

GRADflix-in-a-box

Competition information for institutions

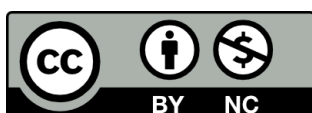
How to use this package

This package is an overview of the GRADflix research communication competition. It includes the following:

- [Background and goals](#), including what the competition is and why students should participate.
- [Competition overview and structure](#), to clarify the individual components of the competition and how they work.
- [Tips and considerations](#) when planning your own competition, based on our experience running GRADflix since 2018.
- [Appendix A: sample communications](#) provides a series of templates you can use to promote the GRADflix competition and inform participants of important details.
- [Appendix B: showcase materials](#) provides sample schedules for help planning the [culminating showcase event](#), as well as accompanying resource templates.

This package, and the associated documents, will provide everything you need to start your own GRADflix competition at your institution. These resources are intended to serve as a general template for the what the competition is about and how it can be organized. These materials can be adapted (if you choose) to suit your specific institutional needs or goals. To see how it looks all together, please feel free to visit our [GRADflix website](#).

This document, and all associated materials (except where otherwise stated) available as part of the GRADflix-in-a-box download package fall under the Creative Commons [Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International](#) license. You are free to use, distribute, and adapt this work freely, provided you include proper attribution and do not use it for commercial purposes.



GRADflix-in-a-box by University of Waterloo Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs is licensed under Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>

Background and Goals

The GRADflix competition was created in 2018 by Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs (GSPA) at the University of Waterloo. The primary goal of the competition is to provide an opportunity for graduate student researchers to share their research with a wider audience. Secondary goals include supporting participants in developing valuable communication and technical skills, and creating opportunities to promote graduate studies and graduate student research at the institution.

GRADflix intentionally represents a complimentary alternative to other major research communication competitions like Three Minute Thesis (3MT), insofar as it doesn't focus on public speaking. It offers an opportunity for students with no prior experience (in public speaking or video creation) to participate and involves no need to perform in front of a live audience. This ideally serves as an encouraging gateway to participation in future competitions.

The competition has been very well-received at the University of Waterloo, with feedback praising GRADflix as a “[fabulous] way to showcase students’ research, particularly for those who would suffer the pressure of a live public speaking event like 3MT.” Colleagues have praised the creativity on display through competitor videos, and indicated feeling inspired to find “other applications for this sort of creativity” and calling it a reminder of “how much talent is here [at the University of Waterloo]”!

What is GRADflix?

GRADflix is a research communication opportunity for research-based Master’s and PhD students. Participants create a video of no longer than 60-seconds (one-minute) to describe their research. The video can take many forms, including live action recording, screencast, moving slide show, animation, or mixed media. All videos must include some type of movement (i.e. slide transitions, zooms/pans, a moving subject) and sound (i.e. voice over, music, effects).

Graduate students can participate at any stage in the research process, and no prior experience with video creation is required. The competition incorporates training in the basic principles of video creation/editing and research communication, as well as multiple opportunities for ongoing support.

A panel of judges chooses the finalists and winners from among the submissions, based on the judging criteria provided. Finalists are then featured in a public showcase of videos, where the winners are announced to a live audience (in-person or virtually).

GRADflix video examples

Still want to learn more? Or, looking for examples of successful GRADflix research videos that effectively engage and inform a general audience? Check out the video submissions from the [2022 GRADflix competition](#), or those from the [2021 GRADflix competition](#) on YouTube. Finalists and winners are indicated in the video titles. Notice the range of video styles. Some are animations, others are video-recorded, and some are made with PowerPoint, or even stop-motion sketches!

Why participate?

By participating in the GRADflix competition, graduate students will be able to:

- Develop and broaden their research communication skills, explaining complex ideas to a non-specialist audience.

- Learn and practice video production and editing skills, using digital narrative to inform and engage an audience.
- Expand their network, gaining greater exposure for their research, and connecting with other students, judges, and faculty members.
- Create a research video useable in other academic and professional contexts, such as adding it to their LinkedIn profile, or as a link in their resume.
- Apply skills learned through this competition to their teaching, integrating technology like videos into the classroom.
- Compete to win monetary prizes!
- Enter more competitions, potentially even using this video if it meets the criteria for submission to other competitions (e.g. [SSHRC's Storytellers competition](#) or [NSERC's Science, Action!](#))

Competition Overview and Structure

Major components

There are four major components to the GRADflix competition, as offered at UWaterloo.

Training session

GRADflix has been designed to incorporate foundational training in the basic principles of video creation, editing, and research communication strategies. This training assumes no prior knowledge in these areas, so that anyone can participate, regardless of previous experience. The training session, offered shortly after the competition launch, covers best practices for video creation/editing, scripting, and communicating to a non-specialist audience. It also includes specific tips and guidelines for any technological tools or resources that participants might need to get started, as well as information about copyright considerations.

To make the competition accessible to a wider group of students, the session directs participants to campus services or resources that they can access for support and focuses on recommending free video creation/editing software, or those with a lower relative barrier to entry. Processes for accessing equipment loans are also highlighted as part of the training.

At the University of Waterloo, the GRADflix training session is a collaborative effort between multiple campus units. You can find each of the four sections as separate PowerPoint documents in the [GRADflix package](#). If you need somewhere to get started, these can serve as a useful example or templates.

