The 2024 Ossie Award winners, showcasing Australia's best student journalism, were announced at the Journalism Education and Research Association of Australia conference, at the University of Melbourne, November 28, 2024.

Links to the stories and judges' comments are below, where publicly available. Prize awards indicated where applicable.

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

Winner – Ella Proberts, University of Queensland, *Body of Work*

While still a student, Ella has already established herself as a dynamic multimedia reporter, editor, and publisher. Her work shows insight and a steadfast commitment to public interest journalism, championing social justice and human rights. Ella's infectious positivity, passion for storytelling, and strong ethical principles illuminate her projects, making her a standout choice for 2024's Australian Press Council Prize for Journalism Student of the Year. Her dedication to excellence academically and professionally is not only in the best traditions of the profession, but also promises to help shape its future.

Highly commended – Lily Kristanto, RMIT University, *Body of Work*

Lily has produced an impressive multi-platform portfolio that not only showcases her talent but also reflects her academic excellence. Her work spans a diverse range of local, national, and international issues, featuring contributions to both Australian and Indonesian media. With a knack for storytelling, Lily's journalism captivates and informs, striking a perfect balance that highlights her insightful analysis. Her ability to apply her academic knowledge with such maturity sets her apart as a rising star in the field.

Judges: David Brill AM ACS (Australian Press Council Independent Journalist Adjudication Panel Member) and Mohamed el Roubi (Australian Press Council Public Member)

John Newfong Award for Reporting on Indigenous Affairs – (Individual, Undergraduate or Postgraduate, Any Medium) ($200)

Winner – Ike Morris, University of Technology Sydney, *More First Nations kids locked up despite youth detention drop*

Ike Morris delivers a well-crafted, researched report on the systemic failures in New South Wales' youth justice system, spotlighting the staggering over-representation and targeting of First Nations youth. With precise, objective reporting grounded in verification and centring Aboriginal voices, Morris amplifies the urgent calls from Aboriginal communities for reform.

Judge: Jack Latimore, Aboriginal writer and journalist

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

Winner – Blair Wise, University of Newcastle, *'Bodies Like Greek Statues': Steroids Are Everywhere*

Blair Wise's exploration of steroid use in young men was beautifully written and showcased a deep understanding of a niche topic. It also displayed Blair's mature journalistic skill in incorporating multiple illuminating first-person narratives while not necessarily endorsing their worldview and decision-making.

Highly commended – Hugh Philips, University of Technology Sydney, *Couriers' outlaw bike race hits Sydney*

Hugh Philips' piece on bike messengers and their annual race should be highly commended. Breaking into secret societies is hard, and Hugh brought back a fascinating tale from his travels.

Highly commended – Georgy Sides, Curtin University, *Children of the SAS*

Georgy Sides' first-person piece on growing up the child of an SAS soldier is worthy of a high commendation, for using the journalistic method to make sense of her personal story. It was a heartfelt and engrossing piece, simply and effectively told.

Judge: Myriam Robin, Australian Financial Review

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

Winner – Frances Du, University of Technology Sydney, *Yulu became obsessed with a secret, female-only language. Now she's revived it online*

Frances Du's feature on Nüshu was surprising and intriguing. It was also exceptionally written and conveyed with impactful quotations from women for whom opening up to speak of their experiences cannot have been trivial.

Highly Commended – Sarah Batley, UNSW Sydney, *'Gentle parenting' draws a different, better kind of house*

Sarah Batley's feature on gentle parenting is highly commended. I appreciated the off-beat but widely relevant choice of topic, as well as the centring of first-person voices on a topic often dominated by experts.

Judge: Myriam Robin, Australian Financial Review

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

Winner – Coco Veldkamp, University of Melbourne, *Building for tomorrow: The case for sustainable, smaller, smarter homes*

Coco Veldkamp clearly established the purpose and angle of the story, and her decision to start with a description of the house and quotes from its designer gave a complex issue a human face and a concrete example of what was being discussed. Coco also featured several different sources and links to appropriate policies/studies and made it clear why we should care.

Highly Commended – Razanne Al-Abdeli, Curtin University, *WA Police Spotted with Thin Blue Line Patches*

Getting the pictures and identifying the police badges was a great 'get', as were the links to previous incidents. The lack of quotes from anyone at the event about this specific issue and their reaction to it was a significant omission, but you must give respect to Razanne for holding those in power to account.

