



Science Communication Award 2024 Three-minute Talks Program

In 2014, intramural training directors from NICHD and NHGRI launched a competition among intramural trainees to communicate in three minutes or less the substance of their research and its significance to improving human health—in such a way that can be understood by a broad scientific audience.

The competition is modeled on one developed originally at the University of Queensland, Australia in 2008 and now employed at other places in Australia, Canada, Belgium, and more recently in the U.S., called the Three Minute Thesis 3MT®.

Subsequently, a small annual competition among three or four ICs was established. We have been delighted to see the TmT expand across NIH in recent years. For 2024, 13 ICs have partnered—NICHD, NIAMS, NHGRI, NEI, NIDCD, NINDS, NIDCR, NIAMS, NCATS, NIAID, NHLBI, NIDDK and NIEHS. **To continue supporting this as an NIH interinstitutional program, the 2024 program will be virtual.**

Objectives:

- Develop scientific communication skills among our trainees.
- Showcase intramural science to the general public.
- Enhance awareness of the breadth and significance of NIH research.

NIH trainees at the postbac, predoctoral, postdoctoral, visiting, and clinical fellow level are invited to compete within their intramural program for these science communication honors. Participants receive professional coaching for oral presentation skills in the form of an introductory workshop held in February, followed by individual sessions for support in creating an “elevator pitch” summary of their research and a single PowerPoint slide to use as a visual aid.

Participation in the TmT introductory training is required. The 2024 workshop will be held on Monday, February 5th, at 10 a.m. (via Zoom).

A single finalist is selected from each institute’s internal competition event.

Final Competition (late June): The final TmT presentation and judging event is held during the last week of June, allowing finalists from various institutes to present their three-minute research talks to a nonspecialized (broad scientific) audience, and based on the judging criteria and overall scoring, a distinguished panel of invited judges will select the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners.

Each institute has their own award incentives for participation in the event—typically a monetary award is provided, to cover the costs of a scientific training or participation and travel at a scientific meeting.

Rules: Fellows can use only a **single, non-segmented PowerPoint slide** with animations or video files. No sound or props are permitted. **Presentations cannot exceed three minutes** and must use only spoken words.

Judging Criteria:

- Ability to clearly and succinctly describe a research project in language appropriate to a general scientific audience
- Have a logical flow that captures and maintains the audience's attention
- Spend adequate time on each element of the presentation, from description of the background to key results, including its relevance to human health
- Enhance the presentation with a clear and concise PowerPoint slide