The 2023 Ossie Award winners, showcasing Australia's best student journalism, were announced at the Journalism Education and Research Association of Australia conference in Sydney.

Links to the stories and judges' comments are below, where publicly available.

The Australian Press Council Prize for Journalism Student of the Year ($750 prize)

Winner – Grace Nakamura, University of Queensland, Body of Work

A very strong portfolio of work alongside a 6.75 Grade Point Average for her studies. Grace Nakamura has presented a community radio program, done an exchange in Germany, did a sting with community start-up, PS Media, and gained a job with the ABC on graduation. Grace looks set for a promising career.

Judges: Members of the Australian Press Council (Matthew Ricketson, Alan Sunderland)

Best text-based story by an undergraduate or postgraduate student – 750 words or less ($200)

Winner – Steven Willems, UNSW Sydney

Steven Willems' Sweltering Cities shone with strong quotes and the variety of talent used. The judge also liked how some solutions were suggested. This would have soared with some more pictures and a lead focussing on one of the case studies, but still an interesting read that puts the reader in a place they may never have experienced.

Judge: Bruce McKenzie, ABC North Coast

Highly Commended – Sharon Wongosari, University of Sydney

Sharon Wongosari obviously went to a lot of effort and linked to many different sources and articles, and could easily have won with a more engaging opening paragraph or two, with *Yes campaign thanks volunteers in Sydney's Inner West*.

Best text-based story by an undergraduate student – over 750 words ($200)

Winner – Aston Brown, UTS

Aston Brown's article on professional recyclers, which sensitively and carefully told a story of highly visible, but little understood, urban poverty in our cities. The judge was struck by how Aston's piece, while well-researched and full of context, nonetheless elevated the voices of the voiceless.

Judge – Myriam Robin, *Australian Financial Review*

Highly commended – Alex Di Rosso, Murdoch University

Alex Di Rosso's fascinating profile of Gerry Georgatos, whose tireless mission shone through the telling.

Best text-based Story by a postgraduate student – over 750 words ($200)

Winner – Mary Ellen Roger, UTS

Mary Ellen Roger's skilled exploration of a failed pest eradication attempt, which brought to life the people involved - on both sides of the contentious issue - and was told simply and effectively, her own voice never overpowering that of her subjects. The image of Mark Brown waiting and hoping for the bees to return will stay with me for some time.

Judge – Myriam Robin, *Australian Financial Review*.

Highly Commended – Jacob Wallace, University of Melbourne

Jacob Wallace's exploration of the pokies in Brimbank was an effective way to localise a national tragedy.

Best audio story (short-form) by an undergraduate or postgraduate student ($200)

Winner – Ashleigh Van Meurs, University of Queensland

Ashleigh Van Meurs' short-form audio feature delves into a first-person account of the effects of cyber-stalking. Her compelling case study and measured writing helps paint a picture of a young woman in the suburbs and the fear she felt in the moment. Ashleigh has

also used appropriate statistics sparingly, further helping to build the case of why there needs to be change. It was a sensitive and thought-provoking audio story. Well done.

Judge: Bronwyn Herbert, ABC

Best audio story (long-form) by an undergraduate or postgraduate student ($200)

Winner – Jade Murray, University of Melbourne

Jade Murray's podcast begins with a clear and well-articulated driving question. From here the listener joins the presenter, sharing her discoveries and her outrage as we explore the subject matter. Sparse, economical scripting gives this podcast pace, and the skilful use of music and natural sound brings the topic to life. This podcast uses a simple question to explore a larger issue - the recognition of women in academia. It is an impressive example of how scripting, delivery, music, and external audio can transform an interesting topic into something truly compelling and thought provoking.

Judge: Mario Christodoulou, ABC

Highly commended – Nicola Brayan, University of Sydney

This was a compelling and highly listenable podcast where the subject matter was brought to life through tight and clever scripting, along with the impressive use of external audio. Each episode sets up a clear direction of travel, drawing the listener in, and the high production values keeps each episode zipping along. Interviews are tight and economical, moving the listener from point to point without getting bogged down. Hard to turn off.

