



FIJI NATIONAL
UNIVERSITY



Three Minute Thesis (3MT™) *Student Handbook*

Fiji National University
Research Office
www.fnu.ac.fj

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Foreword



The Three Minute Thesis (3MT) competition brings together a diverse and interdisciplinary cohort of higher degree by research (HDR) students to develop “elevator pitches” of their thesis topics, all in plain and understandable language. The art of succinctly and precisely communicating one’s ideas in the form of an “elevator pitch” is a critical skill that allows a researcher to differentiate themselves in a frantic and highly competitive world that is crowded by many excellent people with great ideas. In three minutes, participants are required to present their research problem, solution, hypothesis and approach in addressing their thesis topic to an audience of peers, as well as a high-caliber jury of experts from academia, business/industry and the public.

Initiated by The University of Queensland in 2008, the 3MT competition provides a unique opportunity to profile and celebrate the innovative research conducted by active HDR, Masters by coursework or Postgraduate students. The 3MT competition not only helps students’ communicate their research to a non-specialist audience, but it also assists them in articulating a short, pithy, interesting and compelling presentation. We are thrilled to be the first University in Fiji to host this competition, and we look forward to future extensions of the program to the broader region and the world. We hope that you enjoy your participation in the 2022 3MT competition, and we look forward to learning more about your research.

I take the opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to the FNU staff of the Research Office in organizing this event, as well as the able assistance of the Academic Colleges in implementing the program.

Professor Roland De Marco

Pro Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation
Research Office

EVENT OVERVIEW

What is it?

Three Minute Thesis (3MT) is a challenging, inspiring and interdisciplinary competition developed by The University of Queensland to showcase the next generation of students and early-career professionals. Participants have three minutes to present a compelling oration on their thesis topic and its significance. It is important to note that 3MT is not an exercise in trivialising or 'dumbing-down' research, but challenges students to consolidate their ideas and research discoveries so they can be presented concisely to a non-specialist audience. For FNU this is an inaugural competition that is partially funded by ACIAR and FNU Students' Association.

Why participate?

In your post-graduate programme the majority of students need to submit a dissertation. More specifically, candidates enrolled in Higher Degrees by Research (HDR) Programme need to focus extensively in producing a full-scale thesis. The ability to communicate the importance of your research project and articulate your findings is very valuable. The 3MT offers the following advantages:

- Provides participants with networking opportunities amongst like-minded individuals.
- Celebrates and promotes excellent talent in academia and the innovation sector.
- Strengthens links between research and development across academia and business.
- Enables participants to communicate their ideas effectively to the wider community and audience.

Who can participate?

- Anyone who is active in the HDR Programme, or
- Masters by coursework students who have a significant thesis component (including thesis under submission), or
- Graduates who fall in the category of early career researchers (i.e., < 2 years post PhD).

Definition of early career researchers (for the purpose of 3MTC)

- A graduate of either Masters by Research or Masters by coursework that has a thesis component, or a PhD graduate who is employed by FNU.
- From the date of graduation, the early career researchers should not exceed 2 years as of 30 June 2022.



The Fiji National University (FNU) has for the first time been ranked in the Times Higher Education (THE) Impact rankings that measure an

Institution's research, outreach, teaching and stewardship against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

FNU was one of 1,525 institutions across 110 countries/regions worldwide to participate in the impact rankings for 2022.

PRIZES

The winners of the FNU 3MT will be awarded with the following prizes:

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| First Prize | 3000FJD cash |
| Runner-up | 2000FJD cash |
| People's Choice | 1000FJD cash. (Split between an Early career researcher & a post-graduate student = \$500 each) |

Key Dates

| DATE | ITEM |
|----------------------|--|
| 30th July, 2022 | College ADRs to brief the departments and Head of Schools (Internal briefing and preparation on college wide 3MTC) |
| 30th August, 2022 | All Department rounds of the competition to be completed by this date |
| 15th September, 2022 | All School rounds of the competition to be completed by this date |
| 30th September, 2022 | List of College finalists to be received by Research Office |
| 14th October, 2022 | FNU 3MT Final Competition |

