



Association for
Performing Arts
& Entertainment
Professionals

usitt.org

United States Institute for
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Call for Papers: Excellence in Entertainment Engineering Research

The Engineering Commission is pleased to announce that the Excellence in Engineering Thesis Research Project will be returning to the Annual Conference in 2020.

This Project aims to discover, recognize, share, and inspire research that furthers our industry. We invite recent graduates who have exhibited rigor, innovation, and creativity in their research to submit their papers for consideration. "Excellent" theses should challenge or advance our industry and be focused on new technology, innovative applications, or a deeper understanding and application of engineering principles to theatre and live entertainment. Research in any field of Entertainment Technology is welcome.

Selected authors will be invited to present their work in an Engineering Commission session at the 2020 Annual Conference and Stage Expo in Houston, TX, 1-4 April 2020. Thesis presenters will receive complimentary full conference admission.

Graduates may self-nominate, but they should have a sponsor from the degree-granting University.

Qualifications for Consideration

Thesis research must be focused on advancing understanding in an area of Entertainment Technology.

Each jury assigns its own weight to their judging rubric, but the areas considered in thesis review are:

- Innovation
- Industry relevance
- Longevity
- Readability
- Quality of research
- Overall presentation
- Does the research challenge and advance our industry?

Thesis work must have cumulated in graduation with an MFA or equivalent degree in the last four years (April 2015 to October 2019). Work resulting in a MS or MA in an engineering or engineering technology field will also be considered, but the application of the research must be specific to Live Entertainment Technology.

Dissertation proposals prepared by doctorate students in preparation for their final dissertation in a PhD program may also be considered, provided that the proposal is complete enough to be evaluated against a completed thesis. Such a proposal may not yet have the final results of the research but should present an engaging look into a research topic with enough substance as to meet the other criteria of this project.

In exceptional cases, and only with a faculty letter of support, undergraduate research will be considered. Note that this research will be (blindly) judged on its equivalency to graduate level work.

The sponsor must be named in the application and will be contacted by Project staff. Sponsors can be faculty members, instructors, or supervisors affiliated with the degree-granting University. The Sponsor should have familiarity with the graduate's research and/or thesis paper.



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The person submitting the thesis should have rights to the materials and information therein and not be in violation of another's copyright or intellectual property rights.

Submissions must be complete and in the USITT submission portal by Sunday, October 27, 2019 at 11:59PM Eastern Time.

Submission Process

Interested entrants must complete an online registration form between August 28 and October 27, 2019. There is no application fee associated with this Project.

Once registration is completed, each entrant will receive an e-mail containing a link to submit the required documents.

Required documents:

- Name of graduate submitting to the Project and their current contact information
- Name and contact info for sponsor.
 - The sponsor can provide a brief statement of support with the application materials, but this is not required except for undergraduate entries.
- Current Resume (short-form is acceptable) showing academic qualifications
- Title of thesis and a very brief summary or description of the project.
- Final, complete thesis manuscript in Portable Document Format (PDF).

Review process

A panel of industry professionals will review the submitted theses. This is a "blind" review process, with the name of the student and degree-granting institution and facilities redacted. Jurors do not receive resumes or statements of support.

Selected authors will be notified by January 2, 2020, and invited to present at the 2020 Annual Conference in Houston in April.

Past presented papers include:

"Cable Management for Moving Stage Equipment," Thomas Harper, MFA, Drama (Technical Design and Production).

"Electrical Safety: A Standards Based Approach for the Entertainment Electrician," Justin Bennet, MFA, Drama (Technical Design and Production).

"Measuring the Forces Involved in Single Point Aerial Dance Trapeze," Jim Vogel, MFA, Theatre and Drama (Theatre Technology).

"Negotiating Material Description Through Technology," Anamary Leal, PhD. Computer Science and Applications.

"Understanding the Effects of Acceleration in a Theatrical Lifting Hoist," John Van Arsdale, MFA, Theatre and Drama (Theatre Technology).