



Fundació
Catalana per a
la Recerca i la
Innovació



Escola de
Doctorat
UPC



8th edition of the competition 2025 “Present your thesis in 4 minutes”

Standing Committee CP/2024/07/04

17 december, 2024

The UPC's Doctoral School participates in the Present your thesis in 4 minutes competition, which is organised by the Catalan Foundation for Research and Innovation ([FCRI](#)) with the support of the Government of Catalonia and in which 12 Catalan universities participate.

The competition proposes that doctoral candidates in any discipline take on the challenge of explaining their research orally and individually to a lay audience in a maximum of four minutes.

The competition takes place in two parts: the first consists of a preliminary part at each university, and the second is a final in which a representative of each university, the winner at that university, participates.

Competition rules

1. Requirements for candidates
2. Participation rules
3. Competition calendar
4. Legal regulations
 - 4.1 Applicable regulations
 - 4.2 Regulations on the use of images in presentations
 - 4.3 Dissemination
 - 4.4 Tacit acceptance of the rules and exemption from liability
 - 4.5 Personal data protection

Competition rules

The competition challenges doctoral students to explain their thesis in public to an audience who are not necessarily specialists, in under four minutes. The purpose



of this initiative is to bring university research closer to society, as well as to promote society's interest in popular science. The competition rewards candidates' ability to communicate their ideas to a lay audience in open public sessions.

This year, for health reasons and in accordance with the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic, the stages of the competition that were planned to take place face-to-face may be held electronically.

1. Requirements for candidates

- Candidates must be doctoral students who are enrolled at the UPC and who have paid for academic supervision in the 2024-2025 academic year.
- They must be in the second year of their doctoral degree at least (from the date of the first enrolment).
- They must not have defended their doctoral thesis before entering the competition.
- Not having been awarded the first prize of the contest in previous editions. Candidates from previous editions who meet the rest of the requirements may reapply.
- They must commit to attending both the institutional final at the UPC and the final at the FCRI.
- They must undertake not to include any confidential information related to their research in their public presentation. Neither the FCRI nor the UPC are responsible for non-compliance by participants.
- They must have the approval of the thesis supervisor or supervisors when they enter the competition.

2. Participation rules

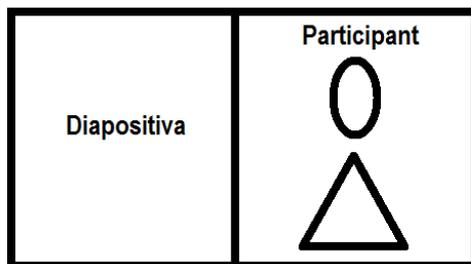
The competition is held in two parts and the corresponding stages described below.

FIRST PART

- **First stage: Recording and uploading a video to a repository**

Candidates must record a video and keep it in the repository of their choice in accordance with the following presentation rules:¹

- Candidates have a maximum of 1 minute to introduce themselves, state the name of the doctoral program they belong to, briefly explain the topic of their thesis, and why they are participating in the contest. The time is considered to start counting from the beginning of the video.
- Candidates must appear throughout the entire video.
- This video must be recorded in MP4 and in landscape format.
- No video or sound cuts are allowed during the presentation. In other words, the speech must be recorded in a single take.
- Although for this phase of the contest it is not necessary to delve into details about your research, if you wish to present any slides, **only a maximum of two static slides can be projected.**
- If slides are included, candidates must occupy at least 50% of the screen, so they must edit the video in the following format:



- No video or sound, no musical instruments, no costumes, etc. are allowed.
 - Presentations must be in Catalan, Spanish or English.
 - It is recommended that participants not use notes or cue cards.
 - A brief or humorous quote is allowed, as long as it does not offend or discriminate even if it is in a humorous tone.
- **Second stage: Registering for the competition at the UPC**

Candidates may apply by completing the online registration form on the Doctoral School website by the deadline in the competition calendar. They must attach the thesis supervisor's form authorising them to take part in the competition and the authorisation for the transfer of image rights.

It is necessary to attach the authorization signed by the thesis supervisor to participate and the authorization of the candidate for the transfer of image rights in the form. Additionally, the form must include the link to the presentation video recorded in accordance with the rules regulated in the previous stage. The link must allow direct access to the video, without requiring any prior validation and/or authorization.



