

PGR Development Programme 2025 – 26



Introduction to Three Minute Thesis competition 2026

Dr Sally Hoare & Stephanie Thomson



Session outline



- What is the 3MT? An overview of the competition aims and purpose
- What are the benefits to you as a researcher when taking part?
- Eligibility - Who can enter?
- Details of the internal competition process at the University of Liverpool
- Examples of research topics and ppt slides of previous finalists 2023-2025
- Hear from last year's UoL winner and UK national quarter finalist (Stephanie Thomson)
- Q&A

3MT History

- The Three-Minute Thesis (3MT) competition was developed by the [University of Queensland](#) to celebrate the exciting research conducted by doctoral research students.
- Since the inaugural event at the University of Queensland in 2008 the popularity of the competition has reached global heights with 900 universities holding events across 85 countries.
- In 2026, The Academy will host the 4th competition to decide who will represent the University of Liverpool at the national 3MT competition run by [Vitae](#).



Three Minute Thesis:

An 80, 000 word PhD thesis would take nine hours to present.

**Your time limit...
three minutes**

3MT overview

- 3MT celebrates the exciting research conducted by postgraduate researchers across the world.
- Cultivates academic, presentation, and research communication skills as well as engagement for research impact!
- Supports PGRs capacity to effectively explain their research and its significance in three minutes, in a language appropriate to a non-specialist audience.
- 3MT is an established globally-recognised competition with 85 countries taking part each year. Highly prestigious in the UK and beyond!



Three Minute Thesis:

**An 80, 000 word PhD thesis would take nine hours to present.
Your time limit...
three minutes**

What the benefits to you as researchers of entering the 3MT?

Your research. Three minutes. Unlimited impact...



The 3-minute advantage why you should enter



- **Raise your research profile:** Winning, being a finalist, and even competing elevates your visibility across the University, to the public, and on a national and international stage via social media and news articles (and with the chance to represent UoL at the national competition). This enhances your professional profile as a researcher.
- **Get high-value training and feedback:** To help you produce a concise, impactful, and engaging presentation, all entrants gain access to an exclusive research communication workshop and one-to-one training (finalists) delivered by one of the top engagement trainers in the country. The 3MT can literally transform the way you present at academic conferences in terms of content and self-confidence.
- **Unlock career and funding opportunities:** The ability to communicate your research clearly to non-specialists is essential for many grant applications, job interviews (both academic and industry), and networking. The 3MT-style pitch becomes your **professional elevator pitch** for life.



The 3-minute advantage why you should enter



- **Boost your Viva prep:** The hardest part of your viva is clearly articulating your research significance to an expert panel. 3MT helps you master this skill months or years in advance, helping you define your key messages, communicate the novelty of your research, and defend your work with confidence.
- **Prestige of representing UoL in the UK national 3MT quarter finals:** The 3MT is an international competition started in 2008 by the [University of Queensland](#) with 900 universities holding events across 85 countries! Our overall winner will go on to represent Liverpool in the UK national competition [hosted by Vitae](#).



What Do previous contestants say?



“the best thing I have done at Liverpool during my research degree”

“I had avoided conferences as I lacked the confidence to present. Participating in the 3MT changed this for me and my confidence has now rocketed. Finally, I can attend and present at events without fear”!

“I came from XJTLU for a 6-month research secondment and 3MT is literally the best thing I have engaged with during my time at Liverpool”

“Just the experience of entering as 2nd to none! My whole outlook has changed on how to convey my research to audiences”

“Going through to the final was one of the highlights of my final year. The experience and atmosphere on the day was fantastic”

“I have struggled with articulating the narrative of my thesis to others. 3MT gave me the skills I needed. I now speak with absolute clarity and confidence”

“Aced the opening of my viva exam thanks to 3MT”

“This competition has changed the way I present in my research environment, a massive thanks to the organisers”

“Not only enhanced my CV for an upcoming fellowship application but helped me write and explain my project summary in a much more succinct and coherent manner”

“3MT gave me a ready to use elevator pitch which I have since developed into a pitch for a book contract”

Who can enter and who can win?



- All faculties (Humanities and Social Sciences, Science and Engineering and Health and Life Sciences)
- Open to all stages (Early, Middle and Late)
- You can re-enter (with full feedback from judges at both the faculty heats and final) unless you win!
- Research topics anyone can win with any topic!
- Just entering this competition raises your profile
- Watch the videos of the previous year's finalists and winner, and learn more about their work [here](#)

Competition rules



- A single static slide is permitted, presented from the beginning of the oration.
- No additional electronic media or props are permitted.
- Presentations are to be spoken word.
- Presentations have commenced when the presenter starts their presentation through movement or speech.
- Presentations are 3 minutes and competitors exceeding 3 minutes are disqualified.
- The decision of the adjudicating panel is final.

