

PhD Thesis Presentation Contest

Application closing date: 25 July 2016. Finalists will be informed by ca 20 August 2016.
Apply by filling the form here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NJSQSM5>

The Final “Polyphony in Innovation: Potential(s) of Social and Scientific Innovations for the Cohesion of the Society” will be carried out on **21 September 2016 in Berlin, Germany** within the Forum “UkraineLab: Playing Polyphony of the Society. Exploring the European Identity” (Berlin, 19-22 September, 2016).

Organiser: German-Ukrainian Academic Society/ The UKRAINE Network, in cooperation with the **MitOst e.V.** and supported by the **Ukrainian Embassy in Germany**

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- 1. What is this Contest about?**
- 2. Who can participate?**
- 3. What are the rules of the contest?**
- 4. What language can be used for the presentation?**
- 5. How the competition will be judged?**
- 6. Who will judge the contest?**
- 7. How the finalists will be chosen?**
- 8. What are the awards?**
- 9. How to apply?**

1. *What is this Contest about?*

Thousands of students from Ukraine study and receive research training in Germany¹. At the same time, the overall visibility of this talented next generation of professionals and scientists remains rather under-appreciated, both in Germany and Ukraine. There are also many PhD students who work on joint German-Ukrainian collaborative projects, or carry out research on topics related to Ukraine – e.g. its history, language, ecology, etc. This PhD Thesis Presentation Contest aims to promote these young scientists and in doing so contribute to increasing the visibility of Ukrainian PhD students in Germany and raising the profile of the German-Ukrainian academic collaboration. This Contest will offer the opportunity to PhD students to advance their presentation skills, learn to present complex scientific questions to a broader interested non-specialist audience and network with other researchers from different fields. Successful candidates will be invited to present their research at the Final event on stage, and get a chance to win one of three prizes as well as add an extra award to their CVs.

This contest is organised for the first time in 2016 within the framework of the [Forum "UkraineLab: Playing Polyphony of the Society. Exploring the European identity"](#). The Final will take place on Wednesday afternoon, **September 21, 2016, in Berlin**. Up to 10 finalists will be pre-selected by the Contest's organising committee, based on the submitted applications (see below *Point 8. How to apply*).

This Contest is organised by the German-Ukrainian Academic Society (the German Chapter of the recently established professional scientific network "The UKRAINIAN Academic International Network", [The UKRAINE Network](#)), in cooperation with the [MitOst e.V.](#) and supported by the Embassy of Ukraine in Germany. The main goals of the UKRAINE Network are:

- FOSTERING academic cooperation with Ukraine;
- SUPPORTING reforms in Ukrainian science;
- IMPROVING knowledge about Ukraine abroad.

2. *Who can participate?*

PhD students carrying out their research in any subject are eligible to apply for participation in the Contest. PhD students formally enrolled as a PhD student at a university or members of a structured PhD programme at a non-university research institute in Germany (i.e. members of the Max Planck Society, Helmholtz Association, Leibniz Association, or The Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft) or the National Academy of Sciences institute in Ukraine are eligible to apply.

In particular we invite PhD students from one or more following groups to apply:

- Ukrainian PhD students studying in Germany (also exchange students or supported by a short-term fellowship);
- PhD students carrying out research within a collaborative German-Ukrainian (or multi-lateral) project;
- PhD students, whose topic of research relates to Ukraine.

¹ Rules for this competition have been adapted from the 3-Minute Thesis Competition regulations (<http://threeminutethesis.org/index.html?page=191546&pid=193447>).

² Approximately 6,500 students from Ukraine studied in Germany in 2014, more than 1000 Ukrainians graduated from a German university in 2013, according to the DAAD/DZHW report "Wissenschaft weltoffen 2015" (<http://www.wissenschaftweltoffen.de/publikation>, pp. 14 & 34). Ukraine was the **seventh** among the 20 key countries of origin of international students in Germany in 2014.

If you have any doubts about your eligibility, please contact the Coordination Committee.

3. *What are the rules of the competition¹?*

- Contestants present their own research work, which is a part of their current PhD thesis.
- The presentation should last no longer than **5 minutes**. Competitors exceeding 5 minutes will be disqualified.
- The presentation should be understandable for educated non-specialist audience. The main points to be addressed are recommended to reflect the so-called “CAR”-principle:
 - **Challenge** – what is the key challenge of your research project
 - **Approach** – what novel methods are used/are being developed to address the challenge
 - **Result** – what major results are achieved/ expected, and why it is important.