Drop-in feedback sessions

Multiple drop-in feedback sessions are offered as part of the GRADflix competition to provide ongoing opportunities for students to get support and ask questions. This is an important component that emphasizes learning and growth as central elements of GRADflix. Students are encouraged to attend no matter what stage of the process they are in, whether they have questions about the rules, need help getting started, or have a completed video they want feedback on.

These sessions are typically promoted to all graduate students via a newsletter, but those who have already registered for the competition receive direct emails and reminders to attend if they want feedback or support.

Drop-in sessions fit best in a virtual format, specifically a Zoom meeting, or any platform that allows for a waiting room and breakout rooms. We have had success facilitating these sessions with small groups of competition organizers and communication experts (one to two GSPA staff and two experts from Waterloo's Writing and Communication Centre). When students join the virtual session, they are asked what kind of advice or feedback they are looking for, and then placed in a breakout room with one of the facilitators for a 1-on-1 discussion.

Video submissions

Since video files are typically too large to send via email, a file sharing service is used for submission. At the University of Waterloo, we have used [Sendit](#), allowing students to send their files securely and to receive a notification once it has been downloaded by the organizers.

By submitting their video, participants are agreeing that the submission does not infringe upon or violate any laws or any third party rights, including, but not limited to, copyright, patent, trademark, trade secret or other proprietary rights and must not constitute material that would be considered libelling, defamatory, a privacy violation, tortious or a contract breach.

Part of the submission process also includes a webform that gathers specific information about the participants. At the University of Waterloo, in order for a submission to be considered, we require the following information from each participant:

- Name (First, Last), with pronunciation
- Pronouns (optional)
- Faculty and level of study (PhD or Master's)
- Contact information, to be posted with their video* (optional)
- Name(s) of supervisor(s)
- Video title
- Short biography of 60-100 words (written in third person)
- Good quality portrait or headshot photo

*All participants are required to provide contact information, for GSPA's usage, as part of registration. With the submission, GSPA recommends participants provide an email address or link to a public profile (e.g. LinkedIn) that is listed with their video on YouTube, allowing for interested individuals to reach out with questions or possible collaborations.

This participant information is used to feature GRADflix finalists (as chosen by the judges) on our website and social media channels, as well as to introduce finalists and videos during the live showcase. The information is also included with the public posting of videos on our [YouTube channel](#), following the showcase.

Finalist showcase

Finalist selection

The panel of judges watches all the videos and scores them based on the judging criteria, creating a shortlist of the top videos to be featured as finalists in a public showcase. The finalists are determined by selecting the highest scorers using the judging sheets in Appendix A. At the University of Waterloo, we typically include 25 finalists in the showcase – this provides a wide range of videos, without

overwhelming the audience with too many choices for the People's Choice vote, or creating too lengthy of a Showcase event.

General format

The showcase has been organized as both a virtual and in-person event. Typically, the structure involves a host from GSPA, as well as several guest speakers from the University (or beyond) speaking briefly on research communication or similar topics. Finalist videos are played in batches (with short introductions before each), with the guest speakers serving to split up the batches of videos. This provides time for viewers to "digest" the videos between sections. An MC introduces each video, using the brief biographic blurbs provided with their submission. The MC also manages the smooth flow of the event by introducing and conversing with guest speakers and presenting each stage or section of the event.

While the judges decide upon the winners in advance, the decisions are announced live during the showcase. When conducted in-person, we require all finalists to attend the showcase event or arrange for a delegate to accept a prize on their behalf if they are selected as a winner (GSPA will support arranging for a delegate, such as a department representative, as needed).

Live attendees are provided with the opportunity to vote for the People's Choice Award winner after all videos have been shown. The voting takes place during the event using a survey software (e.g. SurveyMonkey, Qualtrics). GSPA also provides [downloadable tracking sheets](#) for attendees to mark down their own personal scores or thoughts on the finalist videos as they watch them throughout the showcase.

Additional showcase options, as utilized by GSPA, include:

- Offering movie theatre style snacks and drinks (mailed to finalists for virtual events)
- Incorporating audience prizes and activities (selfie contest for virtual events)
- Red carpet photo opportunities (in-person event)
- Chat or social media engagement options (virtual events)

In-person set-up

- When [running an in-person showcase](#), we arranged for a red carpet to be set up in front of a photo backdrop outside the main event room. When attendees arrived, they received a copy of the event program, movie theatre popcorn, and were then able to walk down the red carpet and have their photo taken by our event photographer.
- Feedback has suggested that a single large screen is the most effective presentation format, with a podium up front, where our MC and special guests spoke from.
- As winners were announced, our Associate Vice-President was available to congratulate each winner.
- Once the formal presentation concluded official photos were taken of the winners, judges and special guests.
- All guests, judges and competitors were invited to join a cocktail reception to celebrate and network together following the showcase (which included wine and cheese).
- Notices of photography signs are placed in visible locations throughout the room, so that we are able to capture the event for promotion on our website and social media. We arranged photos with all of the finalists, the winners, the judges, and the winners with the judges.