3MT Finalists and winners 2024



Shagufta Batliwala, Science and Engineering, “Switch to Sustainability”

Richard Berwick, Health and Life Sciences, “Maria's Story: Unravelling the Autoimmune Basis of Fibromyalgia Syndrome” **PEOPLES CHOICE VOTE WINNER**

Thomas Conley, Health and Life Sciences, “Using The Smell Of Faeces To Enable Personalised Treatment In Irritable Bowel Syndrome”.

Holly Dempster-Edwards, Humanities and Social Sciences, “The Way You Make Me Feel: Crusading and Emotions, Past and Present”

Ruth Neville, Science and Engineering, “From Past Patterns to Future Prospects: Understanding International Student Applications in UK Higher Education”

Josephine Pedder, Health and Life Sciences, “Overcoming the blood brain barrier: the biggest challenge in brain cancer drug discovery” **JUDGES RUNNER UP**

Chrisie Pullin, Humanities and Social Sciences, “Exploring Moral Injury in the Ambulance Service”

Dina-Leigh Simons, Science and Engineering, “eDNA: The Final Frontier for Marine Conservation” **JUDGES WINNER**

Rim Yassine-Kassab, Humanities and Social Sciences, “The medina's voices: a holistic understanding of continuity for urban heritage”

3MT Finalists and winners 2025



Adefola Toye “How do you build universities for a new nation?” (Humanities and Social Sciences)

Rukun K.S. Khalaf “Mother's Nature: the environment and pregnancy” (Health and Life Sciences)

JUDGES RUNNER UP

Sharon Cooksey “Feel the fear and do it anyway?” (Humanities and Social Sciences)

Concetta Gigante “Restoring Banks' Resilience and Saving the Economy” (Humanities and Social Sciences)

Farah Isse Mumin “Pandemics Begin in Communities — So Should Prevention” (Health and Life Sciences)

Farkhondeh Vahdati “Holographic Construction in Design for Disassembly of Shekili-inspired emergency shelters” (Humanities and Social Sciences)

Stephanie Thomson “Femtech fertility ads: selling the illusion of reproductive control” (Humanities and Social Sciences) **JUDGES WINNER**

Bethany Facer “Back to the Brain: Mapping Parkinson’s Pathways” (Health and Life Sciences)

PEOPLES CHOICE VOTE WINNER

Lucien Tuinstra “Collagen in bone fossils” (Science and Engineering)



MONEY BACK
GUARANTEE



The family
dreamed of
now within

World-class fertility
right in Flatiron & B

Your timeline. *Your choice.*



FREEZE YOUR EGGS

*Own Your
Future*

Save 25% This Summer

wands are a must
re 35+



ive this year, at 37, and was
or me. I started tracking my
n Mira and was relieved to

“Mira was
my comfort
blanket”

uzanne

New year
new bump 🍀



Know
your
options.

SPRING
FERTILITY



03:00

proof/
confirm

Check for successful
ovulation

5 PGG Tests
1-Cycle Supply

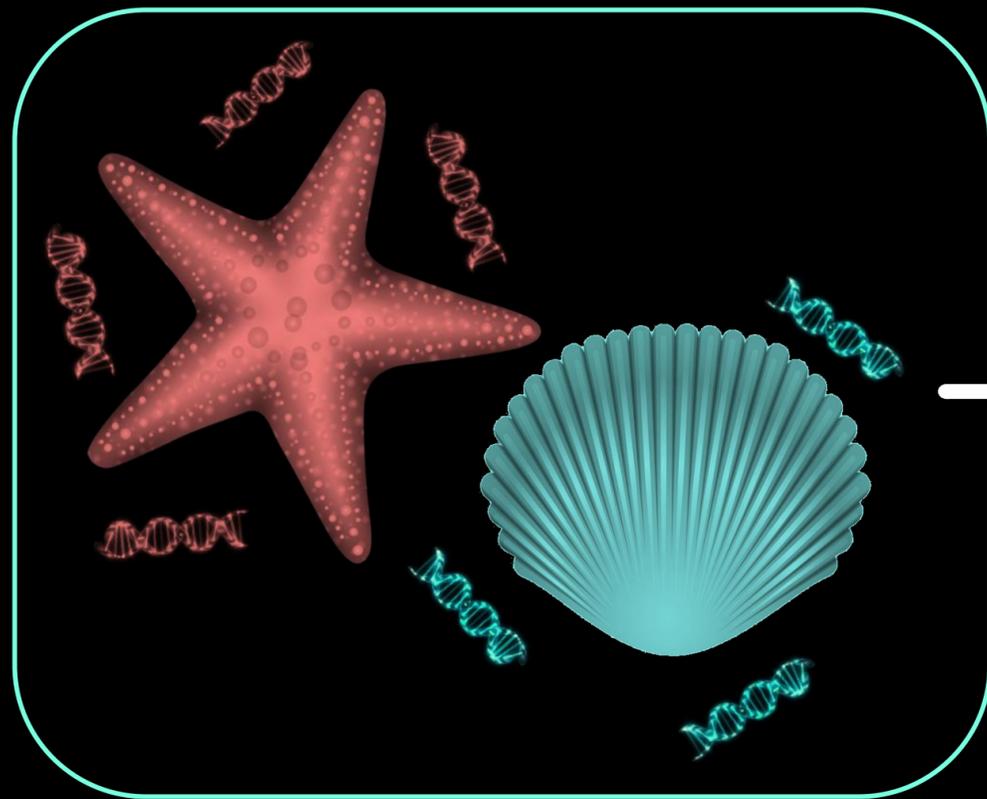
Know if you're ovulating,
for real.

