

2024 John Koowarta Reconciliation LAW SCHOLARSHIP

Closing date: 15 September 2023

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are advised this document contains an image of a deceased person.



Law Council
OF AUSTRALIA



The John Koowarta Reconciliation Law Scholarship is available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in an approved course of study provided by an Australian tertiary institute, which is a prerequisite to admission as a legal practitioner in any Australian jurisdiction.

The John Koowarta Reconciliation Law Scholarship commemorates John Koowarta, a member of the Winychanam community at Aurukun and a traditional owner of the Archer River region on Cape York Peninsula in Queensland. Mr Koowarta challenged the Queensland Government under the Federal *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth) after its decision to prevent the Aboriginal Land Fund from acquiring a crown lease on a pastoral property for the Winychanam people. The decision by the Bjelke-Peterson Government was based on cabinet policy at the time, which opposed ownership of large tracts of land by Aboriginal peoples. The Queensland Government challenged the validity of the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* in the High Court and was defeated. The High Court's decision was later pivotal in the recognition of native title in *Mabo v Queensland (No.2)*.

Mr Koowarta was described by Robert Tickner, the former Commonwealth Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs (1991-96), as "an Australian hero who was a courageous fighter against Governments which discriminate against people on the basis of race." John Koowarta died in 1991 without fulfilling his dream of seeing his traditional lands returned.

The John Koowarta Reconciliation Law Scholarship Trust was established by the Law Council of Australia in 1994, with a \$200,000 contribution from the Federal Government.

The Law Council continues to act as trustee and administrator, with the aim of building the scholarship and promoting the study and practice of the law by more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The Law Council is proud of the outstanding success of the John Koowarta Reconciliation Law Scholarship, which has assisted several Indigenous Australians in completing their legal studies, many of whom have gone on to make valuable contributions to their communities, the legal profession and Australia.

Last Year's Recipient

Ms Sharleigh Crittenden

Ms Sharleigh Crittenden was awarded the Law Council's 2023 John Koowarta Reconciliation Law Scholarship.

Ms Crittenden is a proud Wiradjuri woman and is currently studying a Bachelor of Arts (Criminology) and a Bachelor of Laws (LLB) at the UNSW Sydney. Her approach has involved two complementary aspects: the mentorship of younger Indigenous students, and development of a critical voice in scholarship on issues of importance for First Nations Australians.

Previous Recipients

The John Koowarta Reconciliation Law Scholarship has assisted a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander law students across Australia to complete their legal studies. See list of previous award winners below:

Ms Terri Janke	Ms Aurora Milroy
Mr Nathan Jarro	Mr Ashley Walker
Ms Gina Masterton	Mr Peter Dawson
Mr Jason Briggs	Ms Melinda Mitchell
Ms June Kenny	Ms Danielle Davis
Mr Matthew Karakoulakis	Mr Corey Smith
Ms Tammy Williams	Ms Samara Hand
Ms Corina Martin	Ms Laura Vincent
Ms Leanne Liddle	Ms Alison Boland
Mr Terrence Stedman	Ms Tamara Kenny
Mr Bruce Rudeforth	Ms Mikaela French
Ms Stephanie Bott	Ms Tayla Anderson
Ms Rebecca Martin	Ms Vanessa Turnbull-Roberts
Ms Peta MacGillivray	Mr Noah Bedford
Ms Hannah Dawson	Ms Sophie Coffin
Ms Merinda Dutton	Mr Cameron Downey
Ms Krista McMeeken	Ms Michelle Burchill

2024 Scholarship

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must complete the form below.

In addition, all applicants should provide:

- a brief statement of their aspirations, describing their reasons for studying law and their objectives upon completion of their legal training;
- a brief curriculum vitae and the names, addresses and telephone numbers of two referees;
- written confirmation of community recognition of their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent;
- a transcript of their tertiary results to date, OR a copy of confirmation of enrolment for students who have not yet commenced their tertiary studies;
- any other relevant information with the application, such as details of community or extra-curricular activities, which may also be considered by the selection committee.

Applications close 15 September 2023

Contact:

E. koowarta@lawcouncil.au

T. 02 6246 3788

Advice for Applicants

APPLICANTS MUST BE OF ABORIGINAL OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER DESCENT

For the purposes of this application, an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person is someone who is of Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, who identifies as an Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person, and is accepted as such by the community in which they lives or have lived. Applicants will be asked to provide a written confirmation of community recognition of their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity.

A SCHOLARSHIP WILL BE AWARDED BY THE LAW COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA ON THE RECOMMENDATION OF A SELECTION COMMITTEE

Selection of the scholarship recipient will be based primarily on academic merit judged on results achieved and on reports from referees familiar with the applicant's work and suitability for a career in the law.

The scholarship will not be awarded to an applicant who already holds any other Australian bursary or scholarship.

The selection committee is constituted by a sub-committee of the Law Council's Indigenous Legal Issues Committee.

THE VALUE OF THE SCHOLARSHIP GIVEN IN 2024 WILL BE UP TO \$5,500

The scholarship may be sought for part-time study or full-time study.

The scholarship will be paid direct to the student.

Part-time students may receive part payments (pro-rata) depending on the number of units studied. Payments will not be related to, or affected by, an ABSTUDY benefit received by successful applicants. However, cash payments will be counted as income in determining ABSTUDY eligibility.

All successful applicants will receive or benefit from scholarship payments without application of any means test.

In the past, scholarships have been awarded for a full course of study, subject to review at the end of each year.

A scholarship may not be awarded if the advisory committee believes there is no applicant of sufficient merit.

Application form

closing date for applications is 15 September 2023

PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU SUBMIT ALL THE ITEMS ON THIS APPLICATION FORM CHECKLIST:

- A one-page curriculum vitae (including the names, addresses and telephone numbers of two referees).
- A one-page statement of your aspirations, describing your purposes in studying law and the uses to which you hope to put your legal training.
- A document confirming community recognition of your Aboriginal and Torrens Strait Islander descent.
- A transcript of your tertiary results to date, OR if you have not commenced your tertiary studies a copy of confirmation of your enrolment.
- This form, completed and signed.

Personal Details

First name

Surname

Date of birth

Address (during university semester)

Phone (home)

Phone (during business hours)

Mobile

Email address

Academic

University (where studies will be or are being undertaken)

Title of course (enclose proof of enrolment)

Year of course you will be studying in 2024
(eg. first year, second year...)

Basis of study (full-time or part-time)

Total duration of course (in years)

Expected year and month of
graduation

Name of secondary school or institution

Year secondary school completed

Please attach a copy of your Tertiary Entrance Statement and Higher School Certificate (including subjects completed and scores), OR a transcript of your tertiary education results (to date) if you have already undertaken some tertiary study.

Signed

Date

PLEASE SEND THIS FORM AND ALL
ATTACHMENTS TO:

The Trustee
John Koowarta Reconciliation Law Scholarship Trust
C/- Law Council of Australia, PO Box 5350,
Braddon ACT 2612
or email: koowarta@lawcouncil.au

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

E. koowarta@lawcouncil.au
T. 02 6246 3788

The John Koowarta Reconciliation Law Scholarship
is proudly administered and supported
by the Law Council of Australia

Law Council of Australia
Level 1, MODE3, 24 Lonsdale Street, Braddon ACT 2612
PO Box 5350, Braddon ACT 2612
T. +61 2 6246 3788
E. mail@lawcouncil.au

www.lawcouncil.au



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