- We found it is a good idea to be explicit about judges and competitors taking a photo at the end so that no one leaves prior to the photography session

Virtual set-up

- When [running a virtual showcase](#), we coordinated with an external company [Good Company Productions](#) to facilitate a live event with a mixture of speakers and recorded videos.
- The virtual event was livestreamed through YouTube, where audience members were encouraged to engage by leaving comments. The team working in the background would choose certain comments to highlight in moving banners at the bottom of the screen during guest speaker interviews.
- Participants who submitted videos were gifted with a remote viewing package, including popcorn and candy, with which to watch the event. In previous years this was mailed to them, though we eventually found it more feasible to arrange for pick-up.
- A hashtag was created on Twitter to facilitate a selfie contest. Audience members would take a selfie and send it to our email address. Towards the end of the showcase, while people were voting for the People's Choice Award winner, these selfies would be showcased on screen, and a winner was randomly selected to receive a prize.

Viewing party

When running the showcase virtually, an in-person component can be achieved by hosting an in-person viewing party. This can involve an event space with audiovisual equipment to view the virtual showcase live. Finalists, their supervisors, guest speakers, and other representatives from campus units as appropriate, can be invited to attend in person. The event can be catered, with food, drinks, and snacks to create a celebratory viewing experience.

Post-event actions

After the showcase event, finalists and their videos can be promoted through websites and social media channels. At the University of Waterloo we keep a [list of finalists](#) from previous years, and maintain [YouTube playlists](#) of their videos. We have also conducted [interviews with some GRADflix winners](#) and featured these on our website.

Eligibility

To be eligible to participate in GRADflix, participants must be:

- A graduate student who is registered in a master's (thesis or MRP) or PhD program at the time of the GRADflix competition.
 - Note: Master's and PhD students who have degree completed, but have not yet convocated, are still eligible to participate.
- Willing to allow your video to be made public, and willing to provide a photo and short biography, which will be made public if you are selected as a finalist.
- Submitting a video that is an original work created by you, for which you have all the necessary rights to use and display publicly.
 - Note: Previous finalists who did not win first prize are eligible to compete again if the video submission is **materially different**, from that of their previous submission.

- Willing to attend the finalist showcase, or to arrange a delegate who can accept the prize on your behalf. If you are a finalist and not able to attend or arrange a delegate, you must be willing to work with us to ensure there is someone in attendance, such as a department or faculty representative, who can accept a prize on your behalf.

Video Requirements

In order to be eligible for the consideration, the submitted video must:

- Include movement and sound.
- Be no longer than 60 seconds, though it can be less than 60 seconds.
- Focus on research conducted for your thesis, MRP or dissertation in your current graduate program at this university.
- Not infringe upon or violate any laws or any third party rights, including, but not limited to, copyright, patent, trademark, trade secret or other proprietary rights and must not constitute material that would be considered libeling, defamatory, a privacy violation, tortious or a contract breach.

Accessibility and copyright considerations:

- If your video is selected, you may be asked to submit a script for closed captioning purposes. If your video is selected and you advance to the next round of the competition, closed captioning will be required as the winning videos will be uploaded to YouTube.
- When creating your video keep copyright in mind. As your video will be made available online, you need to make sure that you are using third party content properly.*
- Abstracts, oral descriptions, slides, pictures and videos can all constitute public disclosure and affect intellectual property rights and patentability.*

*We recommend linking students to relevant copyright resources or supports.

Judging Criteria

Updated in 2022, these judging criteria are designed to encourage a focus on clarity, style, and imagination over technical mastery or experience. This helps ensure that students with little or no prior knowledge of video editing or creation can still compete effectively.

Communication (50%)

Your ability to communicate your research effectively and efficiently to a general audience through language and visuals. A strong video will demonstrate:

- Ability to explain complex ideas to a non-specialist audience
- Well-designed script with clear language and terminology
- Good pacing and sequencing of information (i.e. easy to follow)
- Audio and visuals that add information, clarify ideas, or complement the message
- Clear explanation of contribution(s) to research/scholarship

Note: The GRADflix competition will be judged in English.

Creativity (30%)

Your ability to present your research in a unique and thoughtful way. A strong video will demonstrate:

- Creative use of (limited) time
- Novel and interesting presentation of information
- Engaging format that captures audience interest

Technical quality (20%)

Your ability to produce a video with quality visual and audio components. A strong video will demonstrate:

- High quality sound and images
- Integration of appealing audio/visual elements

Note: By submitting your video, you are agreeing that all sounds, images, information, etc. are cited or credited in the video, as required. See [submission details](#) for further information.

Prizes

Four main prizes are awarded by the panel of judges, using the judging criteria above:

- One 1st place prize: \$750
- One 2nd place prize: \$500
- One 3rd place prize: \$250
- One 4th place prize: \$250

At the showcase, audience members vote for a fifth prize winner:

- One people's choice award: \$250

At the University of Waterloo, we have also arranged for a sixth prize, sponsored by another campus unit, [GreenHouse](#):

- “Most compelling social impact story” award: \$250

This type of themed “bonus” prize category can be an effective means of encouraging broader participation. You may wish to reach out to other campus units who might be interested in sponsoring prizes.

Tips and Considerations

Communication

Expectations: Be explicit in the expectations of finalists – it is helpful for them to know in advance that their name and video will be made public, in addition to any expectations of attendance, speaking and/or photos at the showcase event.