Meet Oova:
Your Fertility Translator

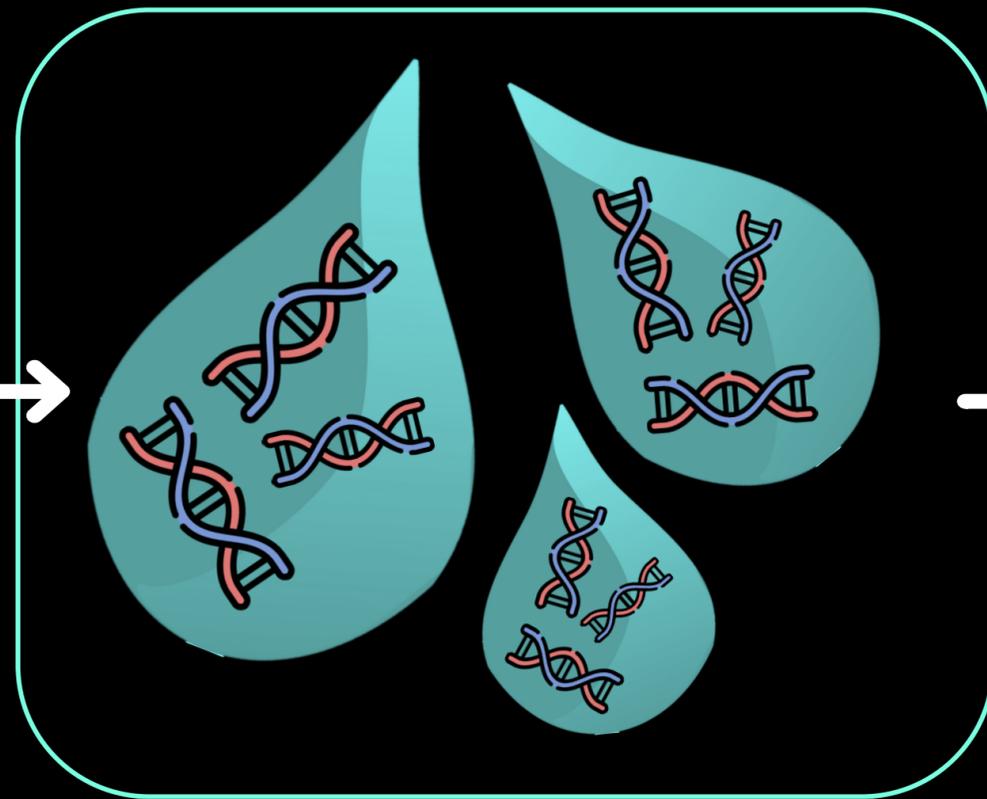


eDNA: The Final Frontier For