



**2026 James E. Grunig and Larissa A. Grunig
Outstanding Thesis and Dissertation Awards
Public Relations Division, International Communication Association**

Submission Deadline: February 9, 2026

The Public Relations Division of ICA invites submissions for the 2026 James E. Grunig and Larissa A. Grunig Outstanding Thesis and Dissertation Awards. Eligible entrants for this competition cycle include theses and dissertations successfully **defended** during the period between January 1, 2025, and December 31, 2025. Theses and dissertations must focus upon phenomena, issues and questions relevant to the study of public relations. Award winners will be recognized at the ICA Conference in Cape Town, South Africa, June 4-8, 2026. The winner of the Dissertation Award will receive US\$500, and the winner of the Thesis Award will receive US\$350. The advisors of both winners will receive certificates recognizing their efforts.

Award aspirants are asked to condense their theses/dissertations into a 30- to 40-page manuscript. The advantages of this requirement include helping our newer scholars to prepare their research for publication consideration, reducing the workload on award judges, and facilitating objectivity in the awards process. All manuscripts submitted for the awards will be subject to double-blind review.

Submission Requirements

To enter the master's thesis or doctoral dissertation competition, submit **two electronic copies (one with a cover page and one without) of a 30- or 40-page manuscript, typed, double-spaced, based on the thesis/dissertation. The page limit applies to the manuscript text only and excludes the cover page, the abstract and keyword page, references, charts, figures and appendices. Appendices must not exceed a total of 10 pages. Files must be submitted in PDF format.**

- The manuscript and all supplemental materials must be written in English and adhere to APA style (the 7th edition).
- Anonymize the manuscript to conceal the identities of the author, their institutional affiliation(s), and the thesis/dissertation advisor. Ensure the author's name and institution do not appear in the PDF file's Properties/metadata.
- The content of the manuscript should be derived from the defended master's thesis/doctoral dissertation and must not include material beyond it.
- The manuscript must include the following sections: Abstract, Introduction, Literature Review or Conceptual Framework, Method, Findings, and Discussion addressing the significance of the findings for public relations scholarship.
- The cover page should include (1) current contact information and affiliation of the author, (2) award category statement (i.e., "For consideration for the Master's Thesis Award or Doctoral Dissertation Award"), (3) the master's thesis/doctoral dissertation manuscript title, (4) date of defense for the master's thesis/doctoral dissertation, (5) university where the master's thesis/doctoral dissertation was defended and degree awarded, and (6) contact information of the master's thesis/doctoral dissertation advisor.

- The abstract and keyword page should include a structured abstract of the master's thesis/doctoral dissertation, within 250 words, and up to 5 keywords. The structured abstract should encompass (1) purpose, (2) design/methodology/approach, (3) findings, (4) originality, and (5) theoretical and practical/social implications.

Submission Link

Complete your submission at https://hkbuchtl.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8owRmuT6ocOUj5Q

Submission Deadline

The deadline to submit manuscripts for this competition cycle is **11:00 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time) on February 9, 2026**. All materials must be received by this date and time. Award aspirants are requested not to submit full theses and dissertations to the awards chair and not to submit materials without first ensuring that they comply with all the submission requirements. **Submissions that fail to conform to the requirements will be automatically disqualified.**

Judging

All manuscripts submitted for the awards will be subject to double-blind review by the Awards Committee comprising 5 or 7 members of the ICA Public Relations Division. The awards selection criteria are as follows:

- (1) Is this work an example of outstanding scholarship in public relations based on its theoretical framework, methodological rigor, and impact?
- (2) Does this work make an important contribution to public relations scholarship as we continue to develop the body of knowledge in our field?
- (3) Does this work have the potential for being considered a “foundational work” that lays the groundwork for a fertile stream of scholarship, whether for this author or other scholars to come?

Chair, Grunig & Grunig Thesis/Dissertation Awards Committee

Regina Chen, Ph.D.

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Hong Kong Baptist University

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About the ICA Public Relations Division

The ICA aims to advance the scholarly study of communication by encouraging and facilitating excellence in academic research worldwide. ICA began more than 50 years ago and is now a truly international association with more than 4,500 members in 80 countries. Since 2003, ICA has been officially associated with the United Nations as a non-governmental association (NGO). With more than 400 members globally, the ICA Public Relations Division is concerned with developing the theoretical basis and empirical insights for communication between organizations and specified publics.

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