Judge: Bruce McKenzie, ABC North Coast

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

Winner – Niddal Abdelrahman, University of Queensland. *Listen here*

Niddal Abdelrahman's investigation of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in Australia is a thorough and sensitive exploration of a difficult topic. I was impressed with the sensitivity of their approach, while maintaining an unflinching focus on what is very confronting content. It is clear they built trust and rapport with women they interviewed and provided important medical and statistical context to their accounts.

Highly commended – Peter Hyslop , University of Newcastle. *Listen here*

Peter Hyslop's story about the mystery surrounding the giant prawn combined gumshoe journalism, excellent interviewing and a sense of fun. It's meticulously scripted, edited and produced and I look forward to hearing more of Peter's entertaining journalism in the future.

Highly commended – Grace Bowles, University of Wollongong, *Fire Alarm*

Grace Bowles's first-person account of living with OCD uses creative audio editing and a forthright approach that places the audience firmly inside the mind of someone with the disorder. It's a non-traditional and compelling piece that connects with the listener in a unique way.

Judge: Ruby Jones, Schwartz Media

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

Winner – Brendan Kearns and Molly Frew, University of Melbourne, *Uncurated (final episode, Season 3)*

A compelling podcast episode that's difficult to pause. Brendan Kearns, Molly Frew and the University of Melbourne team have expertly stitched together historical accounts with personal narratives, crafting a compelling and unsettling exploration of Australia's atomic testing legacy at Emu Plains. Great long-form podcasts are not essays or a series of talking points. They are intimate experiences that take listeners on a journey, and that's exactly what the team has created here.

Highly commended – Rosa Griffith, University of Technology Sydney, *Danger in Dangar Place*

Rosa Griffith's story had the true crime holy trinity - great talent, a compelling story and a grisly historical backdrop. These three elements made for a fascinating podcast which was at its strongest when depicting ordinary people caught up in extraordinary situations.

Judge: Mario Christodoulou, ABC

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

Winner – Rosie Leishman, University of Canterbury, *Bazar Vest - Let the whole world come to you*

Colourful and overflowing with great footage, Rosie Leishman's behind the scenes look at Bazar Vest successfully peels back the curtain to unveil the stories of those driving the Bazar. The level of trust she has fostered with interviewees is clear and in no small way contributes to this insightful work.

Highly commended – Sameen Arshad, University of Queensland, *The Rohingya United - A Story of Brotherhood*

Sameen Arshad's opening sequence is a masterclass in creatively transporting the audience back in time and covering a part of the story that would otherwise be difficult. The shortform documentary features impressive shot sequences, music and good audio and editing. The YouTube watching for editing and shot tips paid off!

Judge: Nicole Hegarty, ABC

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

Winner – James Worsfold, University of Melbourne, *Vulnerable Australian species at risk from looming avian influenza*

James Worsfold has created a piece to be proud of. Tapping into a highly topical issue that he rightly points out has largely gone under the radar to date, James shows great skill. A fantastic, professional piece that would be at home on air.

Judge: Nicole Hegarty, ABC

Best Data Journalism by an Undergraduate or Postgraduate Student (individual or group)($200)

Winner – Yasmine Alwakal, University of Technology Sydney, *Seeing red: The high cost of menstruating*

Seeing red: The high cost of menstruating by Yasmine Alwakal used robust data sources, expert insights and personal stories to vividly demonstrate the discrimination women face due to menstruation throughout the health system and society. Its strong use of data engaged and informed the reader with a constructive approach to storytelling. Original infographics displayed good composition and understood the need to stand alone and drive informed sharing and conversation.

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

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

Winner – Harrison Searle, Henry Alt and Adam Logan, Griffith University, *Sportswashing*

Harrison Searle, Henry Alt and Adam Logan's video on sportswashing is enjoyable to watch while being informative - a hard balance to strike for the most seasoned production teams. Vast efforts have been made to incorporate a strong news angle with entertaining storytelling techniques, including emotive music, gripping interviews and creative camerawork to bring the audience into the scene.

Highly commended – Sophie Gannon, Edith Cowan University, *This story is written by a human*

Judge: Grace McKinnon, ABC News, Analysis and Investigations

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

Winner – The Citizen, University of Melbourne

Compelling ideas and polished execution made The Citizen a standout this year. Coverage of the campus Gaza protests was sharp and informative and steered clear of advocacy. The Building Ballarat series was a good example of constructive journalism outside the university's backyard. The Gone Feral articles were terrific environmental journalism and the *Uncurated* podcast put a cherry on the top of a very impressive body of work.