Marine Conservation

Species

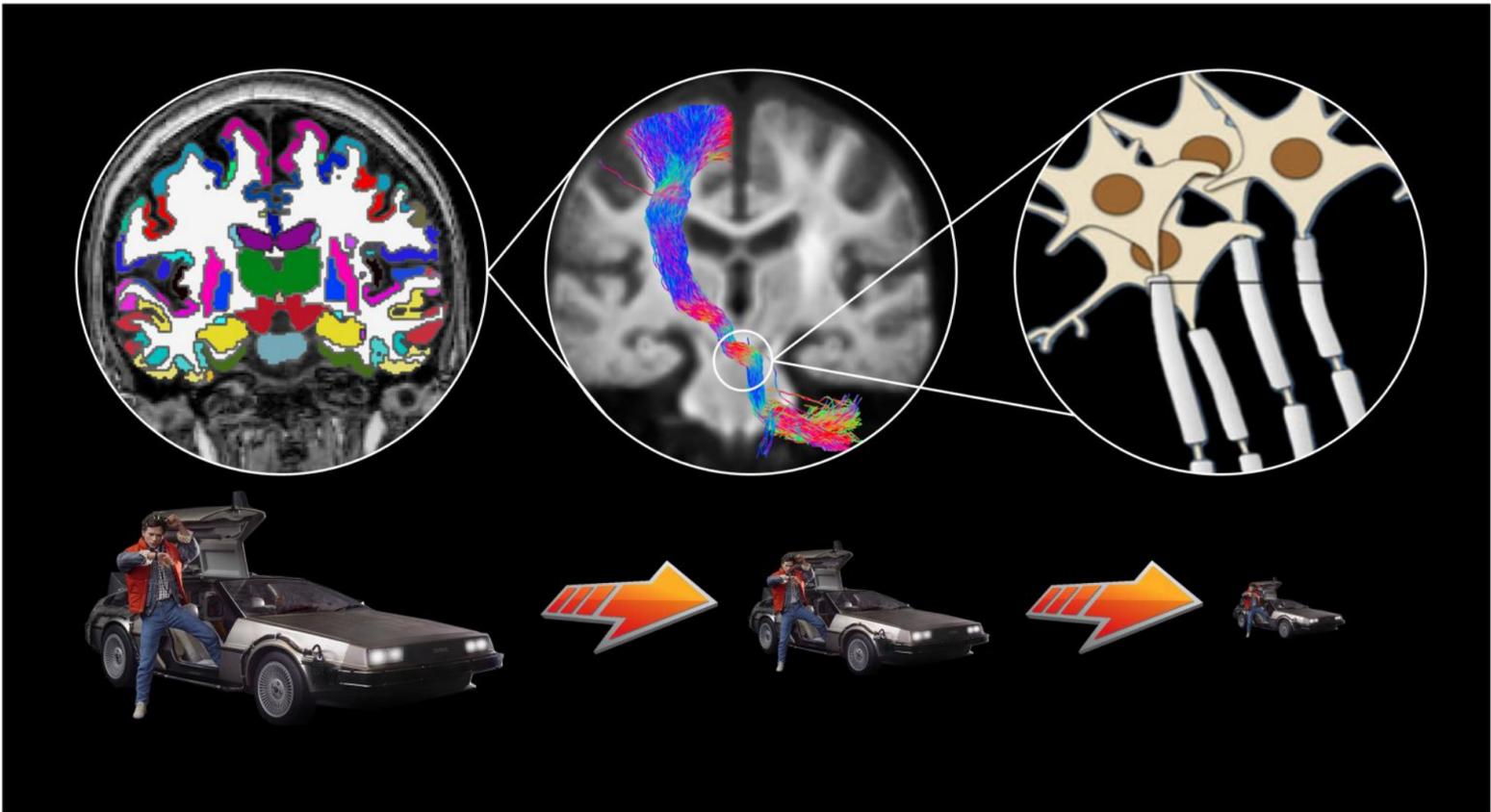


eDNA



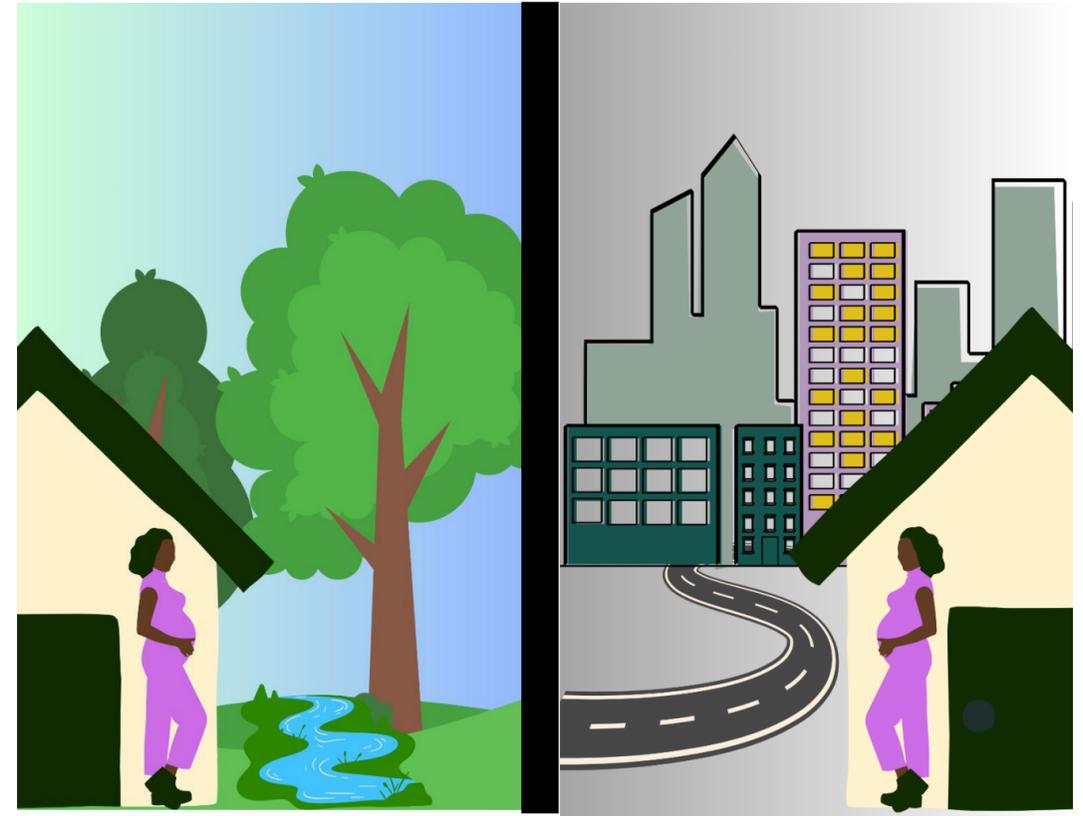