At the end of the talk the audience should not have the feeling “so what?”, but rather “this is fascinating!” You are invited to watch the winners of similar contests here for inspiration: <http://threeminutethesis.org/3mt-showcase>.

- **A maximum of 2 slides** (ppt, pdf, or other formats) are permitted to support the presentation.
 - The first slide should contain basic information about the contestant (name, place of birth, where and what the candidate has studied so far, where the research work is being conducted, who are the project supervisor/s and if this is a collaborative German-Ukrainian research project). No information on any personal awards is permitted here to not skew the panel judgement.
 - The second **static slide** should be used to visualise the subject of the talk or to support the presentation in any other suitable way. No slide transitions, animations, movies or 'movement' of any description are permitted.
 - No additional electronic media (e.g. sound and video files), props (e.g. costumes, musical instruments, laboratory equipment) are permitted.
- **Presentations are to be spoken word** (e.g. no raps or songs are permitted, though poems or rhymed presentations are allowed, if developed by the contestant).
- Presentations are considered to have commenced after a signal from the judging panel.

4. *What language can be used for the presentation?*

The preferred language of the contest is **English**. If the contestant is interested to present in German or Ukrainian, this can be permitted in some cases (simultaneous translation will then be organised).

5. *How the Contest will be judged?*

The contestants will be evaluated for:

i) **Content & Comprehension (50%):**

- Did the contestant manage to convince you of novelty and potential impact of his/her research?
- Did the presentation provide sufficient general background to the research question being addressed?
- Did the presentation clearly describe the key methods and results of the research, including conclusions and outcomes?
- Did the contestant communicate in language appropriate to a non-specialist audience? Did the speaker avoid scientific jargon and, when absolutely necessary, sufficiently explain terminology?

- Did the presentation have a clear and logical structure? Did the presenter spend adequate time on each element of their presentation - or did the presentation feel too rushed?
- i) **Engagement & Communication (50%):**
 - Did the speaker make the audience want to know more? Did the presenter capture and maintain their audience's attention?
 - Was the presenter careful not to trivialise or over-generalise their research?
 - Did the presenter convey enthusiasm for their research?
 - Did the speaker have sufficient stage presence, eye contact and vocal range; maintain a steady pace, and have a confident stance?
 - Did the slides enhance the presentation – were they clear, legible, and concise?

Successful candidates should be able to demonstrate top scientific achievements as expected for their career stage and effectively communicate how the advancement of science and technology contributes to solving global challenges faced by humanity. In doing so the presenters should also reflect on the overall topic of the event “Polyphony in innovation: potential(s) of social and scientific innovations for the cohesion of the society”.

6. *Who will judge the competition?*

The Contest will be judged by a panel of senior scientists-members of the UKRAINE Network, who will represent different areas of research, both natural sciences, and humanities & social sciences. Confirmed Jury members: **Prof. Yarema Okhrin**, Universität Augsburg; **Prof. Yury Gleba**, Nomad Bioscience GmbH; **Dr. Olesia Lazarenko**, Oleksandr Potebnia Institute for Linguistics, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Kyiv/ Humboldt Universität zu Berlin.

7. *How the finalists will be chosen?*

The Contest Coordination Committee and the judging panel will evaluate submitted applications and select top candidates, based on both their description of the research and their track-record, evidenced by academic achievements to date (50:50). Care will be taken to achieve a diverse representation of subjects, as well as gender balance. PhD-level scientists from the Network might be contacted to provide an expert advice for those applications, whose subject area differs substantially from that of any member of the Coordination Committee.

8. *What are the awards?*

The finalists (up to 10 persons) will be invited to Berlin to participate in the full programme of the Forum and present their research live at the **Final**. The travel expenses (usual rules for employees of Public Service/*Öffentliche Dienst* apply) as well as hotel cost will be reimbursed. **Three main prizes** will be conferred to the winners of the Contest's final. All finalists will receive the certificates.

9. *How to apply?*

Interested? Apply by filling the form, providing some basic information on your current affiliation, subject of study and a brief summary of your PhD research project and why your research is important, by following this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NJSQSM5>.