



Handbook

For Participating Universities



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Event Overview

About 3MT

The Three Minute Thesis competition celebrates the exciting research conducted by Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) students. Developed by The University of Queensland (UQ), the exercise 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 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 200 universities across more than 18 countries worldwide.

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

2016 brings an expansion of the Trans-Tasman 3MT competition to include a select number of Asian universities. The competition has now been renamed to the Asia-Pacific 3MT competition.

Why participate?

Skills development for research candidates

The exercise 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 higher degree candidates to come together, get to know one another and talk about their research. It also provides a supportive environment in which research institutions can provide presentation skills training.

McDonnell International Scholars Academy 7th International Symposium

The Symposium will bring together 35 premier partner universities united in addressing the world's most critical problems of the 21st century. It will feature discussions about ongoing research and how institutions of higher learning can foster the collaborative efforts required to address complex global challenges. Each global challenge will be considered in its own right, but it will also be examined in tandem with others. The three themes of the Symposium are:

1. Agriculture, Food & Water
2. Energy & Environment
3. Public Health & Aging

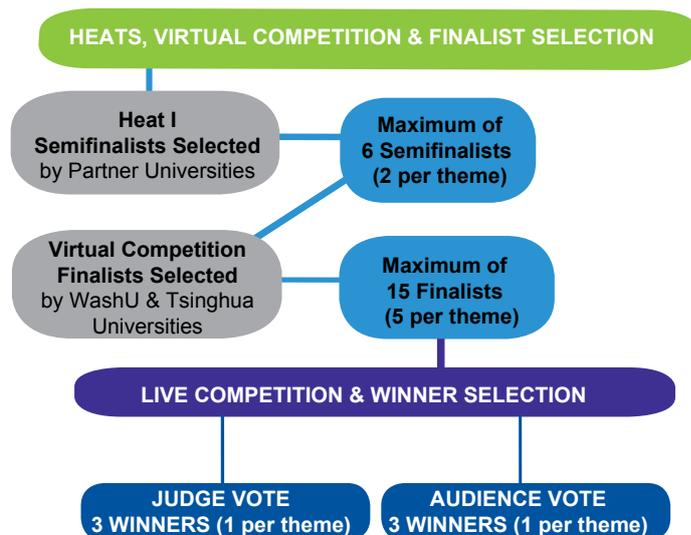
Adapted for the Symposium, 3MT competition submissions should be focused around one of the three themes. **Submissions focused on the topic of Climate Change will also be accepted and categorized under the Agriculture, Food & Water theme.**

Participation Support for Finalists & Prizes

Students selected as finalists following the initial virtual competition will be awarded up to \$2,000 (USD) to cover airfare and lodging expenses while in Beijing to attend the Symposium and present in the live 3MT competition. Judge-selected winners will receive a prize of \$1,000 (USD); winners chosen by the audience will receive a prize of \$500 (USD). *3MT coordinators from partner institutions with finalists/winners selected will be contacted following selection regarding expense and prize processing.

Progression

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



Please Note:

Within each institution there is some flexibility on how the competition is structured, as long as a up to two (2) semifinalists are chosen for each theme and submitted to the virtual competition.

Competition Rules and Guidelines

Eligibility

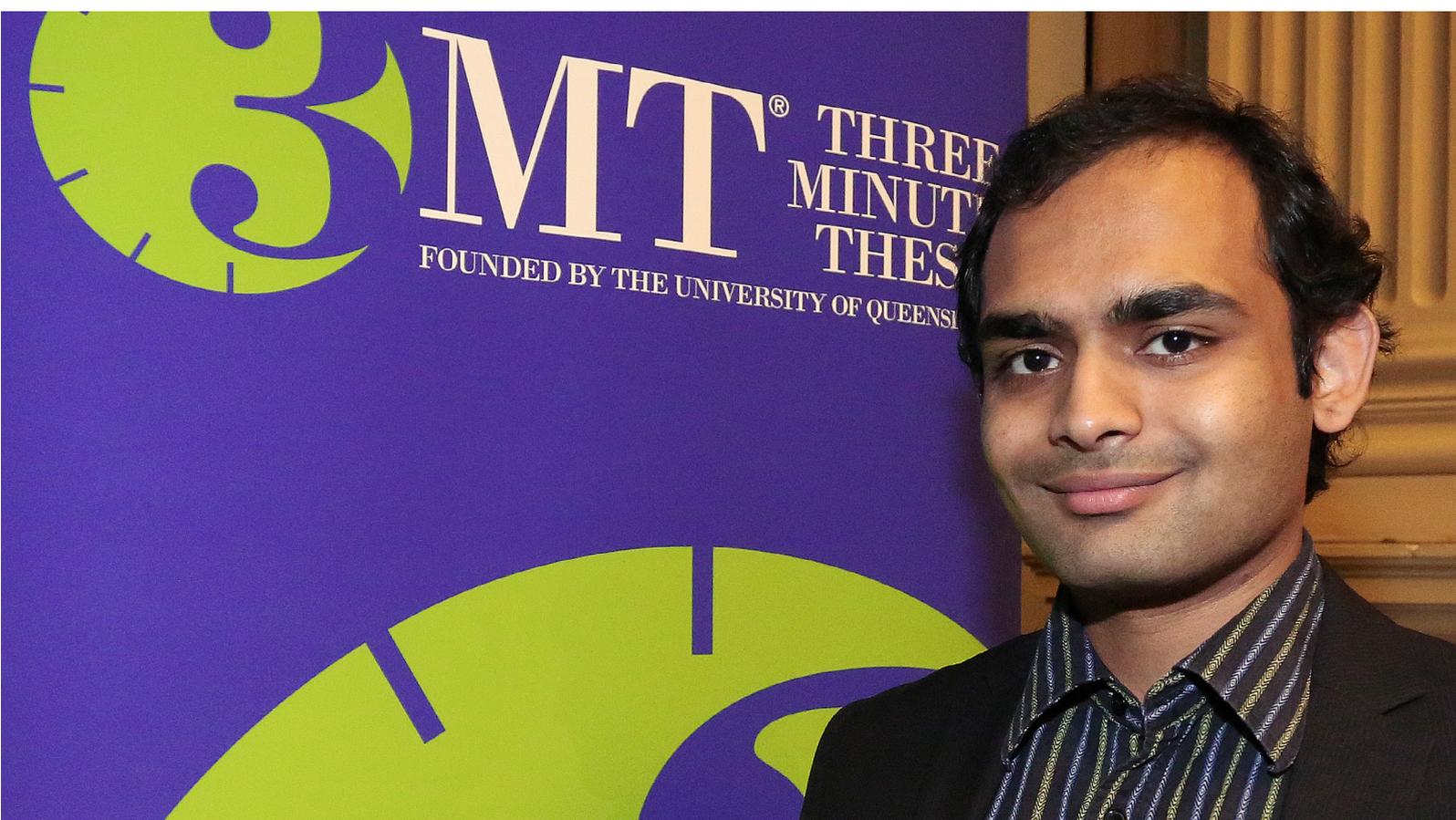
All graduate students (professional and PhD) at McDonnell Academy partner universities who will be enrolled in a full-time graduate program at the time of entry in to the competition and at the time of the Symposium in October 2018 are eligible to participate. Students must present 3MTs on any of the three thematic areas (including on the topic of Climate Change). Climate Change presentations are categorized as part of the Agriculture, Food & Water theme.