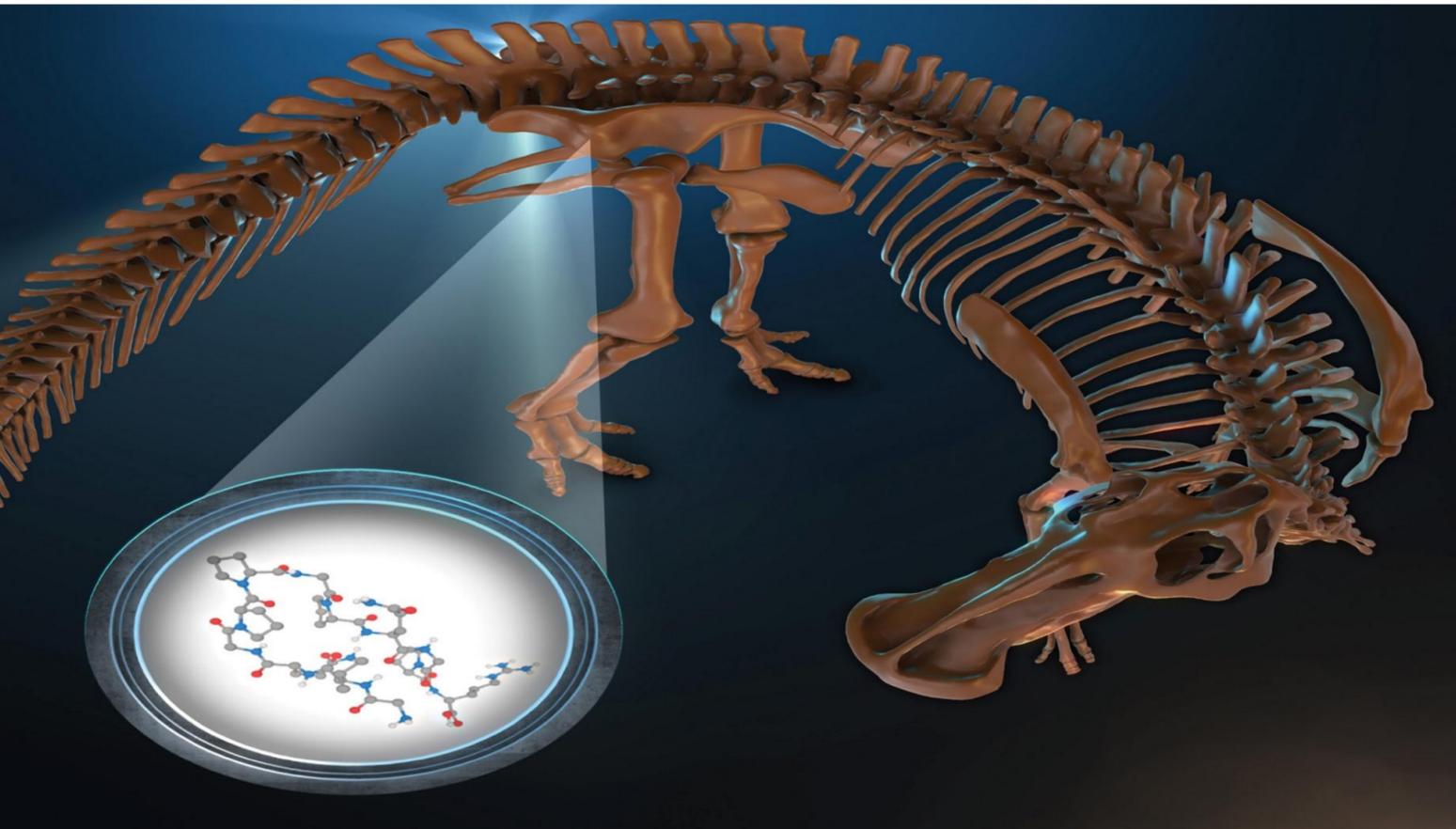
Scanning





IS THERE REALLY A
PERFECTIONISM
PANDEMIC?