Best video story (short-form) by an undergraduate or postgraduate student ($200)

Winner – Kimberly Lambourne, The University of Queensland

A unique documentary which effectively leads with a case study to focus on a little-known element of a broader topic. This entry is well thought out with a timely link to the public discourse. There is good framing with an excellent variety of shots to overlay the main talent.

Judge: Nicole Hegarty, ABC

Highly commended – Ann Khorany, University of Melbourne

A video report with great sequences and interview framing. Excellent work gaining the confidence of the interviewee. A new take on a growing issue. Good use of different overlay for a story that could otherwise be difficult to cover visually.

Best video story (long-form) by an undergraduate or postgraduate student ($200)

Winner – Sean Ruse – University of Melbourne

Sean Ruse's Marching Orders is a professional production. Sean uses a great variety of shots with nice composition. The decision to attend and film several events allows the viewer to feel as if they are among the protesters rather than simply watching a screen. A well-structured and executed piece.

Judge: Nicole Hegarty, ABC

Highly commended – Sabrina Semon, Monash University

Sabina's Hope on the Way is a video report with great sequences and interview framing. Excellent work gaining the confidence of the interviewee. A new take on a growing issue. Good use of different overlay for a story that could otherwise be difficult to cover visually.

John Newfong Prize for reporting on Indigenous affairs ($200)

Winner – Matilda Colling, Charles Darwin University

The series of stories submitted by Tilda Colling shed light on the failure of a culturally unresponsive education system to meet the needs of Indigenous communities, particularly disadvantaged remote Aboriginal communities. As the work highlights, this is a critical and ongoing issue. The portfolio of reporting provides readers with valuable insights into the cultural considerations, the disparities in opportunity between non-indigenous and First Nations schooling, and the gross under-resourcing by the Commonwealth. The work is well-researched, with compelling writing, and provides unique perspectives from community sources. It brings attention to not only the complex factors involved, but the aspirations of the communities and families at the centre of the work.

Judge – Jack Latimore, *The Age*

Highly commended – Amanda Robson, Monash University

For Amanda's interview with Stan Grant on why he walked away from the media.

Best Data Journalism by an Undergraduate or Postgraduate Student (individual or group) (Adobe Creative Cloud 12-month Subscription)

Winner – Charlotte Wintle, University of Newcastle

Charlotte's is a strong examination of the effects of social and income disparity on dental health. Thorough research, strong data and good variety of infographics used demonstrate strong storytelling ability and a good understanding of the principles of good data storytelling. Overall, a credible article which links poor oral health to broader socioeconomic issues, such as employment difficulties, creating a comprehensive understanding of the impact of oral health on overall well-being.

Judge: Miguel D'Souza, Journalist, Trainer, Google Teaching Fellow 2020-2022, CrossCheck@RMIT

Highly commended – Ann Khorany, University of Melbourne

Clever engagement with a personal anecdote relating to the broader issue of housing unoccupancy in Victoria, making the story relatable and grounded. Data is not simply re-presented but displays thorough analysis to reveal underlying trends, such as the doubling of unoccupied apartments since 2016 and the high rate of unoccupied investment properties. Infographics are clear, easy to understand, but could use more time devoted to the user's aesthetic experience of these - broader palette of colours, softer boundaries in maps, backgrounds to charts. This would make a great story even better and a more eye-catching piece. The 'unoccupy' line is smart and funny and displays a talent for finding a clever angle, or a sell, for a story that still resonates with readers. This is relevant, compelling, and thorough work.

Best Visual Journalism by an Undergraduate or Postgraduate Student (all media, individual or group) ($200 prize)

Winner – Ben Astell, Bridget Novak, Annelise Ireland, and Pete Whelan, RMIT University

Bridget Novak, Ben Astell, Annelise Ireland and Pete Whelan's treatment of the Techno Park Drive evictions in *The City Journal* brings a bureaucratic council issue to life with heartfelt residential interviews. The article and video highlighted unique stories within the proximity of the national housing crisis and put a spotlight on the local fight to keep homes belonging

to relatable case studies. The access to residents, built over time with trust and care, is a triumph in student journalism.