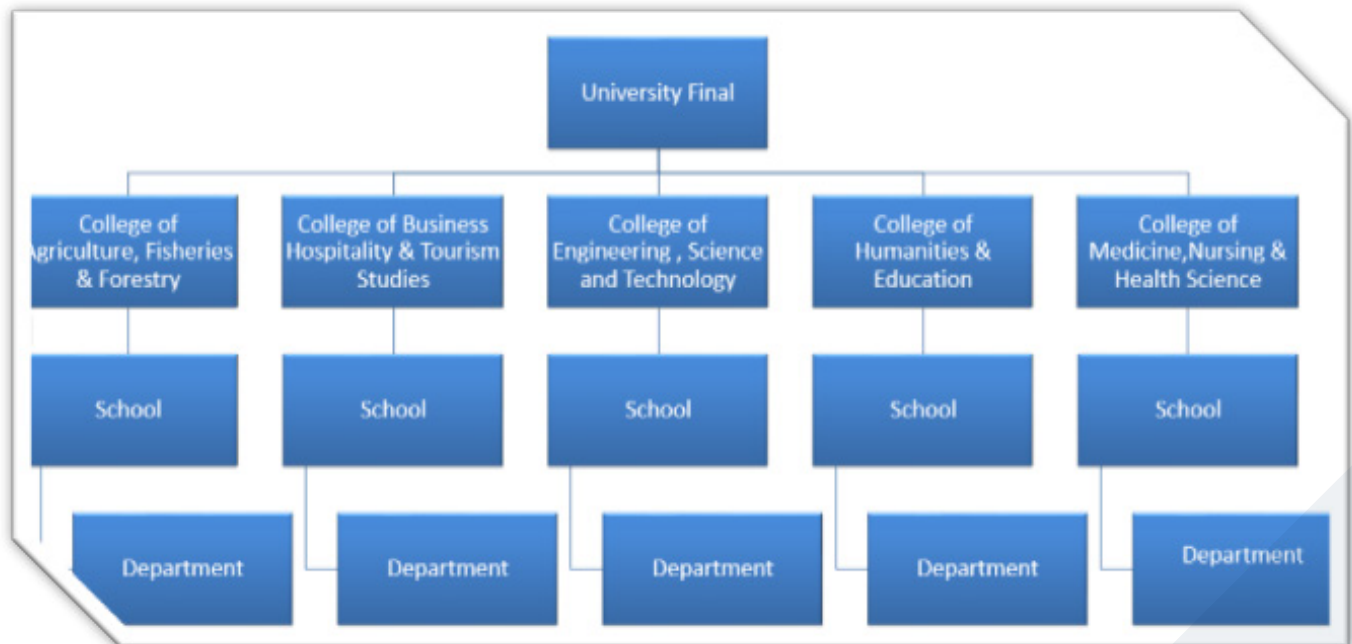
FNU's alignment to Fiji's Development Plan and UN SDG's

The Fiji National University (FNU) is embarking on the next stage of its development. Building on the successes of FNU's first decade, the Strategic Plan 2021–2026 sets out the University's ambitions for the next five years, and charts a course towards the kind of university FNU aspires to be in 2030. The Plan is a dynamic, living document, and will respond to changes in the external environment



PROGRESSION

The following chart outlines the progression of students throughout the competition and highlights key contacts for each event. According to the eligibility requirements, all registered students and staff will participate in the 3MT Department rounds. Only successful applicants will progress to the school rounds and may progress to the college rounds noting that a college finalist will include one student and an early career researcher who will progress to the University Final.



The ADRs will organize the internal 3MT competition at a department level which will escalate to the school level, and will subsequently progress candidates to the college level. From the college level, the finalists will include one early career researcher and one graduate student who will compete in the University final.

Panel Members

- USP Director Research
- FNU Pro Vice Chancellor Research & Innovation
- One ACIAR Partner
- One FNU Student Association Representative
- One FNU independent member
- One Business owner/Entrepreneur/Industrialist
- Permanent Secretary Education

COMPETITION GUIDELINES

Judging Criteria

At every level of the competition, each competitor will be judged on the three judging criteria listed below. Please note that each criterion is equally weighted and has an emphasis on suitability for a broad audience.

Breakthrough factor (50%) – How innovative is the proposed idea?

Relevance and Impact (40%) – How relevant is the idea to the discipline and beyond?

Structure/Performance (10%) – How convincing was the presentation?

1. Comprehension:

- 1.1. Did the presentation help the audience understand the research?
- 1.2. Did the presenter clearly outline the nature and claims of the research?

2. Engagement:

- 2.1. Did the oration make the audience want to know more?
- 2.2. Was the presenter careful in conveying the content of their research in a form that was understandable to a general audience, but also meaningful to an expert one?
- 2.3. Did the presenter convey enthusiasm for their work?

