation.

Event Overview

Progression

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



Please Note:
The winner of each heat or final is expected to represent their School/ Institute/Faculty/University at the next stage of the competition. If the winner is unable to attend the final, the runner-up will proceed to the next round of the competition in their place.

Wildcard Competition

The 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).

U21 Final
(U21 network institutions only)

The Universitas21 (U21) network of universities co-ordinates a virtual 3MT competition open only to U21 member universities. Each participating institution will hold its own internal 3MT competition to select a local winner who will then be put forward for the U21 Final. The Final will be judged by an international panel consisting of industry and academic professionals.

The virtual aspect of the Final will hone skills associated from being filmed for an international audience, receiving international peer review, and gaining skills surrounding the presentation of their research to a wider audience.

Asia-Pacific Competition

The Asia-Pacific 3MT competition, hosted by UQ in Brisbane, Australia, is open to Universities in Australia, New Zealand, South-East and North-East Asia.

Participating universities agree to:

– Register online via the 3MT website
– Provide UQ with the registration fee payment amount of AU$550 + GST;
– Cover the travel, accommodation and associated costs for the competitor representing the institution;
– Ensure competitors meet the eligibility critera (outlined on page 5)

Registration for the Asia-Pacific 3MT competition opens in February each year via the 3MT website and limited places are offered in order of registration until the capacity has been reached.

The Asia-Pacific 3MT competition is proudly sponsored by Springer Nature, one of the world's leading global research, educational and professional publishers, home to an array of respected and trusted brands providing quality content through a range of innovative products and services. Springer Nature is the world's largest academic book publisher, publisher of the world's most influential journals, and a pioneer in the field of open research.

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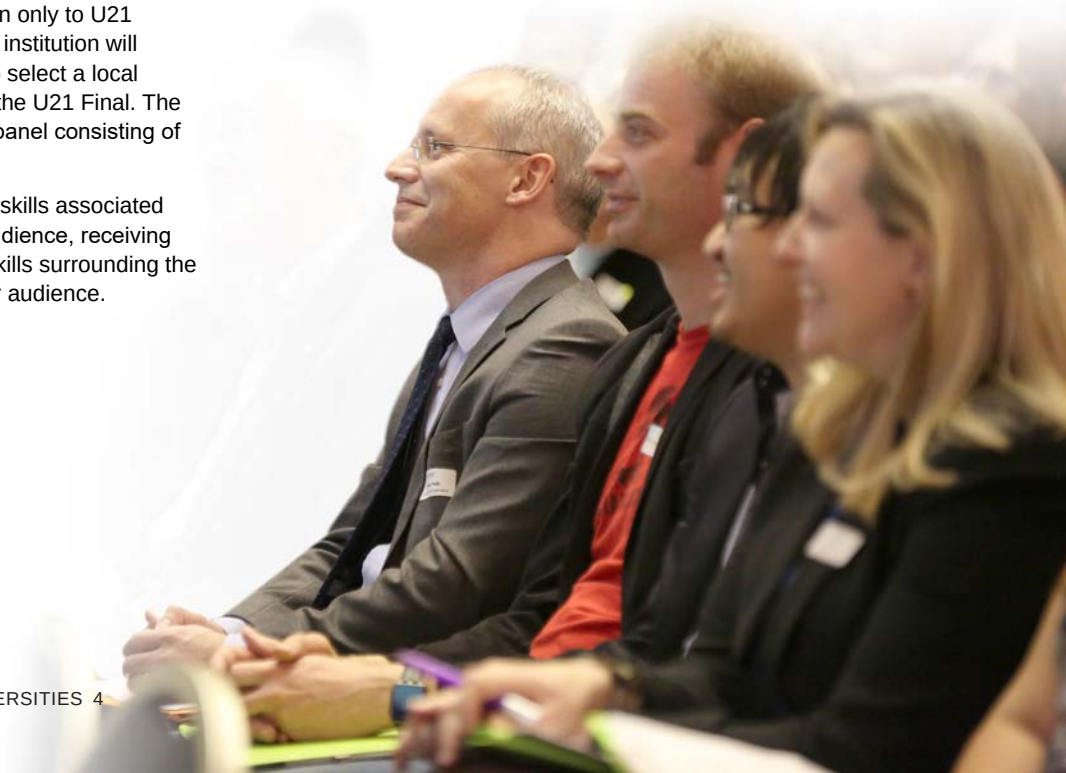


Competition Guidelines

Eligibility

Active PhD and Professional Doctorate (Research) candidates who have successfully passed their confirmation milestone (including candidates whose thesis is under submission) by the date of their first presentation are eligible to participate in 3MT competitions at all levels, including the Asia-Pacific 3MT competition. Graduates are not eligible.

Please Note:
For Australian Students: Those enrolled in any of the following programs are not eligible for the Asia-Pacific 3MT competition:
- Professional Doctorate (Research) (program composed of at least 2/3 research) funded via the Research Training Program;
- Masters (Mphil and coursework);
- Professional Doctorate (coursework)

Rules

– A single static PowerPoint slide is permitted. No slide transitions, animations or 'movement' of any description are allowed. The slide is to be presented from the beginning of the oration.

– 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 spoken word (e.g. no poems, raps or songs).

– Presentations are to commence from the stage.

– Presentations are considered to have commenced when a presenter starts their presentation through either movement or speech.

– The decision of the adjudicating panel is final.

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?

Judging Panel

To provide every entrant with a similar experience, it is recommended that the following be taken into consideration when composing the judging panel.

