2013 Winners

The full list of 2013 Ossie Awards winners.

2013 WINNERS

Best Print News Story ($200) by an Undergraduate or Postgraduate Student

Judged by: Brooke Dubois, Editor, Victor Harbor Times
Winner: Ben Westcott, RMIT University
'ALGA to slug councils for vote'

A reader-friendly piece on local councils spending ratepayer funds on a campaign for a referendum by Ben Westcott, who was interning at The Australian at the time. Ben did well to contact a variety of sources across different states, gathering some excellent quotes, and therefore broadening the interest of the article to a wider audience. To be able to zero in on this story from a few negative remarks on Twitter shows good news sense. His efforts in expanding on what could have been a basic (and boring) 'councils spend money' story have been rewarded by the story's placement in The Australian on page 2. He's also done well to avoid the story being figure-heavy by giving it a people focus. Well done.

Best Broadcast News Story ($200) by an Undergraduate or Postgraduate Student

Judged by: Jessica Harmsen, Journalist, Presenter 7PM News SA, Presenter/Producer, The Food Quarter
Winner: Yasmin Noone, University of Technology, Sydney
'Elder abuse'

This was the stand out-entry. It was a compelling and confronting story that explored a rarely discussed aspect of elder abuse. Yasmin dealt with the topic sensitively and thoroughly, while demonstrating advanced broadcast techniques. She is to be commended for her story structure and the use of natural sound and interview. It made for good listening.

Best Broadcast Current Affairs or Issues Based Story ($200) by an Undergraduate or a Postgraduate Student

Judged by: Jeremy Pudney, director of news – Adelaide; director of digital news – network, Ten Eyewitness News
Winner: Hayley Francis, Edith Cowan University
'Child trafficking'

The standard in this category was quite outstanding. The winning entry was a first-class piece of journalism and stood out from the others for the way in which it illustrated the individual plight of victims, as well as reporting the broader issues. The best stories are about people – they are emotive and compelling. And that's exactly what this report was.
To open the report with a child singing, then offer specific insights into the horror of child trafficking, and real experiences of real victims, created impact and draws real attention to such an important issue. This was a truly moving piece of journalism.

Best Feature Article (Print) ($200) by an Undergraduate or Postgraduate Student

Judged by: Steve Larkin, AAP Adelaide bureau chief
Winner: Ashleigh Tullis, University of Wollongong

'From tanks to the Taliban'

Ashleigh wrote in an engaging style which drew the reader immediately and deeply into her story. Her clever use of distinctly personal, yet succinct, anecdotes from the soldiers resulted in insights into not just their actions, but their thoughts, which gave the story intense human interest. Ashleigh was able to thread together conflicts from World War II to a current new recruit, all in a style which made the reader genuinely care for the interview subjects and their stories.

Highly Commended: Laura McKee, James Cook University
'In God's Hands'

Highly Commended: Lucy Marks, University of Technology, Sydney
'It's going viral'

Highly Commended: Chris Shearer, University of Melbourne
'Australian drug users taking a punt on the New Silk Road'

Best Feature Article (Online) ($200) by an Undergraduate or Postgraduate Student

Judged by: Carol Altmann, Editor, www.bluestonemagazine.com.au
Winner: Jacqueline Byrde, Curtin University
'V8 Family Tree '

Jacqueline's story is a wonderful example of how to grab the reader from the first sentence and not let go until the final word. Her terrific lead/intro set the scene for a very entertaining and informative read that was full of vibrant writing and numerous, highly visual scenes that placed the reader right at the racetrack. Her attention to detail - right down to the weight of the safety gear - and well-chosen quotes from multiple sources made this a memorable story which is a significant achievement when writing for an online audience.

Highly Commended: Henry Belot, University of Melbourne
'Indonesia's social media love affair promises lively 2014 election campaign'

An interesting angle on the forthcoming Indonesian presidential election that is well researched and well written. It offered a timely insight into the use and political influence of social media in a developing country.

Best Online Story ($200) (Undergraduate or Postgraduate)

Judged by: Katelin Nelligan, news editor, News Limited
Winner: Su-Lin Tan, University of Technology, Sydney
'Meriton's war of World Tower'

A culmination of months of work and dozens of cold calls, Tan's story on Meriton's World Square was well-written and very balanced. It was also good enough to run on the front page of The Sydney Morning Herald and its website for several days – a fantastic achievement for a student journalist. Tan showed tenacity (trawling through more than 600 pages of strata documents) and organisation (keeping clear records of documents and calls which helped to avoid legal action from Meriton). I would have liked to have seen the story make more use of the digital medium, with hyperlinks, more photos, videos or audio clips embedded into the text. But in the end, it was such a fantastic piece of investigative journalism that I had to name it the winner.