3. Communication style:

- 3.1. Was the thesis topic and its significance communicated in language appropriate to a non specialist audience?
- 3.2. Did the speaker use sufficient eye contact and vocal range, maintain a steady pace, and a confident stance?
- 3.3. Did the speaker avoid scientific jargon, explain terminology that needed to be used, and provide adequate background information to illustrate points?
- 3.4. Did the presenter spend the right amount of time on each element of their presentation – or did they elaborate for too long or were rushed?

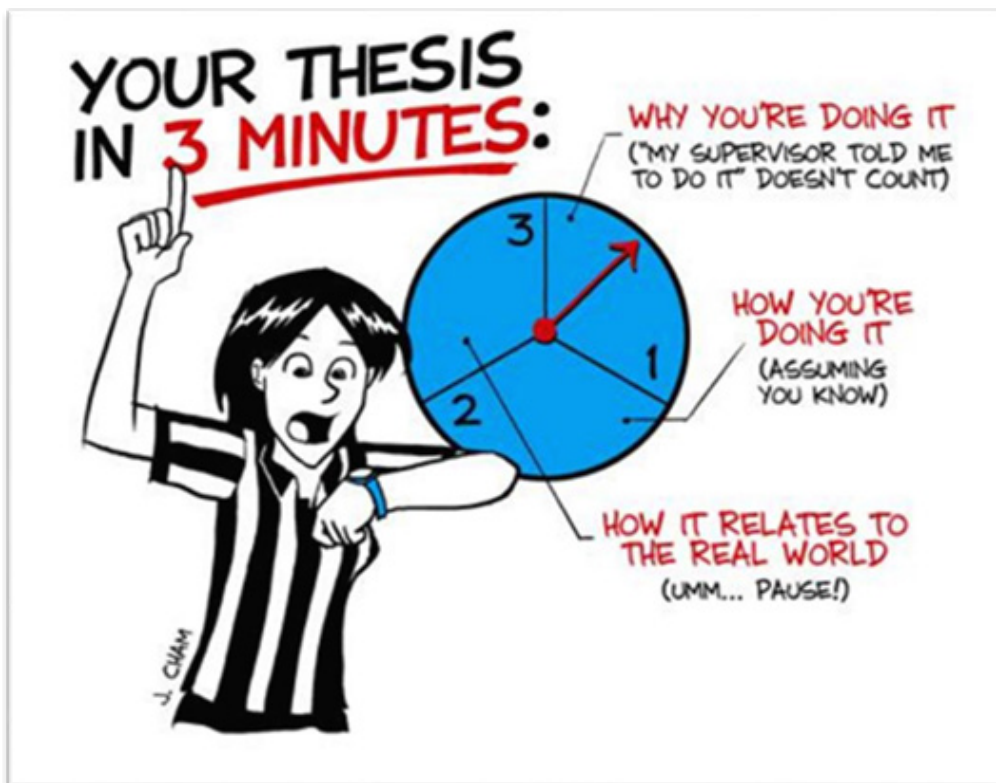
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RULES

The following rules have been developed for the competition.

1. A single static PowerPoint slide is permitted (no slide transitions, animations or 'movement' of any description, the slide is to be presented from the beginning of the oration).
2. No additional electronic media (e.g. sound and video files) are permitted.
3. No additional props (e.g. costumes, musical instruments, laboratory equipment's) are permitted.
4. Presentations are limited to 3 minutes maximum and competitors exceeding 3 minutes will be disqualified.
5. Presentations are to be spoken word (e.g. no poems, raps or songs).
6. Presentations are to commence on the stage.
7. Presentations are considered to have commenced when a presenter starts their presentation through movement or speech.
8. The decision of the adjudicating panel is final.



3MT PRESENTATION PREPARATION

It is important to note that the world's best public speakers prepare before important presentations. To assist you with your preparation, please find below a few suggestions that will help you in writing your presentation, creating your slide and practicing your verbal presentation.

A good 3MT presentation

- Doesn't try to say too much
- Is delivered with poise.
- Has expression (pauses and inflections to stress key points)
- Includes a story, metaphor or emotional element
- Gives concrete examples
- Doesn't 'telegraph'
- Tells you things you didn't expect to hear about on the topic

Practicing your Presentation

We hope you find the following tips useful as you prepare your 3MT oration.

1. Practice, practice, practice

Feeling nervous before you present is natural, and sometimes a little nervousness is a good thing and beneficial to your overall speech. Nonetheless, it is important to practice so that you can present with confidence and clarity.