– Include three to five judges on your panel;

– Balance your judging panel by age, gender, academic/professional positions, and discipline;

– Consider including a marketing/communications member; and

– While judges should declare any conflict of interest, they should still vote on each 3MT presenter's oration, even if the presenter is from their discipline.

Three Minute Timer

A three minute timer may be helpful for candidates when presenting. This can be displayed for the competitor on a laptop (Power Point) or tablet device (Timer App).

A countdown timer is recommended as it will assist in familiarising competitors with the format if they progress to national or international competitions. Visual cues (such as raising a visible yellow card) to illustrate a 30 second warning, and ringing a bell at the final three minute mark are also useful for competitors.

Please Note:
A warning signal will not be used at the Asia-Pacific 3MT competition.

Event Management

Resources

The Three Minute Thesis brand and 3MT logo is a registered trademark of The University of Queensland.

UQ has developed a number of resources (listed below) which are provided upon registration to host a 3MT.

All 3MT information, resources and marketing materials are free to use; however you must obtain the 3MT Materials Permission and ensure you adhere to the Brand Guidelines.

Event Management Resources (examples)

– Judging Sheets
– Award Certifcates
– Order of Proceedings
– People's Choice Ballot (UQ uses Survey Monkey)
– PowerPoint Presentation
– Judging Panel Information
– Participant Contact Details Spreadsheet

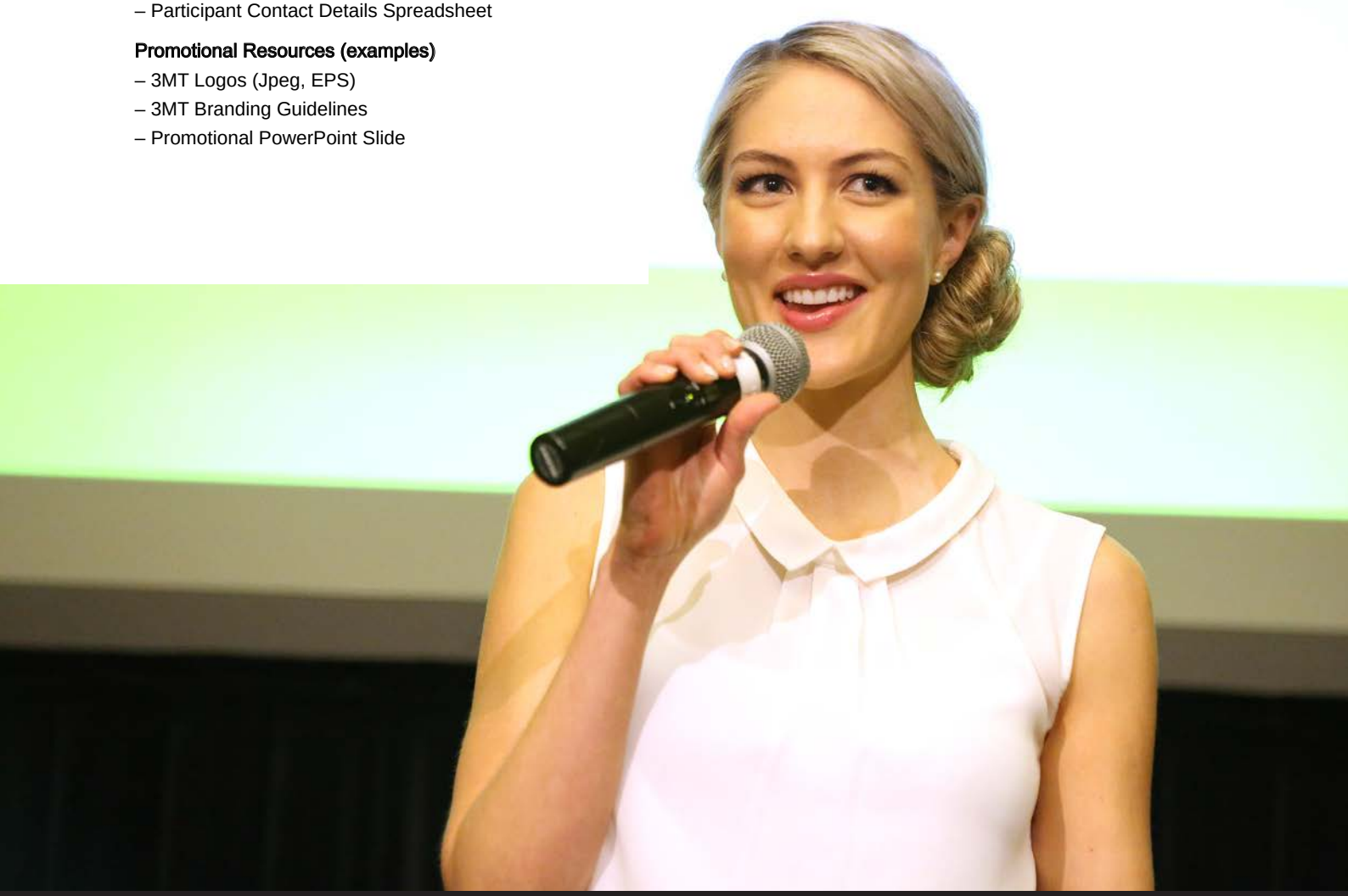
Promotional Resources (examples)

– 3MT Logos (Jpeg, EPS)
– 3MT Branding Guidelines
– Promotional PowerPoint Slide

Further Information

If you have any queries about 3MT please visit the 3MT Website or contact the UQ Graduate School.

Email 3MT@uq.edu.au
Phone +61 7 3346 0510

www.threeminutethesis.org

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