Promotion: Consider linking students to our interviews with the [2021 GRADflix award winners](#) for inspiration on why they might want to participate and how rewarding the experience can be. If you are running the competition for multiple years, keeping track of winners in this way through interviews or profiles can help raise the visibility of the competition and build excitement around it. Emphasizing that

many finalists and winners had no prior experience with video creation highlights the competition's accessibility.

Social Media: If using Twitter, request the twitter handles of all competitors so you can tweet/share their videos on social media and tag them while doing so. Consider using a hashtag for the competition, which can be used to facilitate audience participation during or leading up to the showcase.

Competition Technology

Video format: We specify that participants must submit their videos in mp4 format, to ensure that we don't need to convert them manually.

Video captions: We ask participants to not include captions in the video itself for accessibility reasons. Closed captioning is added when the videos are uploaded to YouTube, and we have had someone check through the captions to make sure they are accurate and making adjustments where necessary. We also inform participants that they may be asked to provide a transcript to support this process, though this isn't always needed.

Sound quality: Expect sound variation between videos, with some being louder or quieter than others. During the final event, we have sometimes needed to raise or lower the volume between videos, to provide consistency to the audience.

Equipment loans: It's worth considering if you are able to arrange for participants to borrow filming and audio equipment. During the GRADflix competition, we have small tripods, a gimbal (electronic stabilizer), lapel microphones, and a shotgun microphone available for short term loans. This allows students to participate using just their phone, while also having a few tools accessible to them to help create better quality video and sound.

Timeline

What has worked for us: While the exact dates of the major components have varied between iterations of the competition, we have found the following timeline to be effective:

- Competition launches in late September or early October.
- Training session hosted approximately three to four weeks after competition launch, late October or early November.
- First drop-in feedback session hosted approximately three weeks after the training session.
- Registration deadline approximately four weeks after the training session. This has been extended depending on registration numbers. Registration is primarily used to identify participants for further communications, so there is some flexibility.
- Second drop-in feedback session hosted approximately three weeks after the first.
- Submission deadline in the second week of January (during the first week of classes).
- Finalist showcase held at the end of January.
 - Note: This provides approximately three to four days for GSPA to review videos and make them available to the judges, one week for judges to review and score videos, and one week to prepare final showcase details after finalists are selected by the judges

Save the date: We suggest having the date for the showcase and other major components available and advertised when people register for the competition, so that students know the overall timeline.

Post-competition: Following the end of the competition we have also done the following:

- Release competitor videos on YouTube, and link to these videos from the website.
- Post the GRADflix winners, with links to their videos, on social media.
- Follow up with students/winners/audience members for feedback.
- Notify individual faculties/departments of their winners, so that they can promote internally if they wish.
- Announce the winners on the website, and update the GRADflix hall of fame webpage.
- Interview winners to include on the website for future competitions.

Appendix A: Sample Communications

Competition launch email - Sample

Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs is pleased to announce the launch of the fifth annual [GRADflix competition!](#)

GRADflix is a research communication initiative for graduate students. Describe your research using a video, moving slide show, or animation of no longer than 60 seconds. If you've never made a video before, [attend our training session](#) on October 27 to find out how easy it is to make a short video!

Selected entries will be chosen by a judging panel to be shown at a virtual showcase event in January, where finalists will have the chance to win one of five cash prizes ranging in value from \$250 to \$750.

Important dates:

- Oct 27: GRADflix [training session](#)
- Nov 16: GRADflix [drop-in feedback session](#)
- Nov 22: Deadline to [register to participate](#) in GRADflix
- Dec 6: GRADflix [drop-in feedback session](#)
- Jan 10: GRADflix [submission](#) deadline
- Jan 31: GRADflix [virtual showcase event](#)

Do you have questions about GRADflix?

- Review the eligibility criteria and other [competition details on our website](#)
- [Attend the training session](#)
- [E-mail us at gradventure@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:gradventure@uwaterloo.ca)

Why participate? GRADflix provides an opportunity to use digital narrative to explain a complex idea, and to develop your "elevator pitch" while doing so. In addition to broadening your communication skills and gaining greater exposure for your research, you will also learn a new skill and have a chance to win a monetary prize. Plus, you may be eligible to submit your video to other competitions, such as [SSHRC's Storytellers](#).

[Register today](#) and get started on a video to share your research with the wider University of Waterloo community.

Registration confirmation email - Sample

Subject Line: GRADflix Competition Confirmation

This email is to confirm your registration for the [2023 GRADflix competition!](#)

The deadline to submit your video is January 10, 2023 at 4 p.m. Keep these key points in mind while creating your video or getting ready to submit:

- Access our [training resources](#), including a recording of the training session, for tools and tips for making and editing your one-minute video.

- Review the [GRADflix judging criteria](#) for more details on how your video will be evaluated by our panel of judges.
- Review [submission guidelines](#) carefully before sending us your video, and don't forget to fill out the [GRADflix participant information form](#).

Thank you for participating and we look forward to seeing your video soon!

Training session reminder email – Sample

Subject: Register for the GRADflix training session

Dear [First name],

Join us for the [2023 GRADflix training session](#)!

