

Louise Cairns Rail Safety Award

Overview

The TrackSAFE NZ "Louise Cairns Rail Safety Award" was established to support individuals undertaking academic research that contributes towards improving safety around the New Zealand rail corridor and/or reducing the levels of harm caused by collisions between trains and vehicles and/or pedestrians.

History

Louise Cairns was killed in 1993 when a truck drove through operating level crossing alarms and into the side of a passenger train. Two other women were killed in the incident, and a further eight people were seriously injured. The Award was set up in Louise's memory in 2013.

2022 Winner

Otago University alumna Sienna MacArthur-Beadle received the TrackSAFE Louise Cairns Award in 2022 for her research on how storytelling affects young people's attitudes toward pedestrian safety around railway tracks. Two West Auckland intermediate schools participated in Sienna's research, which took place in 2021. Students received rail safety presentations from Auckland Transport and then heard from two people with personal experiences of train collisions. The first speaker, a rail incident controller from KiwiRail, spoke about his role in responding to fatal collisions at level crossings. The second speaker, who survived a collision with a train in 2003 when he was a teenager, spoke about his recovery and rehabilitation process as well as the lasting impacts of his injuries on his life since the collision. Sienna's research concluded that students who heard the stories were more likely to view certain risk-taking behaviours as unsafe and reported being less likely to take risks around railway tracks in the future. Sienna now works for KiwiRail's Safety, Health & Wellbeing team, and has continued her work in community rail safety. Last August she planned and coordinated school visits for Rail Safety Week, supporting local teams to share rail safety messages with over 7,000 primary and intermediate students around the country.



Eligibility

This Award is open to all New Zealand citizens or permanent residents who have resided in New Zealand for at least three years immediately preceding the year of selection and who are studying at a registered New Zealand university or other approved tertiary organisation.

Value

The Award of \$5,000 is for a period of one year and is offered each year.

Selection criteria

Applicants will be selected based on the degree to which the research has practical relevance to the New Zealand rail industry by:

- increasing the knowledge of the human factors affecting public behaviour around the rail corridor; and/or
- contributing to an improvement in safety at level crossings through innovative or new engineering technology.

Judging

The judging panel will comprise the Board of Directors of TrackSAFE NZ or their nominees.

Entry process

Send a descriptive summary of your entry (up to 600 words) to tracksafe@tracksafe.co.nz. The summary should include the key factors that have contributed towards demonstrating how the entry meets the judging criteria.

Applications should be signed off by an appropriate academic supervisor. Entry must be in PDF format and send to tracksafe@tracksafe.co.nz by 1 December. The winner will be notified by 1 March.

Terms and conditions

The entrant accepts and agrees to the following terms and conditions:

1. The entrant has obtained the permission of all relevant parties to proceed with the entry.
2. The entrant accepts that the judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
3. The judges undertake to observe the confidentiality of entries and to declare or avoid any possible conflict of interest.
4. The judges reserve the right not to make an award where, in the judges' opinion, no entry of adequate standard has been received