

# Gunson Essay Prize

awarded by  
The Journal of Pacific History  
in conjunction with the Pacific History Association.

A prize of AUD \$1,000 will be awarded at the 2025 Pacific History Association Conference, for the winner of the **Gunson Essay Prize Competition**. Postgraduate or senior students from any country are invited to submit an essay in English between 5,000 and 8,000 words on any topic relating to the pasts of the Island Pacific and its peoples to [editorial@jphinc.com.au](mailto:editorial@jphinc.com.au) by **1 November 2025** (23:59pm, Australian Eastern Standard time).

Each entry should consist of two documents: one with the author's name, contact details, essay title and abstract of 150 words; the other consisting of the essay itself, anonymised, with title, abstract and text. Referencing should be consistent, accurate and complete, but authors do not need to follow any one particular set of conventions for presentation. Please note that an essay submitted for the prize should not have been published or accepted for publication in any outlet by the closing date for entries.

The winning entry will, in the eyes of the judges, make the most valuable contribution to our historical knowledge and draw convincingly from relevant sources to communicate effectively. The judging committee will consist of three members, including a special speaker at the PHA Conference, a representative of the PHA and a representative of *The Journal of Pacific History*. The prize promotes the work of scholars at the early stages of their research. It also pays tribute to Dr Niel Gunson, from the Australian National University, for mentoring so many students and scholars over a lifetime of dedication to Pacific history.

Past recipients of the Gunson Essay prize are:

- 2012. Nicholas Hoare (then at Victoria University of Wellington), for ““Harry” Holland and Samoa: the Labour leader’s “Samoa complex””.
- 2014. Kristie Patricia Flannery (then at the University of Texas at Austin), for ““Battlefield Diplomacy and Empire-building in the Early Modern Pacific World””.
- 2016. Benjamin Sacks (then at the University of Western Australia), for ““Running Away with Itself”: Missionaries, Islanders and the Reimagining of Recreation in Samoa, 1830–1939’.
- 2018. Elyssa J. Santos (then at University of Hawai‘i at Manoa), for ““More Better” Ideas: Chamorro Resistance to U.S. Development Projects on Guam, 1898–1941’.
- 2021. Harry Needham (then at the Australian National University), for ““A Story of Our People's Triumph”: Nauruan Histories of Angam.’
- 2023 (joint winners): Anaïs Duong-Pedica (then at Åbo Akademi University), for ““Ponochement Vôtre”: Kanak Women’s Exploitation through the Anti-colonial and Anti-capitalist lens of Kanak Women Militants’; Steven R. Talley (then at the University of

Otago), for “A Very Remarkable Development... Has Taken Place on Tanna:” The Albatross Scheme, 1915-1922.’

The 2025 Gunson Essay Prize winner will be announced at the PHA’s 26<sup>th</sup> conference at the National University of Sāmoa on 2-4 December 2025.

For further details, contact *The Journal of Pacific History*, [editorial@jphinc.com.au](mailto:editorial@jphinc.com.au).