

Summary

MedPhys Slam is a research communication competition in which participants prepare a three-minute presentation aimed at sharing the significance of their science in a compelling yet understandable manner. Researchers spend day in and day out investigating the minutia of their topics, yet, to market a product or themselves, the minutia must be understood by more than just the scientific community. It's all in the art of communication, and this is what MedPhys Slam aims to foster in the medical physics community. This competition is open to all students and trainees. The preliminary competitions will take place at the local chapter meetings throughout the year, and those winners will participate in the final competition at AAPM 2018. The rules are simple: participants have three minutes to present their research using a maximum of three PowerPoint slides. Participants will be judged on three equally weighted categories: comprehension/content, communication, and engagement. Not only will this be of interest to those within medical physics, it can be expanded as an AAPM media initiative aimed at communicating what we do to the public. Presentations will be recorded and can be posted on social media outlets like FaceBook and a dedicated YouTube Channel.

Structure

- Between now and the AAPM annual meeting, each AAPM Chapter (and one for Canada) will hold a similar competition to select a single winner to represent the chapter at the AAPM annual meeting.
- STSC will organize a final event for the Chapter champions to be held at the 2018 AAPM meeting.

Logistics

- The final event logistics (including budget) are still to be determined, but there is discussion of making the event a major symposium of the Science Council.
- STSC is working closely with AAPM HQ, Meeting Coordination Committee, Working Group on Student and Trainee Research (WGSTR), and Public Education Committee (directly or through liaisons).
- STSC is working with WGSTR to designate a point of contact for each AAPM Chapter, and will be working directly with the respective chapter leadership to hold the preliminary events.

How is this different than YIS?

The purpose of the MedPhys Slam is entirely different than YIS. The audience for our event is not medical physicists; it is a general audience that may have no background knowledge of the field. Presenters have 3 minutes to give the “what, how, and why” of their research and convince a panel of judges that their work is impactful and important.

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 4-6 individuals on the judging panel.

Our initial brainstorming for the type of judges to invite include:

- Local news anchor/reporter
- Local high school physics teacher
- Local university professor (communications, theater, performing arts, physical sciences?)
- Local politician (mayor, council member, school board?)
- 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

Benefits of this event

For the students/trainees who participate, this event will provide an opportunity to practice and develop skills in communicating their research to a public audience. This is an opportunity that is relatively rare for researchers who most often present and publish their work targeted toward an audience of their scientific peers.

For the AAPM, this event will allow for the recording and producing of videos of high-quality speakers presenting current research in a way that is ready for a public audience. The videos can be shared to a wide audience and will 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 our field and annual meeting to the local community.

The same benefits can be scaled to the AAPM Chapters for their local events. The ideal chapter would provide mentorship, guidance, and funding support to their participant. The chapter members can then rally behind “their” representative in the final competition.

Example videos

<https://youtu.be/5fqNh6-RF5M?t=16m11s>

<https://youtu.be/bG3RncD6938>