Date: Oct 27 2022

Time: 2:00-4:00pm

Thinking about registering for the [2023 GRADflix competition](#), but not sure where to start or whether you are eligible? Join us for a virtual training session to learn about:

- Everything you need to create a 60-second research video.
- Different tools and resources you can use.
- GRADflix competition details and guidelines.
- Video best practices, including scripting, technology tools, software options, and other resources.
- Copyright considerations.
- Communicating to a non-specialist audience.

Facilitators assume you have no prior knowledge about creating videos, so come with any questions you have! [Register through Eventbrite](#) to attend.

If you any questions please don't hesitate to reach out to us.

Drop-in session email to registered students - Sample

Subject: Join us for a GRADflix Drop-in Session

Hello GRADflix participants!

You are receiving this e-mail because you have registered for the 2023 GRADflix competition. We are holding our [first Drop-in feedback session](#) next week, November 16 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Zoom. This is an opportunity to ask questions and get feedback from communication experts at the Writing and Communication Centre (WCC), as well as Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs (GSPA) staff. Whether you are still in the planning stages, working on your script, filming, or looking for feedback on what you've done so far, we can help! Here are some common questions we have worked with students on in the past:

- How can I make my script fit into a single minute?
- What kind of visuals should I use?
- Are my points clear, easy to follow?
- How can I edit the footage I have?

The session will run from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., and you can join online at any time using the information below to speak with one of our specialists one-on-one.

[virtual meeting information]

Please reach out to us with any questions!

[Submission deadline reminder email to registered participants - Sample](#)

[exclude from the mailing list those who have already submitted]

Happy New Year GRADflix Participants!

We hope that you have had a restful and relaxing holiday season, and that you are enjoying the start of the Winter 2022 term.

This is a reminder that your video submission for the [2023 GRADflix competition](#) is due on Monday, January 10, 2023 at 4 p.m. You can find specific instructions on the [Submission Details](#) section of the GRADflix website. Remember that there are two steps, both of which must be completed by the deadline:

- Send your video (saved as an MP4 file) to gradventure@uwaterloo.ca using the [Sendit](#) file transfer service; and
- Complete the [GRADflix participant information form](#), so that we have all the necessary information should you be selected as a finalist at the GRADflix Showcase at the end of the month (if you haven't already done so, [register via Eventbrite](#) to attend).

All finalists will be invited to an in-person viewing party for the showcase, so remember to **save the date for January 31, 2023 from 2:45 – 6:00 p.m. ET**. Your supervisor(s) will also be invited, so let them know to save the date as well! If you are selected as a finalist and unable to attend in person, you will be expected to arrange a delegate or work with Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs to do so.

If you have any questions about the GRADflix competition, the submission process, or the showcase, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me at gradventure@uwaterloo.ca.

[Showcase announcement to graduate community – Sample](#)

Subject: Join us for the 2023 GRADflix competition showcase!

We're rolling out the (virtual) red carpet for the 2023 GRADflix Showcase!

You're invited to join Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs (GSPA) for a virtual event featuring the 2023 GRADflix finalist submissions. The winners will be announced live, so come be part of the action!

[Register through Eventbrite](#) today!

The showcase will be streamed live on the GSPA YouTube channel and will feature special guests, prizes, and more. Before the showcase, you will receive a link to watch online – just one click and you're in! Make sure that you're tuned in by 3 p.m. ET, because we have some amazing graduate research videos to share and want to make sure you see the whole show!

As an audience member, you will have the chance to engage with GRADflix competitors, cheer on your favourites and vote for the People's Choice winner from the comfort of your own home. Every vote counts – pick your favorite! The first place winner receives \$750. Prizes will also be awarded to the 2nd, 3rd and 4th place contestants, and to the People's Choice winner. In addition, for the first time this year, GreenHouse is sponsoring a sixth bonus prize of \$250 for the “most compelling social impact story.”

If there is anything we can clarify about the event or the GRADflix competition, please reach out to us at gradventure@uwaterloo.ca. We hope to see you all at the event!

[Viewing party invitation email to finalists - Sample](#)

Subject: Congratulations! You are a finalist in the 2023 GRADflix competition!

Dear [first name],

Congratulations! We're thrilled to announce that your research video has impressed our panel of judges, and that you have officially been selected as a finalist for the 2023 GRADflix competition!

This means that your video will be shared live at our virtual GRADflix Showcase on January 31, 2023. This event will showcase your video alongside those of the other finalists, and the final winners, as chosen by our panel of judges, will be announced live for the first time. The audience will also have an opportunity to vote for the People's Choice award winner.

As a finalist, we will be sending you and your supervisor(s) (who we will reach out to separately) an invitation to attend the in-person viewing party taking place on January 31, from 2:45 to 6:00 p.m. in the Board and Senate room (Needles Hall 3407). There will be free food and drinks while you and the other finalists watch the live event together alongside your supervisors and representatives from your respective faculties.

Please reply to this e-mail confirming that you will be attending the in-person event. If you cannot attend, you must do one of the following:

- Arrange a delegate to attend in your place, so that they can accept a prize on your behalf if you are announced as a winner. Contact them to ensure they are willing and able to attend, then reply to this email with their contact information while CCing them.
- If you cannot arrange a delegate, reply to this email to let us know, so that we can work with you to ensure there is someone in attendance, such as a department or faculty representative.

Finally, remember to spread the word to your friends and family! They can [register for the event](#) to attend virtually and cheer you on from the comfort of their own homes!