Highly commended: Guy Creighton, Griffith University
'The great beef divide: southern producers "hammered" by a northern problem'

Creighton's story on the beef industry in south Queensland was a great example of digital journalism. He used pictures, graphs, pull-out quotes, tweets and audio to help bring his story to life. The story itself

helped to shine the light on a different aspect of the beef issue than what has been covered by other media. It was a well-written and balanced report.

Highly commended: Julie Milland, University of Melbourne
'Health officials alerted as five struck down, paralysed by emerging strain of EV71 virus'

A strong, well-researched story with a well-cut video which helped to make use of the online medium. Milland managed to explain the science in her story for a broad audience. Nice to see a timeline and graphic with health tips also included in the copy, though it would have been good to also add some hyperlinks if people wanted further information about the virus.

Highly commended: Henry Belot, University of Melbourne
'Indonesia's social media love affair promises lively 2014 election campaign'

Belot has produced a strong and interesting story on the Zimbabwean election. Showing initiative, he used social media to find contacts in Harare, rather than relying upon local academics. His research is backed up well with plenty of hyperlinks to source information. However, the story could have embraced the benefits of the online medium better by adding relevant videos and pictures.

Best Story by an International Student ($200)

Judged by: Amy Noonan, Anglicare SA Media Relations Officer
Winner: Tasha Tania, Edith Cowan University
'A Wicked Problem'

Tasha Tania submitted both a well-written article and a tightly-edited video of high quality, covering a difficult yet important problem. She interviewed multiple sources, including health professionals and people undergoing treatment which added an important "real life" touch to her story. Her work was of a very high standard – almost at professional standard. Some of the audio of the video was difficult to hear and it would have been good to have had individuals miked for their interviews.

Highly commended: Tan Li Jun Sheena, Bond University
'Order in the House – should we have dedicated seats for Aborigines?'

Tan Li Jun Sheena presented a well-researched article and an excellent graphic which summed up the article at a glance. The article was well-balanced with a good range of sources.

Best use of Convergent Media (($200)

Judged by: Greg Barila, Deputy Digital Editor, News Limited
Overall comment:

Although there can only be one winner, I was highly impressed by the quality and creativity of all the entries I was lucky enough to be asked to judge. The entries showed that students are thinking about how best to serve their stories on all available platforms. Clearly, they also are experimenting with many of the tools and techniques that professional journalists are also experimenting with: Storify, YouTube, Facebook, infographics and timelines, to name a few. I was impressed by the high quality of the voice and on-camera skills of many of the entrants and have no doubt we'll be seeing and hearing them in professional media roles in the future.

Winner: Holly Humphrey, Monash University
'Bobby calves'

This piece does what all good journalism should do –teach the reader something new. Holly put a lot of work into this story, and it shows. It is an impressive piece of work that makes the best use of the medium, seamlessly integrating words and pictures, audio and video to tell what is clearly an interesting and important story. Holly also made good use of hyperlinks, data charts and infographics, which are hugely trendy in digital journalism right now and a good way to help the reader understand complex or number-

heavy stories, and to bring them to life. Holly also displays a lively and descriptive writing style. She might have considered using a less graphic and confronting image (the birthing image) so high on the page, chosen less saccharine music for the video and removed the "Waiting ….. not waiting…." super, which I think put the piece at risk of being a piece of advocacy journalism, when it was otherwise balanced and objective. The story would have lost none of its impact without it. Overall, a very impressive piece of multi-media journalism.

Highly commended: Clemmie Wetherall and Wes Mountain, University of Melbourne
'Stopping all stations, except Doncaster'

As journalists, we often spend a lot of time skimming broadly over issues when the issues that have a real impact on our readers' lives and their communities are narrower and at a more grassroots level. I like the way Clemmie and Wes really zeroed in on this issue, spent time on it, covered it from every angle and with an attention to the detail and the history. It was nicely presented. The timeline was an excellent idea and gave the piece interactivity. It contained a lot of detail but the beauty of those kinds of features is that the reader is in control and can zoom in our out on as much or little detail as they want. I also like the way the journalists personalized the story with the quick, commuter profiles embedded down the page.

Highly commended: Soren Frederiksen, RMIT University
'90 second news'

With his slick, snappy and informative 90 second news wraps, Soren hits on a particular problem for media in 2013 – how to engage, inform and entertain people who want and need news but haven't got time to go deep. Soren makes good use of humour, graphic overlays and topical news footage to give viewers a good, quick overview of the news of the day. Soren's chatty style reminds of other, hugely successful formats pitched at younger audiences, such as The Project, The Checkout and Hungry Beast. I also like that Soren was thinking about how to create cross-links between print, the web and social.