The submission of applications implies candidates' acceptance of the competition rules.

- **Third stage: Selecting participants**

Once the deadline for applications has passed, the Doctoral School will publish a provisional list of admitted and non-admitted applicants on its website. Once the period for complaints and corrections has ended, the final list of admitted and non-admitted applicants will be published, as well as the order in which the interventions will take place.

If the number of applications admitted for processing exceeds twelve, it will be possible to preselect which of these can qualify to participate in the institutional final and which will be excluded. This selection will be carried out in two phases:

1st Phase. Selection through the video with the highest number of likes

This selection will be carried out through an online public vote via a form, which along with the link to the video of each candidate, will be published on the website of the Doctoral School according to the schedule established for the call (section 3). The 6 videos with the highest number of votes will automatically qualify for the Institutional Final at the UPC of the contest. In case of a tie for this first position, all candidates will be classified.

2nd Phase: Selection through a jury

The selection of the remaining candidates will be carried out by a jury composed of between 3 and 7 members, who may be researchers, teachers, postdocs, students, former students, or administrative staff, all of them from the UPC. There will be a president, a secretary, and members. The identity of the jury members will not be made public. Directors of the theses entered in the contest cannot be part of the jury.

The evaluation criteria of the jury are the same as those described for the UPC institutional final (stage 4a). The jury must prepare and sign a minutes with the alphabetical list of selected candidates to participate in the institutional final. The jury must not classify the candidates by score at any time.



Upon the expiration of the deadline for voting, and again in accordance with the schedule of the call (section 3), the Doctoral School will publish on its website the list of candidates classified and selected to participate in the institutional final as well as the list of excluded candidates, including the number of valid votes received by each candidacy. The resolution will also include the order in which the interventions will take place in the Institutional Final. In no case can the result of the votes be subject to appeal or challenge.

Prior to the Institutional Final, and in accordance with the schedule of the call, the Doctoral School will convene the candidates to an online session consisting of two parts. During the first part, a brief training session on skills and techniques for scientific dissemination will be provided with the aim of being useful to the candidate when preparing their presentation and oral exposition. During the second part of the session, candidates will be informed about aspects related to the organization of the event. The Doctoral School reserves the right to modify or cancel the content of this session.

- **Fourth stage: UPC institutional final**

It is foreseen that the institutional final of the competition at the UPC that the candidates will participate in an in-person session, which will take place on the date established in the call's calendar, in an open, public session before the jury, and which may coincide with the annual Open Day of the Doctoral School.

The event will be presented and conducted by the management of the Doctoral School. The order of intervention of the candidates is the one that will have been published in the resolution of candidates admitted to the institutional final. For organizational needs of the event, the Doctoral School reserves the right to modify the order of participation of the participants, with prior notice to the affected individuals.

Candidates who are not present at the time they are due to intervene will be disqualified from the competition, which will continue as planned.

When it is their turn to speak, candidates must present and explain the topic of their research and, in addition, the results and possible applications of their thesis, according to the following rules for the presentations:



- Participants have a maximum of 4 minutes for their presentation. Anyone exceeding this limit will be automatically disqualified.
- A presentation is considered to have started when the participant begins speaking.
- Only a **maximum of two static slides can be projected.**
- **Incorporating videos, sound, musical instruments, costumes, etc., is not allowed.**
- If any material is used for support, it is recommended to keep it to a minimum.
- Presentations are only accepted in Catalan, Spanish, or English.
- It is recommended not to bring notes or written prompts.
- A brief or humorous citation is allowed, as long as it does not offend or discriminate, even in a humorous tone.

The jury will consist of between 3 and 7 members, who may be researchers, teachers, postdocs, students, former students, or administrative staff, all of them from the UPC. There will be a president, a secretary, and members, and the composition will be announced at the beginning of the event. Directors, co-directors, or tutors of the theses participating in the institutional final cannot be part of the jury.

The Jury will individually evaluate from 1 (*minimum score*) to 5 (*maximum score*) according to the following two criteria:

• **Criterion I: Understanding and content** (constitutes 70% of the total score).