Judge: Misha Ketchell, Editor, The Conversation

The Getty Images Award for Best Photojournalism (Single image) by an undergraduate or postgraduate student ($200)

Winner – Matthew Parkhill, Swinburne University of Technology, *A Show of Strength as Melbourne Erupts in Violence*

Matthew Parkhill's photograph is a high impact single frame that captures and conveys the breaking news events unfolding. The image has a strong composition that successfully communicates the situations information to the viewer. There is a sense of urgency that brings the viewer in close.

Judge: Chris McGrath, Getty Images

The Getty Images Award for Best Photojournalism (Photo essay) by an undergraduate or postgraduate student ($200)

Winner – Danna Shi, University of Melbourne, *Not defined by size: ballet dancers defy stereotypes*

Danna Shi's essay shows a strong and unique story and was shot with a delicate eye, capturing quiet moments. The photographer's use of light has created a wonderful aesthetic throughout the essay that keeps the flow and viewers' attention. The images show the photographer's attention to storytelling, creating a complete photo essay.

Judge: Chris McGrath, Getty Images

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

Winner – Rafaella Melo, University of Canterbury, *Can we afford to live in Aotearoa?*

Rafaella Melo's report was a nice balance of news and personal experience. The piece was an easy read that clearly explored the financial pressures facing migrant workers seeking a better life or a new experience in New Zealand. The judge was especially impressed by the concise, well-researched article that gave voice to several migrant workers in NZ and what sacrifices they must make to get by. This submission had all the elements of a sound news report with a clear point.

Highly commended – Aleksandar Sekulovski, University of Wollongong, *Visiting the South West*

The project concept was interesting, and use of audio helped to bring life to the overall submission. Class issues are often inextricably tied to how ethnic or diaspora groups find their own sense of belonging in Australian suburbia – I would have liked to see this explored more.

Judge: Melissa Coade, Senior Journalist, The Mandarin

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

Winner – Kaya Selby, Massey University, *The Boy in Secure: An investigation of mistreatment at a youth justice facility*

Kaya delves deeply and vividly into the trauma inflicted on some of the most vulnerable people in society. It's well-structured and the prose is clean and evocative. The style is backed up by assiduous journalism -- the array of interviews and depth of research shows throughout.

Highly Commended – Sam Irvine, University of Melbourne, *In the gun: new AI traffic cameras sting low income Victorians most*

A great piece of data driven journalism by Sam Irvine: well-executed, briskly written and clearly illustrated. It raises an important question, and effectively combines statistics and analysis of government policy with its human impacts.

Judge: Charlie Lewis, Crikey

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

Winner – Blair Wise, Olivia Blissett, Brittany Writer and Zac Wong, University of Newcastle, *The Perfect Storm: Universities, Military, and Defence*

Blair Wise, Olivia Blissett, Brittany Writer and Zac Wong have produced a very timely news investigation which is engaging, comprehensive, well-presented and, most importantly, balanced. The student journalists exercised all avenues of information, including FOI and provided insight into the experiences of Jewish and Palestinian students living in Australia.

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)

Winner – Sabrina Caires, RMIT University, *Melbourne's west is facing a youth homelessness crisis*

Thoughtful and analytical, Sabrina Caires adeptly addresses how housing insecurity and equitable access to support services can impact our mental health and wellbeing. Her depiction of the main subject demonstrates compassion and empathy and gives the reader a holistic sense of their life journey and the supports that were helpful, ultimately instilling a sense of hope for other young people who may be experiencing intersecting issues of mental health challenges, housing, and domestic and family violence. The inclusion of a diverse range of sources and supporting data strengthens her article, grounding it in both research and real-life experience. By including relevant help-seeking resources, she ensures that readers who may find themselves in similar circumstances can access the support they need.

Highly commended – Rafaella Melo, University of Canterbury, *Inside Out 2: Why is a kid's movie captivating so many adults?*

Rafaella displayed exceptional work in highlighting the emotional depth and significance of children's cinema for adult audiences. Through their thoughtful analysis, Rafaella effectively conveyed how a movie aimed at children can resonate just as powerfully with adults, encouraging them to recognize the complexity of their own emotions and the importance of seeking support and practicing self-care.

Highly commended – Emily Kaine, UNSW Sydney, *The Promise that could save your own life*

Emily Kaine's piece skilfully highlights the lived experience of someone with bipolar disorder, providing a platform for the subject's voice to be heard in a way that is both compassionate and educational. She expertly balances the realities of mental health struggles with messages of hope and recovery, offering a powerful narrative that encourages empathy, understanding, and acceptance.

