



New Zealand Political Studies Association - Te Kāhui Tātai Tōrangapū o Aotearoa

Newsletter | Autumn 2026

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Message from the President He karere nā Te Tumuaki



Tēnā koutou e ngā rangatira mā,

It has been an honour to take up the role of President of the NZPSA. I remember first showing up to the Canterbury conference as a very nervous grad student and being welcomed into the fold by postgrad members Geoff Ford and David Belgrave.

At different points in my career, NZPSA has served as a great community, and I have loved connecting with scholars from different subdisciplines and locations. I am grateful to the academics who have served in the executive roles, including Jeremy as the outgoing President – everyone taking their turn means that the association can continue and we can provide this sense of community for the next generation of scholars.

In the first couple of months of the year our executive committee team - including myself and incoming executive secretary David Jenkins - have been getting up to speed. I have also met with Mark Chou the APSA president and Bruce Cohen the SAANZ (sociology) president.

I'm looking forward to working with these associations and people in similar roles as we all tackle the same sorts of issues, especially how we can ensure sustainable associations with less funding and fewer academic roles in the social sciences and humanities.

There's a note below about joining the prizes committee. I have spent this time also investigating the way that the NZPSA prizes are structured. Not everyone knows this, but Professor Raymond Miller put royalties from the New Zealand politics textbooks that he wrote and edited over the years into an endowment. Janine Hayward has continued this tradition (with the addition of Claire Timperley and I as editors).

This endowment provides for NZPSA prizes. I am one of the many political scientists that have won one of these awards over the years and was very thankful as a grad student. Not only has Professor Raymond Miller been an excellent scholar but this endowment shows an amazing commitment to community. Priya Kurian, Janine Hayward, and Claire Timperley have signed up for the committee, but we would love more voices – this will just involve a couple of zooms as we explore the best way to configure the prizes going forward. You will hear more from us around the AGM later in the year.

We are also awaiting details of the SAANZ-run social science conference set to take place 2-4 December this year at the University of Auckland (save the date!). The programme so far looks excellent - we will send details as soon as we get them on the conference. I would like to thank Sarah Bickerton, Tom Gregory, and other politics/IR scholars who are working on that. I hope to see you there.

I am currently working on creating a few online roundtable panels – one is on funding, one on media, but let me know if you would like me to organise one on a specific issue. We will be repeating Richard Shaw's initiative in 2023 of creating a spreadsheet of those who would like to do media commentary on their research and topics of expertise.

The other thing to note is network events. The decision has been made in previous years that instead of having a full conference every year there will instead be network events to ensure some whakawhanaungatanga and sharing of ideas. Please consider if you would like to run a network event, and get in touch with a network representative.

Network Events and Funding – NZPSA Biennial Grant

Given there is no NZPSA conference this year, we are encouraging networks to hold their own events, whether it be in person, hybrid, or online.

At the 2013 AGM it was decided that we would establish a biennial **grant of up to \$2,000** for a project that will benefit NZPSA collectively or a significant part of it such as a Network, the Women's Caucus or the Postgraduate Body.

New Networks can be formed for the purpose of applying for funding by gathering ten NZPSA members together and contacting the Executive. NZPSA collectives and individual members are therefore invited to submit applications for project funding by **5pm on the 1st of June 2026** to the President of the NZPSA who will establish a committee to assess them.

Ideas and Rationale for Projects

1. The sorts of projects we might fund include postgraduate conferences or writing retreats, specialist workshops leading to a significant publication, travel to assist a keynote conference speaker or other events on key political issues linked to the NZPSA annual conference, etc.
2. The project should benefit a group of people (not just an individual) across institutions, offering benefit to the wider NZPSA community.

Further submission requirements can be found at the following link:

<https://nzpsa.co.nz/membership-and-benefits/grants-and-awards/>

Join the NZPSA Prizes Committee

We are seeking members for an ad hoc committee to provide input and create options for restructuring the NZPSA undergraduate and postgraduate prizes.

Are the prizes still fit for purpose considering developments in AI? Could a travel award work better? What do you think could be causing a lack of submissions?

In recent years we have seen fewer applications for these prizes, and we would like to revise them to ensure that they are suitable and attractive for students going forward.

The NZPSA executive will form a committee to reconsider these prizes and will bring a proposal to the AGM later this year. Please email president@nzpsa.co.nz to join.

