



## **Guidelines and Terms & Conditions for the Dental Protection Research Competition for undergraduate dental/dental therapy/oral hygiene students in South Africa and Namibia**

The Dental Protection Research Competition for undergraduate dental/dental therapy/oral hygiene students in Southern Africa aims to promote, recognise, celebrate, and reward excellence in research demonstrated by the students in research.

The following guidelines and Terms and Conditions will help you to understand the Competition and its requirements:

### **1. Eligibility**

- a) The Competition is open to all undergraduate dental/dental therapy/oral hygiene students in South Africa and Namibia and graduates undertaking their year of internship or community service. Entrants must be undergraduate at the time of entry into the Competition or within one year following graduation from university.
- b) Entrants must accept the Terms and Conditions for the Competition

### **2. Entries**

- a) Entries must be made through The MPS Foundation's official Online Competition Portal. Entries made by any other means e.g., emails will be automatically rejected.
- b) Entrants can submit either a research proposal, and/or a completed research project.
  - Entrants can enter no more than 1 proposal and 1 completed research project in any one year.
  - Entrants can submit a proposal without submitting a completed project based on the proposal
  - Entrants can submit a completed research project without first having to submit a proposal
  - Entrants can submit both the proposal and the subsequent research project undertaken as two separate competition submissions
- c) Entrants should state if their competition submission is a research proposal or a completed research project.
- d) Research Categories: Entrants should choose from one of the three categories into which to submit their entry. These categories are:
  1. Quality improvement project which has application for patient safety, risk mitigation or the wellbeing of healthcare professionals in dentistry.

2. Presentation of a case managed during the undergraduate year which showcases elements of patient safety and risk mitigation preceded by a review of the literature and the evidence which informed the management of the case.
3. Small-scale research on patient safety, risk mitigation or the wellbeing of healthcare professionals in dentistry.

e) Criteria

Category 1 Criteria - The following are the criteria for the Quality Improvement Project (QIP). *Proposals should clearly demonstrate how each criterion will be addressed:*

- Description of the framework with used (to be used) to carry out the QIP, including any models, tools, or processes.
- Identification of the issue being addressed, explaining why it is significant and quantify its impact using relevant data or metrics.
- Identification of the underlying cause(s) of the issue, describing the methods used to determine these causes
- An evaluation of the literature that supports the (proposed) solution(s)
- Details of how the solution (would be) was implemented and how it (would be) was verified.
- A reflection of how the findings of the research would impact your practice and potentially the practice of others.
- Describe how the (potential) impact could/would be shared or translated to make a difference.

Category 2 Criteria – The following are the criteria for the presentation of a case preceded by a review of the literature and the evidence which informed the management of the case. The case presentation should:

- Show critical appraisal and review of the relevant literature.
- Describe the issues/challenges of the case.
- Clearly show how the evidence informed your practice and management of the case presented.
- Have well written and presented outcome(s) of the management of the case.
- Include Insightful reflections on how the entrant dealt with multiple facets of the case and its management.

Category 3 Criteria – The following are the criteria for the Small-scale Research Project. *Proposals should clearly demonstrate how each criterion will be addressed.* The project/proposal should:

- Have a strong and relevant research question.
- Have adequate literature review providing background and rationale for the research.
- Have clear and relevant aims and objectives.
- Use appropriate methodology for the research question and design.
- Explain how the data collected was (would be) managed and analysed.
- Have clearly presented and explained projects results.
- Have a good discussion section that shows understanding of the results, literature and implications (for proposals, show how this section would be structured and addressed).

- Have conclusions that are supported by the findings and linked to the aims and objectives.
- Include a reflection on how the findings of the research would impact your practice and potentially the practice of others.
- Describe how findings will be disseminated.

f) The proposals and projects may be individual or collaborative efforts involving a team of undergraduate dental students as described above.

g) All the projects and projects must comply with ethical guidelines and regulations, ensuring the protection and wellbeing of research participants

h) Entries must be in English

i) Entries must be submitted no later than the closing date of the Competition, which is 30 September 2026. Any submissions received after this date will not be considered.

j) All entries must include no more than a 3000-word submission (excluding references) describing the research proposal or project. The entry must have a title and should have a rationale for the research question, how the research project will be or was conducted and the impact (or the anticipated impact for proposals), relevance, and significance of the findings.