Best Photojournalism ($200) (Undergraduate or Postgraduate) (judged on the merit of both the photographs and accompanying text)

Judged by: Brenton Edwards, director, Stories Well Told
Winner: Bridget Honan, RMIT University 'And this is too hard: life and early death in the Congo'
What a moving story. This piece was well researched, giving the reader some background to the daily struggles in the Congo. While most photojournalists would document the bigger picture of the conflict, Bridget looked at the effects of the destabilised country by focusing on the smallest of victims and the community that still has empathy and humanity within. The story is well written and describes beautifully the sense of incredulity that faced the writer. The words are perfectly balanced by the images that take the reader to that very place. There is good variety in the images and Bridget was not afraid to take the hard photo.
Her object was to bring a piece of the Congo to Australian eyes and she succeeded.

Highly commended: Daniel Quinlan, La Trobe University
'A load of rubbish'

Daniel has some fantastic images that really tell the story of the poor who sort other people's garbage and eke out a living from it. It is well researched and informative.

Highly commended: Jessica Ibacache, Curtin University
'Dance as protest'

Jessica approached her protest story with pictures and audio, giving the audience a taste of the sights and sounds of peaceful protest followed by the police moving in. Great job.

Other entries singled out for mention were Jacqueline Byrde, from Curtin University, for 'V8 family tree' and Mitch Duncan from Macleay College for 'Road warriors'.

Dr Charles Stuart Prize for best student publication (for publications in any medium)

Judged by: Michelle Etheridge, news editor, News Limited (assisted by Chantelle Kroehn)
Winner: Just Causes, Curtin University
The Just Causes series followed the hard work of Australians fighting for causes close to their hearts. It was clear from the footage that students had worked hard to secure interviews with a range of people on a diversity of subject areas. The videos demonstrated that the students had dug deep to get to the bottom of each issue on which they were reporting. The result was a series of balanced, well-presented and interesting reports.\

Highly commended: The Citizen, University of Melbourne
The Citizen's reports show a great depth of research and talent. Stories were beautifully written, with the journalists also showing a strong understanding of the fundamental aspects of journalism, including depth, balance and a knowledge of what makes a great story.

Mindframe for Journalism Education Prize for mental health reporting ($200)

Judged by: Jenyfer Locke, Senior Project Officer (Mindframe) and Kristy Platt, Project Officer (Mindframe)
Winner: Kieren Bond, Griffith University
'This was not a choice. Elucidating eating disorders and the journeys to recovery'

Keiren has developed a well-researched, engaging blog site about eating disorders.
She has included a variety of inspiring media formats including interviews with people with lived experience, reputable expert comment from both national and international perspectives, and support service and helpline links to raise awareness and emphasise understanding of eating disorders. Keiren's blog site is insightful, humorous and interactive, appealing to a broad audience and providing a platform for informed and respectful discussion and peer learning. In Keiren's words: '… I hope to bring light to eating disorders as well as the stories of those who currently live with and those who have overcome an eating disorder'.

Highly commended: Karma Barndon, Edith Cowan University
'Better care for borderline personality disorder sufferers'

Karma's website article focuses on borderline personality disorder (BPD) and was published in '3degree' which is written and produced by students in journalism at Edith Cowan University. The article offered a relevant and accurate perspective on understanding the complexities, guidelines for management and current research about BPD. Karma also highlighted that stigma associated with BPD can arise through lack of information and understanding, and can also sometimes be sensationalised through media reporting.

The Dart Centre for Journalism and Trauma Prize for reporting on violence, disaster or trauma in society ($200)

Judged by: Cait McMahon, Dart Asia-Pacific
Winner: Daniel Drageset, AUT University
'Fiji torture series'

Daniel's work shows an impressive investigation into alleged police torture in Fiji. Daniel had to straddle important ethical issues and clarify potential bias of sources to produce an impressive piece of reporting. This work carefully investigated YouTube clips, blogs and others sources to construct a series of balanced, online news stories that were eventually picked up by mainstream, international media. Whilst the videos were disturbing to watch, Daniel produced a strong series of news stories that align with the principles of giving voice to victims and survivors of violence and injustice.

Highly commended: Eliza Rugg, RMIT University

'One metre miracle'

Sally A. White Prize for Investigative Journalism ($200) (any medium)

Judged by: Caroline Kelly, Seven News Adelaide

Winners: Campbell Gellie, Tan Li Jun Sheena, Adam Braksator, Stephanie Cogno-Maglieri, Krystal Etherington-Onn, Paris Faint, Edward Fleetwood, Michelle Gately, Leilani Gaze, Liana Hanley, Sasha Hanton, Elin Joensson, Celene Kubala, Robert Millard, Jack Morphet, Jonathan Parry, Silje Remme, Douglas Robichaud, Fiona Self, Natasha Smerling, Emma Willemsen, Sally Wu, Scott Ready, Matthew Walsh, Bond University

'Order in the House'

The Bond entry was comprehensive and compelling. It pulled together a broad cross-section of topics in a timely fashion ahead of the election. Some of the conclusions were real eye-openers. A good read for political junkies and everyday constituents alike. The use of graphics to illustrate key findings complemented the writing, which was clear, catchy and concise. An example of how valuable research is to news media and a great display of journalistic teamwork.