Australian, Canadian and Taiwanese PSA Conference Attendance Awards

The NZPSA offers conference attendance awards – please promote these if you are a supervisor.

Australian PSA Award

The [APSA](#) will provide the NZPSA President or nominee and one NZPSA postgraduate member free conference registration and a free conference dinner. In deciding between applicants for the postgraduate award to the APSA Conference, the Executive will consider the quality of the abstract, financial need and length of NZPSA membership. Its decision will be final.

Applications for the 2026 Award must be received by 5pm, July 14 2026.

Canadian PSA Award

The [CPSA](#) offers free conference registration to two NZPSA graduate student members who are presenting papers at the 2026 CPSA conference. The NZPSA will select the recipients and provide the names to the CPSA. To be eligible, NZPSA student members must have an abstract accepted by the CPSA. Please forward a letter of request to the NZPSA by 15 April 2026.

Taiwanese PSA Award

The NZPSA has signed a new Memorandum of Understanding with the Taiwanese Political Science Association (TPSA). This allows for reciprocal free attendance at our respective conferences for up to two applicants, and includes accommodation for those going to the Taiwanese conference. Please forward a letter of request to the NZPSA by 30 April 2026.

New Prize Opportunity – The Peter Balint Memorial Prize in Political Theory

The Australian Political Studies Association has recently opened applications for the Peter Balint Memorial Prize in Political Theory, established to honour Dr Balint's distinguished contribution to the field.

Peter was an Associate Professor of International and Political Studies at the University of New South Wales in Australia and author of several books in political theory, including *Debating Multiculturalism: Should There Be Minority Rights?* (OUP, 2022).

The Prize is awarded annually for an unpublished work of political theory that makes a significant scholarly contribution.

The recipient will receive a monetary award, and will also be offered a pathway to publication of their paper in the Australian Journal of Political Science.

Applications close 19 July 2026, and full details (including the application form) are available here: <https://auspsa.org.au/peter-balint-memorial-prize-in-political-theory>.

NZPSA Online Roundtable: Appearing in the Media

Friday May 15, 2026 12:00 PM

<https://vuw.zoom.us/meeting/register/2Tkvv7KuS7mP-UYIBTvB8g>

Join us for a lunchtime online roundtable on Friday 15 May 2026 (12:00 PM) where three politics academics share their experiences appearing in the media.

Prof Richard Shaw, Dr Annie Te One, and Dr Joshua James will reflect on what drew them to engaging with the media, any boundaries they've set around their participation (e.g., to do live radio or not?), and their top tips for getting started.

Whether you're considering whether to engage with the media or already fielding the occasional call from a journalist, this is a great opportunity to learn from colleagues who've been there.

Please send this invite along to any colleagues or students who might find it useful - members and friends alike are welcome.

Position Available: NZPSA Treasurer

We are still looking for a treasurer!

Sarah Bickerton has served more than a term as treasurer and is now looking to step aside – she announced this last year before the AGM. This means we are now looking for a treasurer to join our team. What the role involves:

- A meeting of the executive team on Zoom every 6-8 weeks.
- Making online payments
- Liaising with the accountant, ensuring they have everything that they need (once a year)
- Preparing a treasurers' report for the AGM describing qualitatively how the association is getting on financially (once a year)

All training will be provided with a very informative handover – Sarah will also be available to help with questions and assistance.

PhD Corner



Flynn Acworth is halfway through his PhD in International Relations at Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington, supervised by Prof. David Capie and Prof. Jon Fraenkel.

He has a professional background in information security consulting, and currently holds a Bachelor of Science in Cyber Security from Bournemouth University, a Master of Strategic Studies from Victoria University of Wellington, and a Master of Peace and Conflict Studies from the University of Otago.

His doctoral research investigates cyber security cooperation in Oceania, analysing the region's unique digital ecosystem, its evolving threat landscape, and the networks of international and public-private cooperation that have been forming in the region over the last decade.

Alongside his PhD, he works as a Strategic Risk Reduction Fellow for the Asia Pacific Leadership Network, aiding their work on crisis prevention and crisis management in the Asia-Pacific. He's also the NZPSA's executive administrator - responsible for managing the website, communicating with members, and writing these newsletters!

If you're interested in his work, please reach out to him at flynn.acworth@vuw.ac.nz.