# An Introduction to MedPhys Slam

MedPhys Slam, a science communication competition similar to three-minute thesis, aims to highlight and improve emerging medical physicists' communication with non-specialists.

The rules are simple but challenging. Contestants have three minutes to present their research using up to three PowerPoint slides. They are evaluated on their ability to convey their research and its significance to a lay audience.

The MedPhys Slam competition is open to all Student, Junior, and Resident members of AAPM or COMP. A preliminary round of competition takes place at local AAPM Chapter meetings throughout the year (COMP and international contestants will submit video presentations), and winners of the Chapter competitions compete in the final competition organized by STSC at the 2026 AAPM Annual Meeting in Vancouver, BC.

## Why MedPhys Slam?

***For Students and Trainees:*** MedPhys Slam provides an opportunity for students/trainees to develop and practice science communication skills vital for sharing their work with an audience consisting of members of non-specialists. Such opportunities are rare in highly specialized and niche fields like medical physics, where researchers typically disseminate their work only to their peers.

***For AAPM/COMP:*** MedPhys Slam also provides opportunity for public engagement in AAPM. At this event, high-quality videos of presentations accessible to non-specialists are recorded. These videos can be shared with a wide audience to communicate who medical physicists are and what we do as well as to help spread the word about exciting research in our field. Additionally, depending on who is invited as a judge, there is a potential to provide good visibility of medical physics and the Annual Meeting to the local community.

***For AAPM Chapters:*** The same benefits can be scaled to the AAPM Chapters and their local events. The ideal chapter would provide mentorship, guidance, and funding support to their Chapter representative and will rally behind their representative in the final competition. MedPhys Slam provides opportunities to jumpstart conversations on public engagement and communication.

## How is MedPhys Slam Different from YIS?

MedPhys Slam is different from the Young Investigator Symposium (YIS). At MedPhys Slam, the primary audience is non-specialists, who may have no knowledge of physics or medical physics. At YIS, the primary audience is other medical physicists. To be successful at MedPhys Slam, presenters have only three minutes to present the "what, why, and how" of their research, and as such, must deeply consider what non-specialists need to know about the research. YIS presenters, on the other hand, must present enough of their research methods so that the work can be replicated. Without MedPhys Slam, everyone from high

school students to policymakers will be unaware of the value medical physicists' present in a variety of settings. Without YIS, research will continue, but valuable projects will remain unhighlighted and unacknowledged.

## Who Are the Judges?

The ideal judging panel will be a diverse group of individuals, external to the field of medical physics. We aim to have 3-5 individuals on the judging panel of the Annual Meeting Slam, and Chapters are encouraged to follow a similar model.

Potential judges include:

- Local news anchor/reporter
- Local high school physics teacher
- Local university professor (communications, performing arts, physical sciences)
- Local politician (school board, council member, mayor)
- Local musician
- Marketing or communications director from a vendor (this could be one of our typical vendors, but someone who is not a physicist)
- Patient advocate/cancer survivor

## Sample Videos

You can view the previous MedPhys Slam competitions or other medical physics 3MT competitions for inspiration:

- UBC 2022 3MT Winner: Emilie Carpentier
- TMU 2016 3MT Winner: Michael Moore
- 2019 MedPhys Slam competition
- 2021 MedPhys Slam competition

## Questions?

Direct any and all questions to MedPhys.Slam@gmail.com.