2. Vocal range

- Speak clearly and use variety in your voice (fast/slow, loud/soft).
- Do not rush - find your rhythm.
- Remember to pause at key points as it gives the audience time to think about what you are saying.

3. Body language

- Stand straight and confidently.
- Hold your head up and make eye contact.
- Practice how you will use your hands and move around the stage. It is okay to move around energetically if that is your personality, however it is also appropriate for a 3MT presentation to be delivered from a single spot on stage.

4. Record yourself

Record and listen to your presentation to hear where you pause, speak too quickly or get it just right. Then work on your weaknesses and exploit your strengths.

5. Look to the stars!

- Watch your role models such as academics, politicians and journalists, and break down their strengths and weaknesses. Analyse how they engage with their audience.
- Visit the [3MT website](#) to view presentations by previous 3MT finalists.

6. Dress

- While there is no dress code, if you are unsure of how to dress, your personal presentation is important, so you may choose to dress for a job interview or an important meeting.
- Do not wear a costume of any kind as this is against the rules (as are any props).

7. Practice using a microphone

While each School, Department or College may use different equipment, at the FNU Final, you will have a wireless

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

The Research Office has adapted the University of Queensland 3MT FAQs to assist students wishing to participate in 3MT.

Q: Can I also be eligible if I am in a programme that has Masters by coursework but has a thesis component?

Yes

Q: Am I eligible if I have not gone through the candidature confirmation but preparing for my proposal defense?

Yes

Q: Can I present my oration using a digital medium, for example Skype/Zoom?

Normally not

Q: Can I present my oration as a poem, rap or song?

No. While we appreciate everyone has a different presentation style, the purpose of the activity is to “engage the audience without reducing research to entertainment value alone”. 3MT is primarily about developing a student’s oration skills. It is important that the competition is not seen as trivialising the research.

Q: Can I use a laser pointer?

Yes. A laser pointer is not considered a prop. However, the emphasis is on the oration.

Q. Does my slide have to be in PowerPoint?

No, however, it is our preferred format as all slides will be collated into a single PowerPoint presentation for the competition.

Q. How many transitions or animations can I have in my slide?

None. The slide must be static and not change in any way during the presentation. Your slide must be displayed for the duration of your presentation.

Q. Do I have to use a slide?

No. The slide is optional as the emphasis is on the oration

Q. What happens if my presentation is longer than 3 minutes?

In the 3MT Final, a 20-second warning will be provided to competitors (a fluoro coloured board held up by the timekeeper) and a bell will sound at the three-minute limit. If a presenter continues to speak after the bell, they will be automatically disqualified.

Q. Is there a dress code?

There is no stipulated dress requirement such as ‘smart casual’. Some students have worn suits with ties, others t-shirts and jeans. Please wear whatever is comfortable for you. Please note that no costumes are allowed (including hats, fancy masks [Covid protective masks are allowed], Dame Edna specs).

Q. Can I win more than one category?

Yes, it is possible to win a place (a place getter and the People's Choice award).

Q. What happens if I cannot attend the final?

The winner of each heat or final is expected to represent their School/Department/College at the final competition stage. If the winner from the College level is unable to attend the final, the college will not have a representative at the 3MT.

Further information

If you have any queries about 3MT please contact the

3MT Event Coordinators in the Research Office.

Rajieli Niubalavu | rajieli.niubalavu@fnu.ac.fj

Reena Singh | reena.singh@fnu.ac.fj

Saleshni Kumar | saleshni.kumar@fnu.ac.fj

APPENDIX

Email Approval

From: 3MT@uq.edu.au <3MT@uq.edu.au>

Sent: Thursday, January 13, 2022 4:56 PM To: Ronald R. Kumar <ronald.k@fnu.ac.fj>

Subject: 3MT Event & Brand Permission

Dear Ronald,

Thank you for registering Fiji National University's interest in hosting a **Three Minute Thesis (3MT)** competition.

Your institution has been authorised to develop a 3MT competition and has permission to use the brand and all resources as long as the same rules, judging criteria and branding guidelines prescribed by **The University of Queensland** are followed.

It is a requirement that **The University of Queensland** is acknowledged in all 3MT promotional and marketing materials.

Links to competition resources are below:

- **3MT Resources (live)**
- **3MT Resources (virtual)**
- **3MT Branding Guidelines**

Further information can be found on the [3MT website](#) however should you require additional information please contact the Graduate School at The University of Queensland - 3MT@uq.edu.au.

Thank you for your support of the Three Minute Thesis competition. Kind regards

Graduate School

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