



To: All final-year research postgraduate students

Three Minute Thesis Competition

Challenge yourself to describe your research within 3 minutes to a general audience and win a travel grant or book prize!

The Graduate School and the Knowledge Exchange Office (KEO) will jointly organize the first Three Minute Thesis (3MT™) Competition for HKU this year. 3MT is an academic competition that challenges research postgraduate (RPg) students to explain their research within 3 minutes to a general audience.

Background

The 3MT Competition is an initiative of The University of Queensland (UQ), Australia, which was introduced in 2008 and is now run annually. Enthusiasm for the 3MT concept and its adoption in numerous universities led to the inaugural Australia & New Zealand 3MT™ Competition held in 2010.

3MT celebrates the discoveries made by research students and encourages skill development in communicating the importance of research to the broader community. It is emphasized that 3MT is not an exercise in trivialising or ‘dumbing-down’ research, but rather is an initiative to encourage students to consolidate their ideas and to present a clear and concise description of their research projects in language appropriate to a non-specialist audience.

Eligibility Criteria

- MPhil or PhD students whose candidature have been confirmed and who are in their final year of study (*i.e.* within one year prior to the end of their candidature or who have already submitted the "Notice of Intent to Submit a Thesis")
- MPhil or PhD students who have submitted their thesis may also enter the Competition if they have not yet received the confirmation letter from the Graduate School that they have already completed all the requirements for the conferment of the degree sought.

Please note that students are permitted to enter the competition only once during their candidature.

Presentation Rules

- Each presentation is limited to 3 minutes maximum. Participants exceeding 3 minutes will be disqualified.
- The presentation should be delivered in English.
- A single static PowerPoint slide is permitted for each presentation (without any slide transitions or animations).
- No additional electronic media (*e.g.* sound and video files) are permitted.
- No additional props (*e.g.* costumes, musical instruments, laboratory equipment) are permitted.
- The decision of the adjudicating panel is final.

Participants are advised to focus their presentation on the following key issues:

- The problem(s) being addressed in their research project
- A brief explanation on how the research is being conducted in an attempt to contribute to the solution of the problem(s)
- The potential impact the research will have on the society or research field

Participants are reminded that due to the nature of the competition, any data or information presented or discussed in the Competition should be considered information that will likely enter the public domain, for example, in media coverage, in subsequent University publications for the public in print and/or digital formats, and/or on the University's websites, etc.

Judging Criteria

- **Communication style:** was the thesis topic and its significance communicated in language appropriate to an intelligent but non-specialist audience?
- **Comprehension:** did the presentation help the audience understand the research?
- **Engagement:** did the oration make the audience want to know more?

The adjudicating panel will comprise both internal and external members.

Prizes

- Winner: HK\$7,000 research travel subsidy or book prize
- First Runner-up: HK\$5,000 research travel subsidy or book prize
- Second Runner-up: HK\$3,000 research travel subsidy or book prize
- People's Choice (by audience ballot): HK\$3,000 research travel subsidy or book prize

If an awardee opts to use the prize for research travel subsidy rather than book vouchers, it should be subject to the same conditions governing the use and reimbursement of travel grants in support of international academic training/research activities for RPg students (*i.e.* paragraphs 3, 7 and 9-12 of document 357/409) or of conference grants for RPg students (*i.e.* paragraphs 3b, 10-14 of document 356/409) that are administered by the Committee on Research and Conference Grants. Both documents can be found via the Graduate School website (<http://www.hku.hk/gradsch/web/student/fund.htm>). The travel should be made within one year of the award. A brief report on the academic training/research activities undertaken or the conference attended should be submitted to KEO within 30 days after return.

Schedule

The 3MT Competition has been scheduled for:

Date: Friday, June 17, 2011

Time: 3:00 pm

Venue: T5, Meng Wah Complex

Registration

For registration to enter the 3MT Competition, please visit the HKU Event Management System:

<http://hkuems1.hku.hk/hkuems/hkuevent.aspx>

Registration Deadline: May 18, 2011

Depending on the number of student registrations for the Competition, participants may need to go through shortlisting rounds before the final competition. Details will be decided and announced after the deadline for registration.

Resources

A briefing session will be organized before the registration deadline to introduce the 3MT concept to students. Details will be announced soon.

Interested students are also advised to look at the video clips on the presentations of UQ's 3MT 2010 winners at the following website:

<http://www.uq.edu.au/grad-school/three-minute-thesis> (under "UQ 3MT™ Competition")

For enquiries, please contact KEO (tel: 2299 0171; email: keoffice@hku.hk).

The assistance of The University of Queensland in launching the 3MT Competition at HKU is deeply appreciated.

Graduate School
Knowledge Exchange Office

cc All RPg Supervisors and FHDC members

April 19, 2011

May 9, 2011 (updated)