Guidelines, General Selection Process and Competition Timeline

- Each partner university will promote the 3MT within their respective university, holding competitions or accepting general submissions from eligible students by the deadline set by the partner 3MT competition coordinator.
- Each partner university will select up to six of the top submissions across all thematic areas. Ideally we would like a mix from all three thematic areas; no more than 2 per theme.
- Each partner university will send their top 6 submissions using the specified form for reporting entries by midnight (CST) Monday 23 July 2018.
- 15 finalists (up to five (5) from each theme) will be selected from all partner submissions; finalists will be announced by midnight (CST) Wednesday 15 August 2018.
- Finalists will compete live at the Symposium during designated times on 13 October 2018.
- 3 winning 3MT presentations will be selected at the Symposium by judge; 3 will be selected by audience vote.

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.



Competition Rules and Guidelines

Rules for Entry (Video) Submissions

- Presentations are limited to 3 minutes and competitors exceeding 3 minutes are disqualified.
- The 3 minute audio must be continuous - no edits, breaks etc.
- No additional electronic media (e.g. sound and video files) are permitted within the video recording.
- Students should submit their competition entry (video) using the specified method, process or form required by their institutions 3MT competition coordinator.
- 3MT competition coordinators should submit their selected entries using the specified method and form required by the Symposium 3MT competition coordinator.

Judging Criteria

At every level of the competition each competitor will be assessed using the judging criteria listed below.

Please note: Each criterion is equally weighted and has an emphasis on audience.

Comprehension and Content

- Did the presentation provide an understanding of the background to the research question being addressed and its significance?
- Did the presentation clearly describe the key results of the research including conclusions and outcomes?
- Did the presentation follow a clear and logical sequence?
- Was the thesis topic, key results and research significance and outcomes communicated in language appropriate to a non-specialist audience?
- Did the speaker avoid scientific jargon, explain terminology and provide adequate background information to illustrate points?
- 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?

Selecting the Judging Panel

To provide every entrant with a similar experience, the UQ Graduate School recommends considering the following when composing your 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 staff 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 Countdown

The UQ Graduate School recommends implementing a three minute countdown timer which is helpful for candidates when presenting. This can simply be displayed for the competitor on a laptop (Power Point) or tablet device (Timer App).

Please note: The countdown timer is not compulsory and we recommend asking each competitor if they would like to use it or not.

We recommend adopting the countdown timer as it will assist in familiarising competitors with the format should they go on to compete in the national or international competitions whereby a table device (Timer App) may be used. Students may also like a visual cue (such as raising a visible yellow card in the air) to illustrate a 30 second warning, and ringing a bell at the final three minute mark.

Resources

If your institution would like to brand and promote the competition at your university, UQ has developed a number of resources which can be downloaded from the 3MT Website and include:

Event management resources:

- Award Certificates
- Budget
- Judging Sheets
- Order of Proceedings
- Participant Contact Details Spreadsheet
- People's Choice Ballot
- PowerPoint Presentation
- Promotional PowerPoint Slide
- 3MT Logos (Jpeg, EPS)
- 3MT Participant Registration Email
- 3MT Attendance Invitation Email
- Judging Panel Information
- Reserved Seating Template

Promotional resources:

- 3MT Logos / Description
- 3MT Branding Guidelines / Media Release

More Information

If you have any general queries about 3MT please contact the UQ Graduate School.
Phone +61 7 3346 0510
www.threeminutethesis.org
3MT@uq.edu.au

More Information About the 7th International Symposium 3MT Competition

Roumy Theunissen
Director of Global Conversations
Office of Public Affairs
Washington University
Tel. 314.935.2915 | rtheunissen@wustl.edu

DIRECT LINKS TO COMPETITOR RESOURCES

- [3MT Competitor Guide](#)
- [Watch 3MT Presentations](#)



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