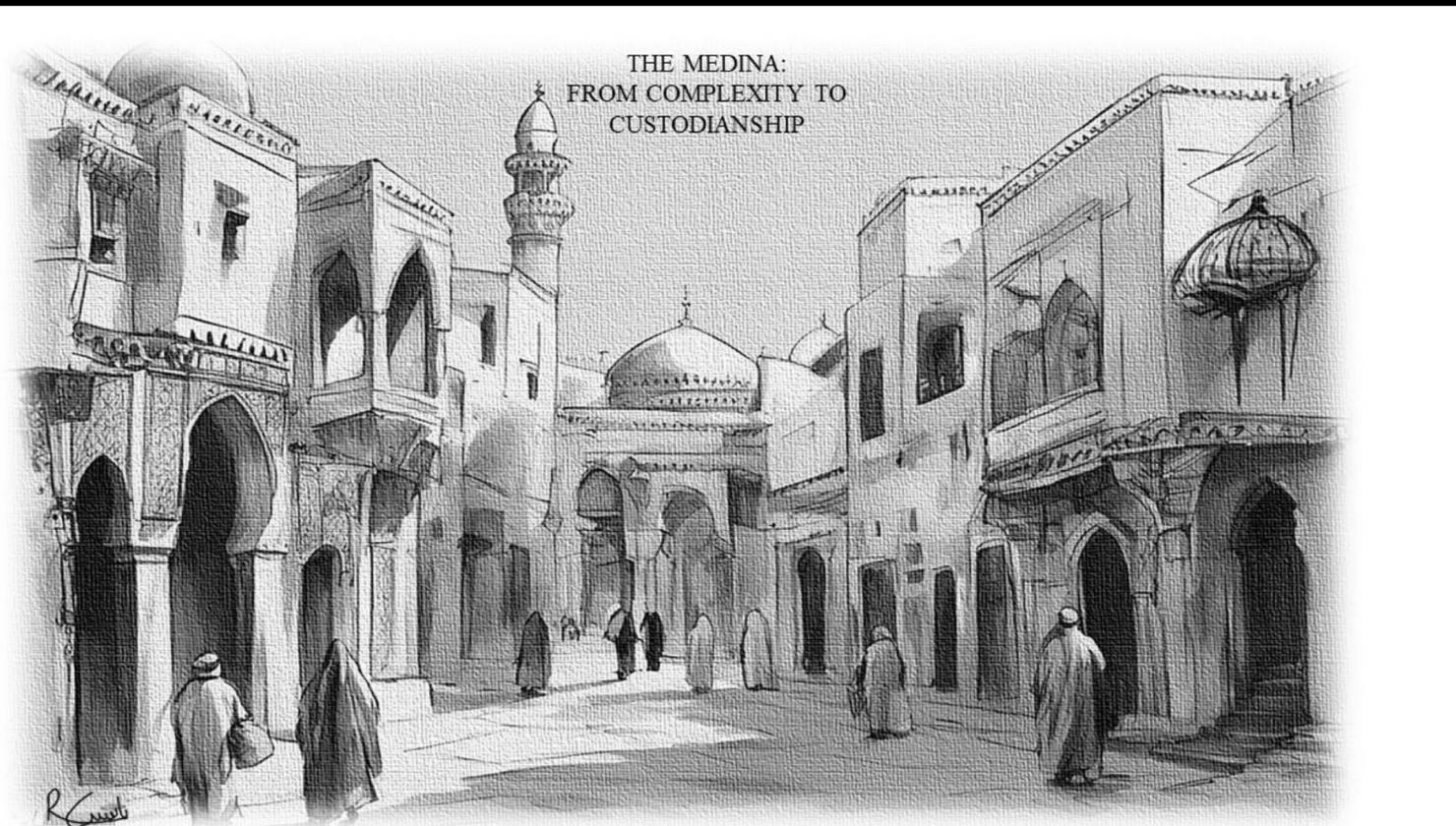
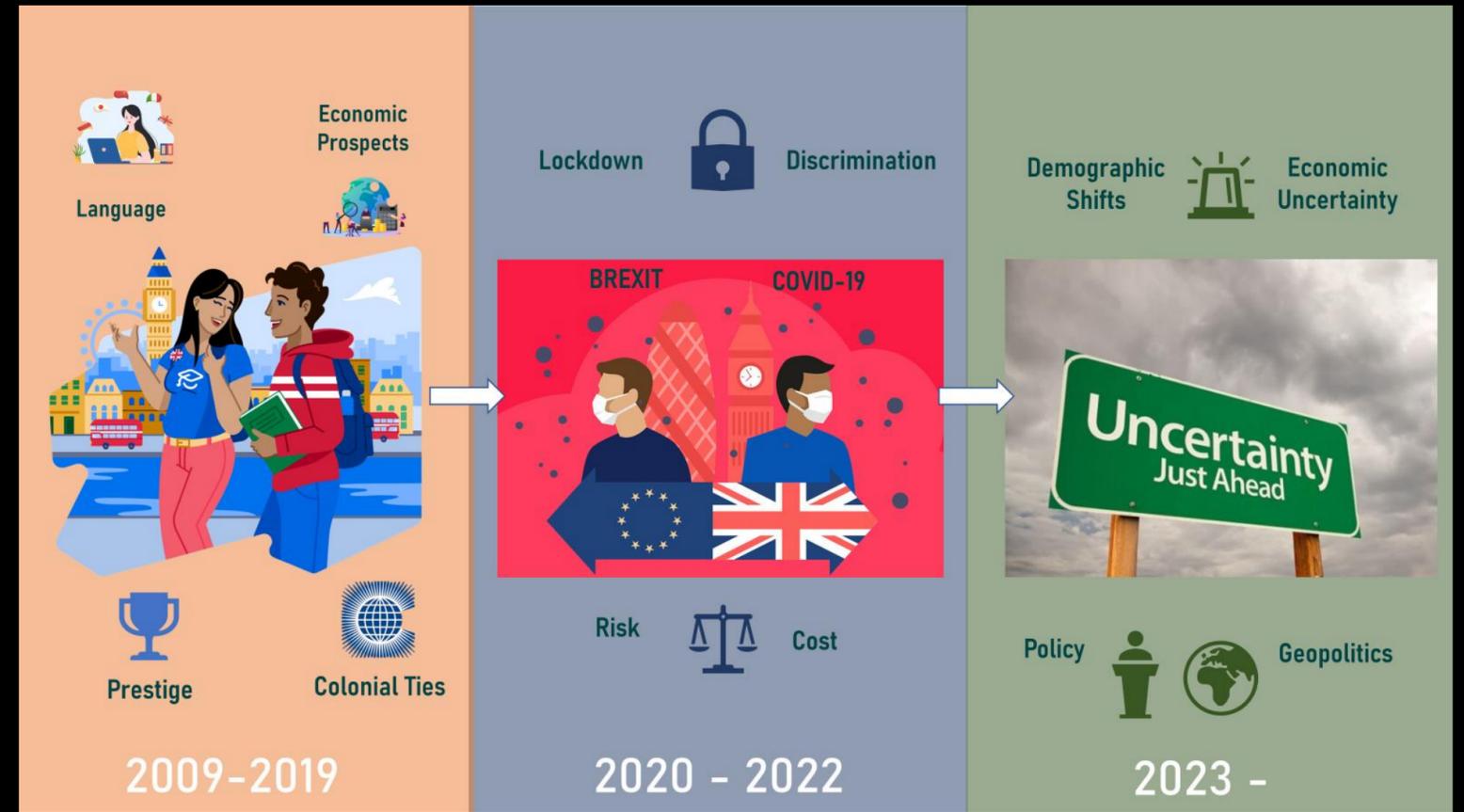
...OR HAVE WE CREATED A MONSTER?!!