Judges: Emma Pryse and Elena Glasic, Mindframe

Monash Climate Change Communication Research Hub Prize for best climate change reporting ($200)

Winner – Georgina Preston, University of Melbourne, *Planning, and planting, for humans and animals in a more crowded, warmer future*

Georgina Preston's piece beautifully captures Ballarat's potential to balance urban growth with environmental preservation. It brings a global challenge to the local context, elevates community voices, and eloquently describes a hopeful vision for the future that values both nature and Australia's future generations under a changing climate.

Judge: Amelia Pearson, Monash Climate Change Communication Research Hub

Cait McMahon OAM Journalism and Trauma Reporting Award ($200)

Winner – Sophie Havilah, University of Technology Sydney, *'I hate them for what they did to me' – strip searches are traumatising children*

Sophie Havilah's news article on strip searches on children sheds light on a not often discussed topic, is supported by solid data and very strong quotes and from both talent in the story. It was well written, clear about its intent and in its delivery, and explored the issue in a sensitive, confident and balanced way. As a reader, I left feeling I had insight into an important issue from a legal and personal perspective and could see grounds for a much larger investigation into this issue in the future.

Highly Commended – Sophia Kouri, University of Technology Sydney, *Father of murdered teen's long fight for change*

Sophia Khouri's piece on Ken Marslew and his Enough is Enough charity drew me in from the first line and took me on a journey throughout. She explored Ken's journey and shift from devastated parent to changemaker in an emotive and engaging way, bringing the reader right to the heart of the issue. As this was a one talent story, I felt it needed balance and some acknowledgement of whether the funding was being stripped and if so, why, to complete the narrative.

Judge: Caroline Winter – PodTalk, TV and podcast producer

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

Winner – Ashleigh Wyss, University of Melbourne, *As calls for help escalate, motels not the answer for families fleeing violence, crisis workers say*

Ballarat is ground zero for the horrifying violence crisis facing women in Australia. Ashleigh Wyss' winning piece explains with clarity the array of complicated bureaucratic challenges facing those on the frontline trying to find safe homes for abuse survivors. This story is original, important and agenda-setting. Her engagement with frontline workers centres the lived experience of victim-survivors. Her language is respectful and empowering; the inclusion of Ingrid Irwin's interview keeps the perpetrator in clear view. Ashleigh's deft use of crime statistics reveals the issue's prevalence, situating it in a national context.

Judges: Drew Ambrose and Amber Cuneen

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

Winner – Elise Mayer, University of Newcastle, *Words Matter: Australian Journalism's Peace-Keeping Responsibilities in a Volatile World*

Elise Mayer's essay, *Words Matter: Australian Journalism's Peace-Keeping Responsibilities in a Volatile World*, is a beautifully written piece of thought leadership that resonates deeply in today's climate. Through a sensitive and insightful lens, Elise examines the pivotal roles of both traditional and social media in our democracy, focusing on one of the most polarizing issues of our time. Elise skilfully illustrates how journalistic ethics can be harnessed to combat extremism and radicalisation, while upholding the essential value of freedom of expression. Her well researched and compelling arguments not only shed light on the challenges we face but also offer a roadmap for responsible journalism in a multicultural Australia.

Highly commended – Macey Fogarty, RMIT University, *Why Don't People Trust the News? Surveys, Statistics & Studies*

Macey Fogarty's engaging video essay, *Why Don't People Trust the News? Surveys, Statistics & Studies*, dives deep into a crucial topic that shapes journalism's role in our democracy. With a clever blend of her own survey results and meticulously researched secondary sources, she tackles the complex issues of media convergence, dominance, and the vital commitment to facts and truth-telling. Macey's witty presentation not only illuminates these challenges but also makes them relatable and accessible for her audience. This thoughtful exploration invites viewers to reflect on their own perceptions of the news, sparking a conversation that is both timely and essential.

Judges: David Brill AM ACS (Australian Press Council Independent Journalist Adjudication Panel Member) and Mohamed el Roubi (Australian Press Council Public Member)

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

Winner – Harriet Grummet, Monash University

Harriet Grummet's essay skillfully explores the ethical dilemmas surrounding reporting on public figures. She meticulously categorizes the concept of celebrity, thoughtfully examining how these classifications impact privacy rights and the broader public interest. Her sophisticated analysis of legal and regulatory frameworks, alongside the commercial aspects of journalism, reveals a deep understanding of the issues. Moreover, she proposes a practical ethical model that serves the public, individual journalists, and media organizations alike. Harriett's insights resonate with many of the pressing issues the Press Council faces in adjudicating privacy complaints, making her work both timely and relevant.

Judges: David Brill AM ACS (Australian Press Council Independent Journalist Adjudication Panel Member) and Mohamed el Roubi (Australian Press Council Public Member)