What is 3MT®, Why is it Beneficial, How is it Judged, and How to Prepare

THE THREE MINUTE THESIS 3MT® COMPETITION AT IMS2018

What is 3MT®?

The Three Minute Thesis 3MT® competition, developed by The University of Queensland (UQ), Australia, in 2008, (see http://threeminutethesis.org/) “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.”

In three minutes or less, using only one static slide, and no other props, contestants deliver their presentation to a panel of non-specialist judges. These judges rank the contestants, based on how engaging, accessible, and compelling they made their presentation. A candidate who goes overtime is disqualified.

Since its inception, the 3MT® competition has grown to include more than 350 universities across more than 18 countries worldwide.

Here, for example, is “Double rotor motor” by McMaster University engineering student Teng Guo: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YKCwewMKcg8

You can also find twelve videos selected from the inaugural IMS2017 3MT® Competition on the MTT-S IMS YouTube channel https://www.youtube.com/mttims

How is 3MT® being adapted for IMS2018?

Going beyond the scope of academia, the proposed 3MT® competition for IMS2018:

- Requires that participants have received their first professional degree no more than 15 years prior to the date of the competition
- Is open to young and aspiring professionals, including students and postdoctoral fellows.
- Requires authorship or co-authorship of a paper accepted for and presented at IMS2018 as the principal gateway for entry to the competition.
- Limits any accepted contestant to speak only once, with no substitutions.
- Caps the total number of contestants (maximum to be decided).

Why is participating in the IMS2018 3MT® beneficial to your career?

Developing the skills necessary to distil highly complex, technical material into a form accessible to the non-specialist has become popular worldwide for students within universities that have adopted the 3MT® competition. Such skills become lifetime assets for the career advancement of any professional. Once such skills are mastered, namely, clarity of communication without oversimplifying or resorting to jargon, and the ability to engage a
diverse audience with authenticity and enthusiasm, these skills are transferrable to virtually any professional career path.

**When and in what format will the competition occur?**

The competition is scheduled for Monday, 11 June 2018, in one of the technical session venues. Contestants will make their presentations to symposium attendees and to a panel of non-specialist judges. The equipment available will be the same as for any technical session, with the addition of a videographer who will record each 3-minute presentation for possible uploading on YouTube.

**Broad goals of the IMS2018 3MT® competition**

The IMS2018 3MT® competition is designed to stimulate interest in the wide range of applications of microwave technology. Such information would help renew the public’s interest in microwaves as a transformative technology that is rewarding both to those who study it, and to those whose daily lives benefit from incorporation of scientific developments in consumer products.

Goals include:

- Developing for the general public a suite of video-taped, award-winning 3-minute microwave-oriented presentations by passionate and articulate younger members of MTT-S.
- Persuading general audiences of the importance to humanity of microwaves and related technical fields.
- Showcasing the human element of individual members of our Society.

These goals should go a long way to attracting high-school students, undergraduates, and women to our profession.

**The prizes**

While recognizing the top 4 ranked contestants, it is planned to award cash prizes to the top three, and to the Audience Choice winner.

**The organizers**

John Bandler, IMS2018 3MT® Chair
Erin Kiley, IMS2018 3MT® Co-Chair

**The Rules**

The 3MT® rules and judging criteria as formulated by the University of Queensland follow. See [http://threeminutethesis.org/rules-judging-criteria](http://threeminutethesis.org/rules-judging-criteria)
For the extended rules and guidelines for the IMS2018 3MT® Competition see IMS2018 3MT®

Competition 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

See http://threeminutethesis.org/rules-judging-criteria

Comprehension & 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 & 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?

Links to Videos from the Inaugural IMS2017 3MT® Competition
You can find selected videos from the inaugural IMS2017 3MT® Competition on the MTT-S IMS YouTube channel https://www.youtube.com/mttims


Shirin Montazeri, “Low-power Electronics for Future Telescopes,” IMS2017 3MT® Second Place Winner: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3kkj6jdYBR4


Farhan Abdul Ghaffar, “Don’t Talk Back!” IMS2017 3MT® Honorable Mention: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0BLCaCcoNgQ

Preparation & Links

3MT® Showcase (Winning Presentations from around the World): http://threeminutethesis.org/3mt-showcase


Making the Most of Your Three Minutes: https://www.grad.ubc.ca/sites/default/files/materials/gps_3MT.pdf


If I Am To Speak Ten Minutes, I Need a Week for Preparation; If an Hour, I Am Ready Now: http://quoteinvestigator.com/2014/03/01/short-speech/

Workshops and Articles