Judge: Grace McKinnon, ABC News, Analysis and Investigations

Best publication (GBP100 book voucher, sponsored by Intellect Books)

Winner – *Central News*, UTS

Crisp clear writing and simple design made *Central News* the standout publication in an excellent field. Especially impressive was the range of coverage and sure-footed execution, whether it be a news story on the decline in job ads, a panel discussion on how to cover Gaza, or a profile of a firefighter ahead of bushfire season.

Judge: Misha Ketchell, Editor, The Conversation

Highly commended – Ruth McHugh Dillon, Madi Lo-Booth, and Penry Buckley, RMIT University

RMIT's *Voice to Parliament* production is an especially ambitious and impressive 90-minute live TV production broadcast on the eve of the referendum that included high quality reporting, interviews and explainers.

Best Photojournalism (Single image) by an undergraduate or postgraduate student ($200 prize)

Winner – Kayla Spurway, Western Sydney University

The simplicity of Kayla Spurway's composition and stark use of black and white makes this a powerful image and focuses the viewers' attention to the subject and the emotion in the image. The photographer has captured a moment that forces the viewer to ask questions about the image and the story behind it.

Judge: Chris McGrath, Getty Images

Best Photojournalism (Photo essay) by an undergraduate or postgraduate student ($200 prize)

Winner – Samina Rakhshani, Western Sydney University, *Timeless Motherhood*

The essay showed a well thought out idea and was executed in a way that was fresh and well put together, the photographer took a visually difficult story and managed to create a unique way of sharing the information with the viewer and the photographers vision is easily seen through the image structure flowing through the story, the use of the diptych theme works well to hold the viewers' attention and creates an intimacy throughout the photo essay.

Judge: Chris McGrath, Getty Images

Highly commended:

- Aleeyah Clifford, University of Newcastle, for *Smile Lines*
- Jayden Scherrenberg, Griffith University, for *5 Kids by the Beach – An Inspiring Origin of Climate Success in the Pacific.*

The Private Media Award for Diversity awarded to a student from an underrepresented group ($200 prize)

Winner – Hannah Hammoud, University of Melbourne

Hannah's entry, *Faith and fasting: Muslim athletes playing on through Ramadan*, examined how sporting communities are adapting to the unique faith-needs of its players. This different angle on diversity through the lens of sport helped tell a story about the things athletes had in common (i.e. the need for food and rest) and how multicultural societies are learning to accommodate and include the interests of everyone so that Muslim athletes can fully compete alongside their teammates during the holy month.

The judge was especially impressed by the excellent narrative-driven storytelling, accompanying photos and pull quotes to deliver a full news package. Using two case studies or following the story of two people (a man and a woman competing in different sports) helped to round out the project and explore the concept comprehensively.

This submission was a standout project for its originality and quality, and nicely represented a genuine part of modern Australia. Congratulations.

Judge: Melissa Coade, Senior Journalism, *The Mandarin*

Highly commended – Jacob Gamble, Monash University

Jacob's *LGBTQIA+ leaders share bold ideas for Asia Pacific* was a nice round-up of contemporary social and political issues, canvassing perspectives from different advocates in the region.

The Crikey Award for Investigative journalism by an undergraduate or postgraduate student (individual, any medium) ($200 prize)

Winner – Pamela Rontziokis, UTS

Pamela's report investigates a highly sensitive topic – the possibility that a church is financially exploiting their congregants when they are at their most vulnerable. The revelation of documents that the Archdiocese had not made public gave the story weight, and the writing was sharp, factual, and lean.

Judge: Charlie Lewis, Crikey

Highly Commended – Gwen (Qiyun) Liu, University of Melbourne

Gwen Liu's investigation was an assiduous and widely researched piece, exposing an exploitative practice aimed at a vulnerable group.

The Dorkin Award for investigative journalism by an undergraduate or postgraduate student (group) ($200)

Winner – Marilyn Tan and Xinyi Li, University of Melbourne

Marilyn Tan and Xinyi Li report is a terrific example of grass-roots journalism, providing a voice to people who are often ignored. The article was well written and researched, providing valuable insight to an important subject. However, whether The Barro Group made a statement remains ambiguous. If they did, it should have been printed in full separately from the EPA.

