



2021 VCS Top Dissertation Award: Call for Nominations

The Visual Communication Studies Division is seeking nominations for the second edition of the divisional Top Dissertation Award. This award recognizes outstanding doctoral research in the field that enhances the understanding of the visual, offers new insights, and is grounded solidly in visual theory and methodology. Nominations are open to a diversity of theoretical and methodological approaches, topical foci, and forms of visual communication.

In order to be eligible for consideration, candidates must be a **member** of the VCS Division, and dissertations must be defended within the **two calendar years** preceding the award year (2019 or 2020 for the 2021 award). The award winner receives a cash award and will be recognized at the VCS Division's business meeting during the annual ICA conference.

Please note that, as per ICA policy, submitters must choose only one division/interest group to which they submit their dissertation for a division/interest group dissertation award.

Nomination procedure

The nomination packet should be submitted to the Chair of the ICA Visual Communication Studies Division via **email** (jelle.mast@vub.be) no later than **8 March 2021**. Please use the subject "VCS Top Dissertation Award". All application materials must be in English.

Supporting materials should be sent to the person making the nomination. All nominators must submit one PDF containing all of the following:

- A **cover letter** with the name, affiliation, and contact information of the nominee and their advisor(s), and date of the dissertation defense.
- A manuscript that acts as an **integrated summary** of the dissertation not exceeding 30 pages of text (double-spaced, one-inch margins on all sides), and 50 pages total (including all references, tables, appendix, etc.). The summary paper should describe the study's rationale, theoretical framework, research questions, relevant literature, methods, key findings and main conclusions, as well as articulate the original contribution to the field of visual communication studies. When parts of the doctoral research were designed or carried out within a larger team-based setting, candidates should acknowledge this and take care to specify their individual role(s) in the overall process.

The manuscript may be written especially for the award submission, or it may be a compilation of appropriate sections from the dissertation. The summary paper should include a separate title page that contains only the title and a 150-word abstract.

Submissions that don't comply with the guidelines will be disqualified.

- **Two supporting letters** from faculty mentors. One of these letters must be a nomination from the dissertation advisor that includes a statement articulating the contribution of the work to the field and its merit/suitability for the award.

Evaluation procedure

All nomination materials submitted for the award will be reviewed by the award committee, coordinated by the Chair of the VCS Division. Each submission will be judged on several criteria including strength of the argument or evidence it presents, theoretical and methodological rigor, level of innovation, and relevance and overall contribution to the field of visual communication studies.

For any questions related to the award, please contact jelle.mast@vub.be.