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us.

[Finalist announcement to grad community - Sample](#)

[Sent to Associate Deans and Recruitment reps one week before the event]

Subject: 2023 GRADflix Showcase – Finalists announced!

We are excited to announce that we have selected the 2023 GRADflix competition finalists! Their videos will be showcased at the 2023 GRADflix showcase, a live virtual red carpet event streaming on YouTube on January 31, 2023 from 3 to 5 p.m. At the event, the winners chosen by our panel of judges will be announced, and the audience members will vote on the People's Choice award winner.

[number] of this year's 25 finalists are from the Faculty of [name]. They are: [list finalists]

We have reached out to their departments and asked them to encourage students to join the stream to cheer on their peers and learn a bit about the amazing research being done by other UWaterloo graduate students!

[Register through Eventbrite](#) to attend! More information about the competition can be found on the GRADflix website.

Appendix B: Showcase Materials

In-person showcase schedule – Sample

Time	Activity
3:00 pm	Competitors arrive (reserved seating). Bottled water will be provided.
3:00 pm- 3:15pm	Judges arrive (reserved seating) Associate Vice-President GSPA and Vice- President GSPA arrive (reserved seating)
3:30 pm	Doors/bar open. Attendees are welcomed and encouraged to get a drink before taking a seat. They will be advised that the formal show will begin at 4:00pm.
4:00 pm	GRADflix Showcase begins <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening remarks (Jeff Casello, Associate VP, Graduate Studies) • Host introduced (Sarah Howard) • Host proceeds through GRADflix PowerPoint
4:10 pm	Competition begins <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host introduces each competitor (bio) • Each competitor video is played • Judges make notes, if necessary
5:00 pm	Competition ends <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host thanks the audience and competitors, Judges leave to deliberate and pick winners (Angela Rooke to facilitate deliberation) • People’s Choice awards introduced by host. Screen grab of each video along with the contestant’s name will be posted on the screen. • Audience will be provided with a URL and asked to vote for People’s Choice award using their smartphones. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Competitors, Judges and Host not participating in People’s Choice awards • Approximately 5 min later: competitors called to front (Katie Couto) for Q/A. Host will introduce each competitor and video title again. • Vice-President GSPA will facilitate the Q/A (Kirsten Muller)
5:15 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People’s Choice results tabulated (Katie Couto)
5:15 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judges return from deliberation and are seated • Vice-President GSPA/Associate Vice-President GSPA to say final thank you and hand out prizes • Winners are announced • Prizes awarded • Group photos of GRADflix participants and winners with judges taken (photographer)
5:20pm	Wine and cheese begins
6:30pm	Event ends

Virtual showcase schedule – Sample

Time	Activity
2:30 pm	Participants join StreamYard (virtual platform back end), complete sound check, etc.
2:55 pm	Stream goes live with placeholder and music
3:00 pm	Event welcome and introduction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host discusses platform logistics and gives territorial acknowledgement • Opening remarks (Jeff Casello, Associate VP, Graduate Studies) • Host goes over competition details and rules.
3:16 pm	Video set #1 begins <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host introduces each video, with finalist name, video title, and very brief bio.
3:24 pm	Break #1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments about videos so far, highlighting audience comments if possible. • Introduce selfie contest.
3:28 pm	Video set #2 begins <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host introduces each video, with finalist name, video title, and very brief bio.
3:35pm	Break #2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments about importance of communication skills. • Reference to past competitors' perspectives.
3:39 pm	Video set #3 begins <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host introduces each video, with finalist name, video title, and very brief bio.
3:47 pm	Interview with former winner Madu Gallapanathi
3:55 pm	Video set #4 begins <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host introduces each video, with finalist name, video title, and very brief bio.
4:03 pm	Break # 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share selfies that have come in. • Reminder to send in selfies for the contest.
4:08 pm	Video set #5 begins <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host introduces each video, with finalist name, video title, and very brief bio.
4:15 pm	Video review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recap of video names with screenshots from each. • Instructions for people's choice award voting.
4:20 pm	Interview with Dr. Kelly Grindrod
4:30 pm	Awarding of winners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announce each winning video preceded by a drumroll. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Starting with fourth place winner and working up. ○ Pause for comments and congratulations with each video. Highlight audience comments where possible. • People's choice winner announcement
4:50 pm	Closing comments
5:00 pm	Event ends

People's choice award scoresheet - Sample

[Note: This was provided as a fillable pdf with uwaterloo branding to attendees prior to the showcase.]

As an audience member at the GRADflix 2022 Showcase, you get to be part of the action by voting for your favorite GRADflix video to win the People's Choice award, which includes a cash prize of \$250! Our judges are picking winners based on communication (50%), creativity and visual impact (30%), and technical quality (20%), but for People's Choice, you get to decide what matters most to you!

