3MT® (Three Minute Thesis) 2020

3MT® competitions offers PhD students the opportunity to engage an audience and judging panel of university staff, general public and industry with their research and its potential impact in just three minutes!

Communicating to different audiences helps you to demonstrate the contribution that your work could make to wider society and the economy. This is your chance to engage and enthuse a range of learners about research.

Developing your skills
Participation in 3MT® provides an opportunity to develop your presentation and research communication skills and supports the development of your capacity to effectively explain your research in language appropriate to an intelligent but non-specialist audience.

Here’s what our 2019 winner, William Trickey said:

“3MT has been an amazing experience! I've met some great people and learnt about their interesting research. I'm honoured to have won, it's been such a positive experience for me. I really recommend any PhD student to give it a go.”

– William trickey (Physics)

Who is eligible?
University of York PhD students, who have passed their first formal review of progress, and have not yet completed their viva.

How to apply?
Complete the online 3MT Proposal, which must include a proposal title and a short lay summary/abstract (500 words) describing your research and its potential impact on the economy/society by 01 April 2020. Applications will be reviewed by a panel of engagement specialists and a selection of the entries will be chosen to audition with a 3 minute presentation and a slide representing their message on 23 April 2020.

Selection for the final
Ten finalists will be selected from the auditions to take part in the University of York 3MT® 2020 final on Wednesday 10 June 2020. The event will be held at 6pm in the Tempest Anderson Hall at The Yorkshire Museum. Training in public engagement and presentation skills will be provided for the chosen finalists and will take place on Wednesday 13 May 2020.

3MT® 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) or props (e.g. costumes, musical instruments, laboratory equipment) are permitted.
• Presentations are limited to 3 minutes 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 and are considered to have commenced when a presenter starts their presentation through either movement or speech.
• The decision of the adjudicating panel is final.

In association with
Prizes
There will be prizes for first (iPad), second (Amazon Vouchers) and third (Amazon Vouchers) place. There will also be a “Peoples’ Choice” winner.

Judging Criteria
At every level of the competition each competitor will be assessed on the judging criteria. 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?

UK 3MT® 2020 semi-final (online) and final
The winner of the York 3MT® 2020 final will enter a video of their presentation into the Vitae hosted UK 3MT® 2020 semi-final (by end June 2020). Six finalists will then be selected to perform live in the UK 3MT® 2020 final during the gala dinner at the Vitae Researcher Development International Conference, in Birmingham, on 16 September 2020.

Falling Walls Labs 2020
The Falling Walls Lab is a challenging, inspiring and interdisciplinary format to showcase the next generation of top researchers, developed and hosted annually by the Falling Walls Foundation in Berlin on 08 November. All York 3MT® 2020 finalists will be encouraged to adapt their 3MT talk and enter a Falling Walls Lab, for the chance to represent the University at the Falling Walls Lab Finale and Conference in Berlin on 08/09 November 2020. Our 3MT 2020 winner will be provided with a bursary to attend a Falling Walls Lab.

YGRS PGR Induction Event
York 3MT® 2020 finalists will be invited to perform at the York Graduate Research School (YGRS) Post Graduate Researcher (PGR) Induction event on 27 September 2020.

Timeline and Important Dates
- 01 April 2020: Closing date for entries
- 09 April 2020: Short-listed applicants informed
- 23 April 2020: Audition event (RCSS Training Room YH/100b, 9am – 5pm)
- 30 April 2020: Successful applicants informed
- 13 May 2020: Training session for finalists (The Piazza building PZA/123, 9am – 5pm)
- 22 May 2020: Review session
- 10 June 2020: University of York 2020 3MT® final (Tempest Anderson Hall, 6 – 7.15pm)
- end June 2020: UK 2020 3MT® semi-final (online) video submission
- 16 September 2020: UK 2020 3MT® final (Vitae conference)
- 27 September 2020: YGRS Induction Event

Please contact the Research Excellence Training Team rett@york.ac.uk with any enquiries