Judge: Alison Sandy, Seven Network

Mindframe (individual, any medium, undergraduate) for reporting on a mental health or suicide related issue responsibly, accurately, and sensitively ($200 prize)

Winner – Freddie Moffat, RMIT University

A highly personable, engaging video, Moffat adeptly intertwines how indexation, work-study balance, university debt and economic stressors impact student burnout. He highlights signs to look out for and his experts suggest simple solutions, emphasising support networks and self-care. The conclusion is encouraging, and he's also included links to university supports.

Judges: Chloe Woodland and Kristy Platt, Mindframe

Highly commended – Eliza Marlow, Griffith University

Eliza's well-researched report navigates eating disorders with responsibility and sensitivity, promoting community awareness and help-seeking. Through various perspectives, Marlow explores challenges, societal influences, and parental roles before proposing changes in health policies and education systems.

Mindframe (individual, any medium, postgraduate) for reporting on a mental health or suicide related issue responsibly, accurately, and sensitively ($200 prize)

Winner – Suhayla Sharif, UTS

This interview sensitively captures author Vanshika Virmani's lived experience of anorexia nervosa, taking the reader on a journey through diagnosis, resilience building and recovery. While help-seeking information would improve the piece, it proposes hope and improved understanding of anorexia to other South Asian Australians. It beautifully reflects the author's living experience.

Judges: Chloe Woodland and Kristy Platt, Mindframe

Our Watch (individual, any medium, undergraduate) for a story which represents best-practice reporting of violence against women ($200 prize)

Winner – Remy Naughton, Charles Sturt University

Remy Naughton's entry was a clear winner because of its originality and execution. She demonstrated real initiative by finding a compelling angle from a dentistry conference, and

then unpacked it through meticulous interviewing and succinct audio storytelling. Remy demonstrated best-practice reporting of violence against women through her respectful language choices and her evidence-based approach. Congratulations.

Judges: Drew Ambrose and Amber Cuneen

Highly Commended – Amelia Walter, University of South Australia for *South Australian hospitality has a harassment problem — and workers want immediate change*

Our Watch (individual, any medium, postgraduate) for a story which represents best-practice reporting of violence against women ($200 prize)

Not awarded this year.

Dart Centre for Journalism and Trauma – Asia Pacific Award for reporting on the impact of violence, crime, disaster, and other traumatic events ($200 prize)

Winner – Jack Ward, RMIT University

Jack Ward's *More Than Ticking a Box* offers compelling and engaging coverage of an issue, which is extremely traumatic, intimate and far reaching within the community with empathy and understanding.

Judge: Amantha Perera, Dart Centre for Journalism and Trauma – Asia Pacific.

Highly Commended –

- Perrie Moller, Griffith University, for *Oh, my God, darling, maybe we should have listened!*
- Acacia Soares, UTS, for *Turning 'pain into purpose': Harrison's fight to reform child sex abuse law*

Monash Climate Change Communication Research Hub Prize ($200)

Winner – Zoe De Koning, Olivia Sanders, and Gabriel Mills-Connolly, RMIT University

Zoe, Olivia and Gabriel's scrolly-telling feature offered an insightful investigation into the West Gate Tunnel Project and its mark on air pollution in Melbourne's west. The inclusion of science communication, alongside the perspectives of residents, helps us to better

understand the threat greenhouse gases and pollution pose to our health. Complimented by rich imagery, video footage and testimonies, this story felt both informative and compassionate.

Judge: Ella Healy, Monash Climate Change Communication Research Hub

Highly commended – Jessica Evensen, Curtin University, for *Childless by Choice*.

The Australian Press Council Undergraduate Prize for an essay on the topic of media ethics ($200 prize)

Winner – Felice Lok, Monash University

This essay about the weakness of Australia's shield laws provided a good analysis of the existing problems. The essay's clear and logical argument is grounded in well assembled evidence.

- Highly commended - Skye Cody, Monash University: The student is to be commended for tackling the difficult, still unfolding issue of the coverage of the Brittany Higgins case.

Judges: Members of the Australian Press Council (Matthew Ricketson, Alan Sunderland)

The Australian Press Council Postgraduate Prize for an essay on the topic of media ethics ($200 prize)

Not awarded this year

Judges: Members of the Australian Press Council (Matthew Ricketson, Alan Sunderland)