As you watch our 25 finalist videos, keep track of your comments and favorites below:

GRADflix finalists, set 1

Name and video title	Comments and score
Sepideh Sarmast – A green energy storage	
Ebru Emir – A survey on robot personality: designing expressive robotic motion for effortless HRI	
Karen Hock – Breaking news: sugary drink taxes	
Robert Chlumsky – Building blended hydrologic models	
Cameron McGlade-Bouchard – Challenging voluntary sustainability standards' role in filling global regulatory gaps	

GRADflix finalists, set 2

Name and video title	Comments and score
Chien-Chih Chen – FactDefender: an implementation of fake news prevention by blockchain and an incentive mechanism	
Arisha Imran – Flooding in a drying delta	
Azwad Abid – Flying cars: a smooth transition for you	
Maya Petgrave – Glycosylation and dynamics of the human cannabinoid receptors	
Anika Chiang – Helping farmers save our water	

GRADflix finalists, set 3

Name and video title	Comments and score
Maria Bernadette Battaglia – Human behaviour and small-scale fisheries governance: the role of social norms	
Anas Mahdi – Improving mobility for elderly population	
Zaid Abbas Al-Sabbag – Interactive defect segmentation using XR	
Anshul Goyal – Is power sector ready for EVs (Electric Vehicles) integration into grid?	
Atiyeh Ahmadi – Let's go for healthier future!	

GRADflix finalists, set 4

Name and video title	Comments and score
Lauren Gosse – Mental health service use among children and youth with chronic physical conditions	
Eugenia Dadzie – Microbes and enzymes: sustainable plastic degradation	
Nargess Heydari Beni – Monitoring cardiac activity from the upper arm	
Abhishek Mishra – Online monitoring of bioprocesses using fluorescence spectroscopy	
Linda Sosa-Hernandez – Shyness and friendship formation	

GRADflix finalists, set 5

Name and video title	Comments and score
Mariam Gad – Silicon batteries	
Alexander Malone – The determinants of paramedic performance	
Saeideh Davari Dowlatabadi – The effect of early life and adulthood social stress on brain development	
Jessica Vander Vaart – The effects of exercise combined with music on the brain	
Hannah Burdett – Upscaling snow processes	

Showcase playbill - Sample

Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs presents

GRADflix

SHOWCASE



What is GRADflix?

GRADflix is a research communication opportunity for University of Waterloo graduate students. Participants create a video, moving slide show, or animation of no longer than 60 seconds (one minute) in length that describes their research. Videos can take many forms, but must include movement and sound.

Over 70 students registered to participate in the 2019 GRADflix competition. The top 15 videos, as selected by the judges, are being showcased today.

GRADflix prizes

Five prizes will be awarded:

- 1st place prize: \$750
- 2nd place prize: \$500
- 3rd place prize: \$250
- 4th place prize: \$250
- People's choice award: \$250

Judging criteria

The judges have selected the top four videos based on the following criteria:

Communication (50%):

- use of clear language and terminology; good pace
- appropriate use of images to complement message
- contribution to research/scholarship is clear and understandable
- logical sequence of information (i.e. easy to follow)
- ability to explain complex ideas to a non-specialist audience

Creativity and visual impact (30%):

- creative use of (limited) time
- information presented creatively
- well-designed images/script
- visually appealing, engaging

Technical quality (20%):

- high quality sound and images
- effective use of images and sound
- citations/credits where required

2019 GRADflix Showcase

Introductory remarks

Welcome by Jeff Casello, Associate Vice-President, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs

Video showcase

Live viewing of the top 15 GRADflix video submissions.

People's choice vote

Pull out your smartphone—you're a judge too!
The host will advise when the voting link is open:
www.surveymonkey.com/r/GRADflix

Question & answer period

Do you have questions about the research our finalists are conducting? This is your chance to learn more!

Announcement of winners

The top four videos, and the people's choice winner, will be announced.

Wine & cheese reception

Please join us following the announcement of winners for a wine & cheese reception.

Connect with @UWaterlooGSPA and
share your red carpet experience!

#GRADflix

2019 GRADflix Finalists

Worms and waste

Amanda Yan Yan Lim, MES candidate
Environment, Resources and Sustainability
Faculty of Environment

CloudSat and Arctic snow

Fraser King, MSc candidate
Geography and Environmental Management
Faculty of Environment

Making gay identities: Queer media practices queering media technologies

Jason Lajoie, PhD candidate
English Language and Literature
Faculty of Arts

GitHub use for government related work

Jaydeep Mistry, MES candidate
Geography and Environmental Management
Faculty of Environment

Conjugated polymer research for renewable energy

Jenner Ngai, PhD candidate
Chemical Engineering
Faculty of Engineering

CAR T - The future of cancer therapy?

Kristina Ellis, MSc candidate
Pharmacy
Faculty of Science

Remote vital signs monitoring using a mm-wave FMCW radar

Mostafa Alizadeh, MASc candidate
Electrical and Computer Engineering
Faculty of Engineering

Warmer winters: Fighting an uphill downhill climate battle

Natalie Knowles, PhD student
Geography and Environmental Management
Faculty of Environment

Augmenting bridge inspections with autonomous robotics

Nicholas Charron, PhD candidate,
Civil and Environmental Engineering
Faculty of Engineering

**Unlocking meaning: Doors as a “key” to understanding
Honoré de Balzac’s novels**

Rachel Green, MA candidate
French Studies
Faculty of Arts

Playing with space

Rina Wehbe, PhD student
Computer Science
Faculty of Mathematics

Rethinking women's desire: The science behind low libido

Siobhan Sutherland, PhD student
Psychology
Faculty of Arts

Virtuality of motion sickness

Siyavash Izadi, MSc candidate
Kinesiology
Faculty of Applied Health Sciences

**Warmer winters, colder soils, and more phosphorus in our
water**

Stephanie Higgins, MSc candidate
Geography and Environmental Management
Faculty of Environment

The game of helping others

Tina Chan, MSc candidate
Public Health and Health Systems
Faculty of Applied Health Sciences

Congratulations to all of our finalists!