- The presentation has provided an understanding of the background of the research question addressed and its significance.
- The presentation has clearly described the key findings of the research, including conclusions and results.
- The presentation has followed a clear and logical sequence.
- The thesis topic, key findings, and significance as well as research results have been communicated effectively to a non-specialized audience.
- The participant has avoided scientific jargon, explained terminology, and provided adequate background information to illustrate points.
- The participant has allocated appropriate time to each element of their presentation, without any specific aspect being addressed for too long. The presentation has not been too rushed.



• **Criterion II: Commitment and communication** (constitutes 30% of the total score).

- The participant has not trivialized or overly generalized their research.
- The participant has conveyed enthusiasm for their research.
- The participant captures and maintains the audience's attention.
- The participant has had sufficient stage presence, eye contact, and vocal range; maintained a steady pace, and displayed confidence.
- The PowerPoint slide has enhanced the presentation: it was clear, readable, and concise.

Once the intervention round is concluded, the jury will have a maximum of 30 minutes to announce and communicate to the attending audience the names of the 3rd, 2nd, and 1st place winners.

The 1st place winner of the institutional final at UPC will receive €300. The 2nd place winner will receive €250 and the 3rd place winner will receive €200.

Following the institutional final, on the date established by the call's calendar, the name and contact email address of the candidate who will represent UPC in the inter-university final of the "Present your thesis in 4 minutes" contest organized by FCRI will be communicated.

SECOND PART: Interuniversity final

The interuniversity final is organised by the Catalan Foundation for Research and Innovation ([FCRI](#)) and held in a single, open and public session on 3 July 2025 at the CaixaForum in the city of Girona, in the afternoon.

The participants in this session will be the 12 candidates selected as finalists in the first part of the competition (one from each Catalan university). The order of intervention will be random according to a prior draw conducted by FCRI and communicated to the finalists.

The FCRI will establish the composition of the jury, which will include the General Secretary of the CIC.

Rules for presentations

- As in the fourth stage of the first part of the competition, participants will have a maximum of four minutes to present their research.
- Only a maximum of two static slides can be projected.
- No video or sound, no musical instruments, no costumes, etc. are allowed.
- Participants may use some material, but it is recommended that this be kept to a minimum.
- Presentations must be in Catalan, Spanish or English.
- Timing of presentations will begin when participants start speaking.
- It is recommended that participants not use notes or cue cards.
- Participants may use a brief or humorous quotation.

The following prizes will be awarded:

- First prize: €3,000
- Second prize: €2,000
- Audience award: €1,000
- Special Mention Assumpció Català i Poch for the promotion and support of the Catalan language: €1,000 (Catalan language strengthening plan). Only theses presented in Catalan may compete.

In case of a tie between one of the prizes voted by the Jury and the Public's Prize, the one with the highest monetary amount will be awarded, and the Public's Prize will be given to the next finalist with the highest number of votes.

3. Competition calendar

	Date
Publication of the call and rules	3 February 2025
Registration	From 3 to 28 February 2025
Review of the applications	From 3 to 7 March 2025
Publication of the provisional decision and list of admitted candidates	10 March 2025
Publication of the final decision and list of admitted candidates for participating in the UPC final	24 March 2025
Informative meeting on organizational aspects of the Institutional Final for classified participants.	29 April 2025 From 10:00 to 11:00 a.m
UPC institutional final	8 May 2025



Communication to the FCRI of the winner and UPC candidate for the interuniversity final	9 May 2025
Interuniversity final (Fundació Catalana per a la Recerca i la Innovació) at the CaixaForum in the city of Tarragona.	3 July 2025

4. Legal regulations

4.1 Applicable regulations

The rules set out in this call for entries will be published on the Doctoral School website and will be the only instrument of official advertising for the purpose of determining deadlines and compliance with the formalities specified herein. Nevertheless, in a supplementary and non-official manner, the UPC may also send e-mail notices to the interested parties and use any other means of publication it deems appropriate to ensure that the event is disseminated as effectively as possible among doctoral students and researchers. The organisers must communicate with participants using the e-mail address they provide when they register. Winning the first stage of the competition implies participating in the second stage.

