



MEDIA RELEASE

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HISTORY FELLOWSHIP WINNER TO EXPLORE HOW SOUTH AUSTRALIANS MOBILISED AGAINST URANIUM MINING IN THE '70s

Adelaide historian Dr Nicholas Herriot has been awarded the prestigious 2026 History Council of South Australia Fellowship for his project “Leave it in the Ground: South Australia, Uranium, and the Atomic Age”.

The project, which was the unanimous winner in a strong field of ten nominations, will investigate how South Australians mobilised against uranium mining and grappled with the promise and peril of the atomic age, focusing on the 1970s and early 1980s – a period of intense political controversy.

Dr Nicholas Herriot is an early career researcher specialising in Australian labour, environmental and social movement history. He teaches history at the University of Adelaide and serves on the executive of the Labour History Society (South Australia).

Supported by the State Library of South Australia, the \$2000 History Council Fellowship is open to all Australians exploring South Australian history, and aims to foster research that deepens our understanding of the state’s past and its contributions to wider histories. The annual winner also receives 10 hours of library research support, library space and the use of a computer.

History Council of South Australia president Prof Matthew Fitzpatrick said the judges were impressed with Dr Herriot’s plan to explore the legacies of anti-nuclear campaigns in shaping contemporary debates about energy, sovereignty and environmental justice.

“The project is both topical and timely, resonating with current explorations into alternative energies and about the power of protest,” Prof Fitzpatrick said.

“By illuminating these aspects of our recent past, the research will help contextualise ongoing concerns about nuclear policy and environmental responsibility and highlight the library’s rich collections as vital resources for understanding the state’s unique identity.”

Prof Fitzpatrick said the state library’s commitment to preserving and sharing the state’s documentary heritage contributed significantly to the success of the awards, and the advancement of historical research. He also thanked the Marsden Swarcbord Foundation for its continued support.

State Library of South Australia director Megan Berghuis said she appreciated how Dr Herriot’s project would draw on the library’s extensive archival holdings, including oral histories, activist ephemera and rare periodicals.

Marsden Swarcbord Foundation director Dr Susan Marsden AM said she was impressed by Dr Herriot’s intention to situate local activism within national and transnational networks.

For further media information, please contact History Council of South Australia president Matthew Fitzpatrick on 0403 347 247 or email matthew.fitzpatrick@flinders.edu.au.