Profiles



Amanda Yan Yan Lim

Worms and waste

Amanda's research interests include vermiculture, biosolids management and composting. Her hope is to contribute solutions for municipal waste issues.



Fraser King

CloudSat and Arctic snow

Fraser is a MSc student researching remote sensing of Arctic snow using specialized radar on the NASA cloud profiling satellite CloudSat.



Jason Lajoie

Making gay identities: Queer media practices queering media technologies

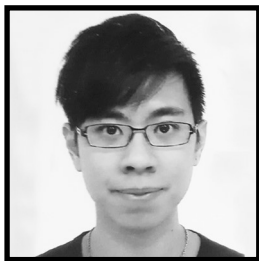
Jason is a PhD Candidate in English who explores how queer identities are constructed, shared and negotiated through media and technology.



Jaydeep Mistry

GitHub use for government related work

Jaydeep is pursuing a MES in Geography. He researches how people can work together to create data and software.



Jenner Nagai

Conjugated polymer research for renewable energy

Jenner is pursuing his PhD (Nanotechnology) in synthesis of conjugated polymers used in organic solar cells, chemical and biological sensing under the supervision of Prof. Yuning Li.



Kristina Ellis

CAR T - The future of cancer therapy?

Kristina is completing a MSc in Pharmacy under the supervision of Dr. William Wong at the School of Pharmacy. Her research focuses on CAR T-cell therapy, which is a novel gene therapy used to treat cancer.



Mostafa Alizadeh

Remote vital signs monitoring using a mm-wave FMCW radar

Mostafa completed his MSc degree in wireless communications at the University of Waterloo in 2018. His major research interest is signal processing and implementation.



Natalie Knowles

Warmer winters: Fighting an uphill downhill climate battle

Nat is fueled by a love of the mountains to help solve environment and climate challenges by aligning interests in sport and sustainability.



Nicholas Charron

Augmenting bridge inspections with autonomous robotics

Nicholas is a third year PhD student in Civil and Mechatronics Engineering. His thesis topic is robot based 3D mapping for civil infrastructure inspection.



Rachel Green

Unlocking meaning: Doors as a “key” to understanding Honoré de Balzac’s novels

Rachel’s MA thesis examines Balzacian doors as a narratological tool used to frame symbolic space; create socio-geographical zones; and convey exclusivity, secrecy & power.



Rina Wehbe

Playing with space

Rina's research focuses on understanding the social and collaborative environment around large multi-touch displays with the aim of improving the design of these collaborative environments.



Siobhan Sutherland

Rethinking women's desire: The science behind low libido

As a PhD student in Clinical Psychology, Siobhan examines the interpersonal factors that impact satisfaction in sexual relationships.



Siyavash Izadi

Virtuality of motion sickness

Siyavash is a second year master's student in the Neuroscience stream of the Kinesiology program, under the supervision of Dr. Barnett-Cowan (MBC Lab).



Stephanie Higgins

Warmer winters, colder soils, and more phosphorus in our water

Stephaine graduated from the University of Winnipeg with a BSc (Hons.) in Geography. She is in the second year of her master's degree in the Faculty of Environment.



Tina Chan

The game of helping others

Tina is a MSc candidate in the School of Public Health and Health Systems in Applied Health Sciences. She is also a member of the UW Human-Computer Interaction group.

2019 GRADflix Judges

Alison Hitchens

Associate University Librarian - Collections, technology and scholarly communication, University of Waterloo

As Associate University Librarian, Alison provides leadership in the areas of collections, access, technology, assessment, bibliometrics, and scholarly communication. Alison is also actively engaged in shaping our digital future through leadership roles on the Tri-University Group Steering Committee and the Ontario Council of University Libraries Collaborative Futures Procurement Committee.

Clare Bermingham

Director, Writing and Communication Centre, University of Waterloo

As Director of the Writing and Communication Centre, Dr. Clare Bermingham is responsible for the development and oversight of services and programs that drive and support communication excellence at the University of Waterloo. Clare is interested in fostering agency in writers and highlighting how communication and writing are integral to learning, knowledge creation, and wider engagement.

Donna Ellis

Director, Centre for Teaching Excellence, University of Waterloo

Dr. Donna Ellis has supported the teaching development of Waterloo faculty members and graduate students since 1994. In her role as Director, Centre for Teaching Excellence, she oversees the strategic direction of the Centre's work. Donna has also taught in the University of Waterloo's Speech Communication program.

Nick Manning

Associate Vice-President, Communications, University of Waterloo

Nick Manning is responsible for accelerating connections and co-ordination across campus to build new models for excellence and innovation within University communications. Formerly the Chief Communications Officer at Waterloo Region District School Board, Manning's professional career spans both public and private sectors.

Thank you to our GRADflix collaborators!

Centre for Teaching Excellence

Instructional Technologies and Media Services

Library (Copyright and licensing)

Writing and Communication Centre

Thank you for attending!