THE BLOOD BRAIN BARRIER

Drug discovery's biggest challenge

This graphic features a stylized brain in a profile view on the left. Next to it is a hand with the palm facing forward, mimicking a stop sign. The background is light blue and filled with various pills and capsules. A large question mark is positioned above a bowl of pills on the right. The text 'THE BLOOD BRAIN BARRIER' is written in large, bold, blue letters with a purple outline. Below it, the subtitle 'Drug discovery's biggest challenge' is in a smaller, orange font.



How to enter



Visit our website ([here](#)) and **how to enter pages ([here](#)) also our help document on creating and uploading your You tube video ([here](#))**

Fill in registration form with video link ([here](#)) and email your powerpoint slide to researcher@liverpool.ac.uk If you need any advice ask us!

Selection for the final and national competition.

1. Faculty heat stage – 3 faculty winners announced (prizes £50 amazon vouchers) 1 for each faculty then up to 9 finalists selected (3 judges for each entry and overall scores totalled, highest 9 scores go through)

2. The 9 finalists will get 1 to 1 professional coaching for all finalists from Jamie Gallagher!

For the final on the 17th June (3 winners. Judges winner, Judges runner up and Peoples Choice Vote) £100 for the winner and £50 for Peoples choice vote winner (7 judges in the final, overall scores totalled, highest score wins)

Overall winner will go through to the **UK nationals (video recorded by CIE).**

Judging final recap



- Finalists notified by early May
- If you are not successful you can reapply (judges feedback is shared with all contestants)
- All finalists will have their research biography and profile online on our dedicated 3MT pages, along with a copy of your ppt slide and you tube video (permanent record and link to your CV)
- The selected applicants will then go forward to the 3MT Final to be held at the University on 17th June where a final panel of 7 judges will select the overall winning entry.
- The UoL winner will be supported by the Academy RD Team to enter the national finals [hosted by Vitae!](#)
- Your submission to Vitae will be professionally recorded by the Centre for Innovation in Education here at Liverpool!