Appendices may be included and will not count towards the word count. However, all items included as appendices should only be providing extra, detailed information [e.g. a copy of a questionnaire used in the project]. Appendices should not be used as a way of circumventing the word count limit as the Judges may not go through any information in the appendices because these will be considered as additional detail, but nonessential information.

k) Entries must adhere to the word limit requirement. Entries that exceed the word limit may be disqualified.

l) Submissions must be the original work of the entrant(s) and must not include any unreferenced copyrighted material plagiarised from another source.

### **3. Submission Process**

a) Submissions must be made via the Competition's official Portal.

b) Submissions must be made according to the Competition guidelines stated on the Competition's official Portal

c) All submissions will be reviewed by a panel of judges according to the Competition criteria outlined in the guidelines document.

d) All materials related to the Competition, including the entries, shall become the property of the Competition, and may be used at the sole discretion of the Competition organisers.

### **4. Judging**

a) Entries will be judged by a panel of judges.

b) Judges will be evaluating entries on their quality of proposals and research, relevance of research to dentistry, and overall presentation of the research.

c) The judges' decision is final, and no negotiation or discussion will be entered into

## **5. Awards, Prizes and Recognition**

a) Winners will be notified of the results via email.

b) Prizes will be awarded for the best competition entries for each professional group for each university. There will also be commended awards. Each professional group research project winner will receive R4,000 and a certificate. The commended award winners will receive a certificate. Each professional group proposal winner will receive R1,000.

c) The winning completed research projects for each professional group at the university level will compete for the overall national winner's prize of 15,000 and a certificate for their professional group.

d) Winners and commended entrants of completed projects will be invited to have their research published by the MPS Foundation for MPS members and the wider healthcare community

e) For a collaborative entry that wins, the contributors will share the prize money equally.

f) There will be acknowledgement for universities for their winners for each professional group.

## **6. General Terms & Conditions**

a) By entering the Competition, entrants agree to be bound by these Terms and Conditions and acknowledge the decisions of the Competition judges and the Competition organisers, which are final in all matters relating to the Competition.

b) Entrants also agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Competition organisers and judges from all liability arising out of the entry's participation in the Competition.

c) The prize won by an entrant is non-exchangeable, non-transferable, and is not redeemable for other prizes.

d) The organisers of the Competition will have the right to disqualify any entries for any reason, and any disqualified entries will not be eligible for any prizes.

e) Entrants agree to comply with all applicable laws and regulations while participating in the Competition and acknowledge that the Competition organisers are not responsible for any taxes, duties, or fees associated with any awards they may receive as part of the Competition.

f) The Competition organisers reserve the right to disqualify any entrant that is deemed to violate these Terms and Conditions or any applicable laws or regulations.

g) The Competition organisers reserve the right to modify or amend the rules and regulations of the Competition at any time.

h) The winners may be required to take part in promotional activity related to the Competition and the winners must agree to participate in such activity on MPS's reasonable request. The winners consent to the use by The MPS Foundation, Dental Protection and MPS and its related companies, after the closing date of the

Competition for a period of 12 months, of the voice, image, photograph and name for publicity purposes (in any medium, including still photographs and films, and on the internet, including any websites hosted by MPS and its related companies) and in advertising, marketing or promotional material without additional compensation. In entering the Competition, all entrants agree to the same.

i) The MPS Foundation, Dental Protection and MPS shall not be liable for any failure to comply with its obligations where the failure is caused by something outside its reasonable control. Such circumstances shall include, but not be limited to, weather conditions, fire, flood, hurricane, strike, industrial dispute, war, hostilities, political unrest, riots, civil commotion, inevitable accidents, supervening legislation, or any other circumstances amounting to force majeure.

j) The MPS Foundation will handle entrants' personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and The UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

This competition is an excellent opportunity to showcase your research skills, contribute to research in the dental sector, and make a meaningful impact. Please make sure that you adhere to the Competition guidelines and requirements that we have provided. If you have any questions about the Competition, please contact us at [info@thempsfoundation.org](mailto:info@thempsfoundation.org) using "The Dental Protection Research Competition for undergraduate dental/dental therapy/oral hygiene students in South Africa and Namibia " as the subject heading. We look forward to your participation.