4.2 Regulations on the use of images in presentations

Any participants who use slides in which identifiable individuals appear must have the subjects' written authorisation to disseminate these images. In the case of minors, candidates must confirm that they have obtained the written consent of the minors' parents or guardians to use and disseminate images in which they appear.

The organisers reserve the right to request a consent form authorising the use of such images, which participants must provide if their presentation is selected. The UPC will not be liable for any third-party claims in relation to the works presented. Participants must take full responsibility for the videos they submit for the competition. They must also confirm that the works are theirs and that they have the rights required to use them in the competition. The organisers reserve the right to reject any videos that do not comply with the required characteristics, that may cause offence due to their content or for any other reason, or that they believe may cause any kind of detrimental effect.

4.3 Dissemination



Participants must authorise the UPC to use, exploit and disseminate their work, without any temporal or geographical limitations, in promotional and advertising activities and in the context of any initiatives undertaken by the Doctoral School to promote scientific culture and research and doctoral studies at the UPC. In the event that the UPC wishes to use it beyond the above, it must request authorisation expressly. The organisers reserve the right to publicly communicate the names of winners and use images of them in activities related to the prizes and/or to promote or advertise the competition. Winners are not entitled to receive any consideration in exchange for such use of their names or images.

4.4 Tacit acceptance of the rules and exemption from liability

All participants must accept the rules of the competition in their entirety, as well as the organisers’ response to any incidents not foreseen in these rules, in accordance with the criteria that are deemed most suitable. The organisers reserve the right to add to or amend these rules and to cancel or void the competition provided there is a justified reason for doing so. Any amendments to these rules will take effect the day after they are published. The organisers will be exempt from any obligation or requirement to pay compensation if—due to force majeure, legal requirements or any other reason (at the organisers’ discretion)—the competition is cancelled or suspended. Participants will have three days to withdraw from the competition for this reason or to take any actions they deem appropriate in the event that additions or amendments are made to the rules. The organisers will not be held responsible for any internet errors or malfunctioning of the server in which YouTube videos are stored. The organisers reserve the right to disqualify or exclude any participant who commits fraud, disrupts the smooth functioning and normal course of the competition in accordance with the established rules or makes offensive or violent remarks that infringe upon the dignity or propriety of others or that may cause offence.

4.5 Personal data protection

In accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation, Regulation (EU) 2016/679 and Organic Law 3/2018, of 5 December, on the protection of personal data and the guarantee of digital rights, the basic information on personal data protection in the processing that must be done in this competition is as follows.

Information on data protection	
Data controller	Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya UPC Doctoral School escola.doctorat@upc.edu



Contact details of the data protection officer	Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, Carrer Jordi Girona, 31, 08034 Barcelona SPAIN
Purposes of the processing	Specifically, those described in these rules of the 8th edition of the competition Present your thesis in 4 minutes, 2025. F03.19 Management of awards, competitions, donations and similar events organised by the University. Further information is available at https://rat.upc.edu/ca/registre-de-tractaments-de-dades-personals/F03.19
Legitimate interests	The consent of the interested party to the processing of their personal data that is expressed by checking the corresponding box of the form that must be completed to participate in the competition.
Recipients of personal data	Members of the general public who are interested in accessing our printed or electronic media, including the internet, for the purposes of teaching, research or promotion. The FCRI, organiser of the competition, in which the 12 Catalan public universities participate. Publication on the Doctoral School website, on UPC websites and on social networks of the names of the winning candidates. Most social networks are located in countries outside the European Economic Area and their legislation does not require a level of protection of personal data equivalent to European protection. Participants expressly agree to the processing of their data according to that specified and to any possible international data transfers resulting from this processing.
Rights of data subjects	Right of access, right to rectification or erasure, right to restriction of processing. Right to object. Right to data portability. Further information is available at https://www.upc.edu/normatives/ca/proteccio-de-dades/normativa-europea-de-proteccio-de-dades/drets
Data retention period	As needed for any of the purposes that are described in our retention policy: https://www.upc.edu/normatives/ca/proteccio-de-dades/normativa-europea-de-proteccio-de-dades/politica-de-conservacio-de-les-dades-de-caracter-personal
Complaint	If you have been unable to exercise your rights to your satisfaction, you can file a complaint with the APDCAT: apdc.cat

Standing Committee CP/2024/07/04

17 december 2025