Uploading your video



Videos should be uploaded via YouTube. Instructions to do so can be found at YouTube Help.

Click [here](#) for our You Tube video guide. Easiest on your phone!

Once your video is uploaded you should append it to your 3MT application form which is available here: [University of Liverpool 3MT 2026 Competition Registration Form](#)

If you have any technical issues or concerns when preparing your video you can contact the following sources of support:

- UoL IT Services <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/it/getting-help/>
- The Centre for Innovation in Education (CIE) <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/centre-for-innovation-in-education/contact-us/>
- <https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/57407?hl=en-GB&co=GENIE.Platform%3DDesktop>

Support from the Academy



- Please try to attend [Jamie Gallagher's workshop](#) on 24th March prior to putting your final submission together (in person 09.30 to 12.00, will be recorded for those who cannot attend)
- Following that workshop there will be 1 Drop-in session for interested applicants to consult with the Academy Team the date is **1st April (link to join posted on canvas)**
- This year we will offer 1 to 1 drop in sessions online via Teams for advice or if you wish to pitch your 3MT presentation to a developer prior to submission (contact researcher@liverpool.ac.uk)
- The competition is now open for applications and will close on **17th April at 5pm.**

Judging criteria comprehension and content



- Presentation provided clear motivation, background, and significance to the research question;
- Presentation clearly described the research strategy/design and the results/findings of the research
- Presentation clearly described the conclusions, outcomes and impact of the research.

Judging criteria engagement and communication



- The oration was delivered clearly, and the language was appropriate for a non-specialist audience
- The PowerPoint slide was well-defined and enhanced the presentation
- The presenter conveyed enthusiasm for their research, captured and maintained audience's attention



The final Liverpool Hope Street Hotel 17th June

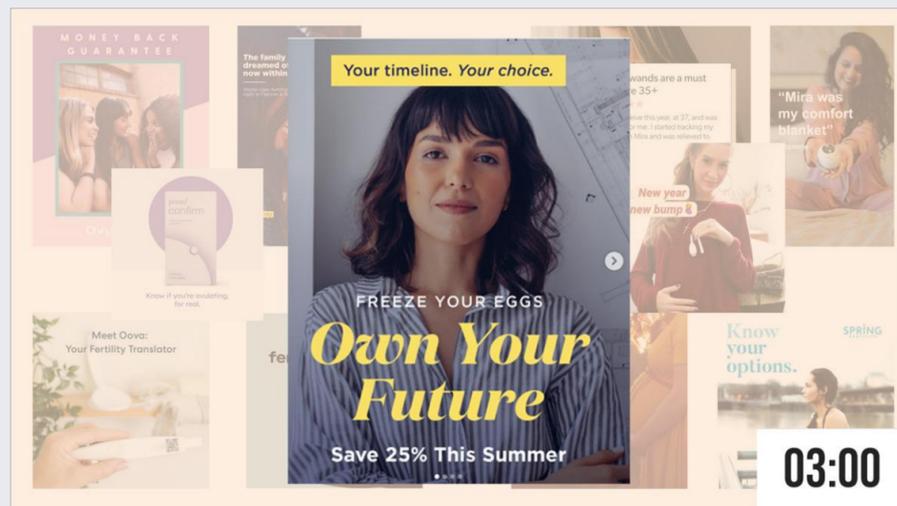


Stephanie Thomson 2025 winner and Vitae National quarter finalist



Stephanie is a PhD researcher in the University of Liverpool's School of The Arts and won the competition last year with her amazing presentation on:

"Femtech fertility ads: selling the illusion of reproductive control"



Any Questions?



Links to Key 3MT resources



3MT – Key resources from Uni Queensland and more...

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/researcher/pgr-development/3mt/howtoenter/>

Videos of UoL 2023, 2024 and 2025 entries:

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/research/postgraduate-research/three-minute-thesis/>

Fionnuala McCully's 2023 winner blog:

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/researcher/blog/posts/myexperienceofthe3mtcompetition/>

Dina-Leigh Simons 2024 winner news article and Vitae national quarter final [Youtube video](#)

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/researcher/news/articles/three-minute-thesis-3mt-the-winners-2024>

Stephanie Thomson 2025 winner news article [Three Minute Thesis \(3MT®\) 2025 winners announced - News - University of Liverpool](#) and Vitae quarter final video entry [here](#)

Upcoming PGR development sessions

