

PhD defence and lay talk at Leiden University

1 July 2024

The lay talk

- From 1 September 2024, every PhD candidate at Leiden University will give a ten-minute lay talk immediately preceding their PhD defence in the Great Auditorium.
- The lay talk is not an official part of the PhD defence, and will not be assessed. The Examining Committee will not be present in the auditorium during the lay talk.
- The lay talk is a simple, concise presentation in which the PhD candidate talks about their PhD research, where possible also focusing on its societal relevance or impact.
- As the name indicates, the lay talk is expressly intended for a non-academic audience, in the auditorium and on the livestream, and should therefore be understandable to that audience.
- The lay talk may be given in either Dutch or English, or, with the approval of the Dean on behalf of the Doctorate Board, in another language.
- A digital presentation may be shown during the lay talk.
- There is no opportunity to ask questions during or after the lay talk.

Preparation

- A PhD candidate who wishes to include a digital presentation in their lay talk should send this presentation, no later than one week in advance, to the Audiovisual Department av-acad@UFB.leidenuniv.nl, who will ensure that the presentation is ready for the PhD defence.
- *It is the PhD candidate's responsibility* to deliver the presentation in due time, and to bring their presentation on a USB stick anyway.
- PhD candidates who fail to meet the one-week deadline may bring their presentation on a USB stick to the PhD defence.

On the day itself

- The PhD candidate reports to the Beadle's Office (first floor of the Academy Building) 15 minutes before the PhD defence. After a brief instruction, the PhD candidate and their assistants (paranymphs) go directly to the Great Auditorium.
- Sixty minutes are reserved for each defence plus lay talk (PhD ceremony); there is a 15-minute break between two PhD ceremonies. This time allocation is strictly enforced.
- One of the paranymphs introduces the PhD candidate and the lay talk. This paranymph closely monitors the time during the lay talk, signals to the PhD candidate after five minutes that half of the time has passed, and ends the talk after 10 minutes. The PhD candidate then takes a seat at the fixed lectern. The Beadle and the Examining Committee enter the auditorium and the defence starts.

Appendix 1: tips for the lay talk

The lay talk does not have to be submitted to the supervisor(s) or co-supervisor(s) for approval.

However, the PhD candidate is naturally free to discuss the lay talk with them beforehand.

We recommend that you write out your talk.

We also recommend that you practise and time the talk in advance, for example with colleagues, family or friends.

If you use a digital presentation, bring it along on a USB stick, just to be sure. Make sure there are no other files on the USB stick.

One of the paranymphs is expected to announce the lay talk and end it on time. Here are some example sentences that can be used for this purpose.

- Dear guests, welcome to the PhD defence of NAME OF PHD CANDIDATE, my name is XXXXXX and as one of the candidate's two paranymphs, I would like to tell you what you can expect in the next hour.
- Before the actual defence ceremony starts, NAME OF PHD CANDIDATE will give you a ten-minute summary of their research. There will be no opportunity for questions. After this summary, please remain seated until the Beadle and the Examining Committee make their entrance. The Rector will then open the defence – which will last exactly 45 minutes. I now give the floor to NAME OF PHD CANDIDATE.
- Addressing the PhD candidate: Thank you for this summary of your research.
- Addressing the audience: Please remain seated, the Beadle and the Examining Committee will join us in a moment, and the Rector will open the PhD defence ceremony.

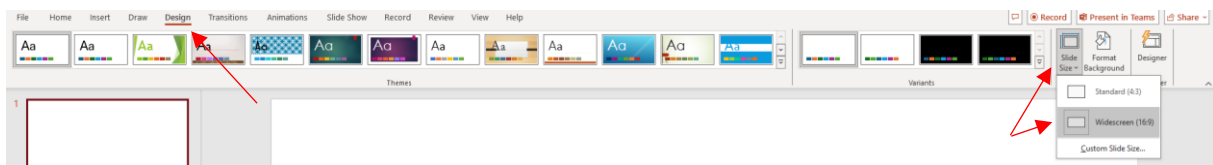
Appendix 2: instructions for the presentation

Submitting your presentation

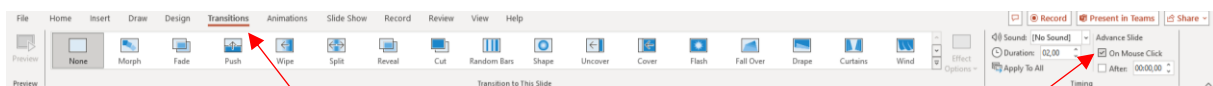
- We only work with PowerPoint (PPT).
- When submitting your PPT presentation, please explicitly mention that it contains audio or video fragments.
- It is not possible to use your own laptop during the presentation.

Formatting

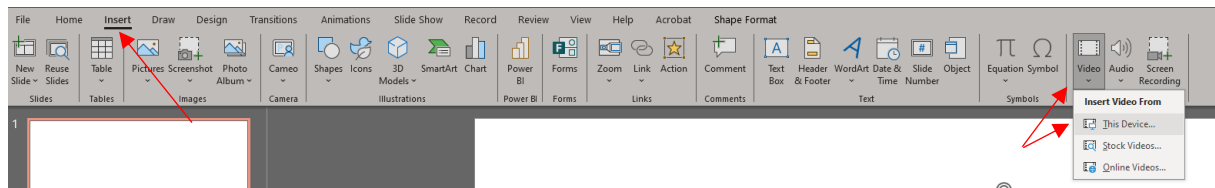
- Make sure you format your PPT on a Windows PC, as formatting on an Apple PC can lead to unexpected results.
- Make sure you format your PPT in aspect ratio 16:9 for a fully filled projection screen.
- Before you start formatting your PPT presentation, select Design/Slide size/Widescreen 16:9 (see below).
- Formatting in 16:9 is not an absolute requirement; we can also display PPT presentations that were formatted in 4:3.
- Keep your slides clear and readable. Use the right font size and use contrasting colours for text and background.
- Be mindful of lighting; dark images may not be so easy to see in the room.



- Transition to the next slide should be set to 'mouse click' (Transitions/On Mouse Click).
- Do not use time settings for the transition to the next slide, unless strictly necessary.



- Audio and/or video clips should be embedded in the PPT presentation, otherwise we cannot guarantee that they will be displayed correctly:



- Do NOT under any circumstances use links to websites or files on your computer.
- Check that your PPT presentation works on one or more computers.
- Check that the audio and/or video clip starts immediately after you click the mouse or press the arrow key.

In the room

- Just before the lay talk, the technician will set up your presentation, and give you the 'presenter/clicker' for operating the PPT. The technician will explain to you how this works; we recommend that you try the presenter out straight away. The presenter is not equipped with a laser pointer.
- The PPT runs on a PC at the technician's workstation at the back of the room, so you will not have a computer, keyboard and mouse at your disposal.
- You can 'watch' the PPT presentation on the screens at the sides. You cannot use speaker notes; they will not be displayed!
- The audience can follow the presentation on the projection screens behind you.
- **Once the lay talk is over, the technician will collect the presenter from you, as it will be needed for the next PhD defence.**