

# 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.

## 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

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

## ENTRY PROCESS

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

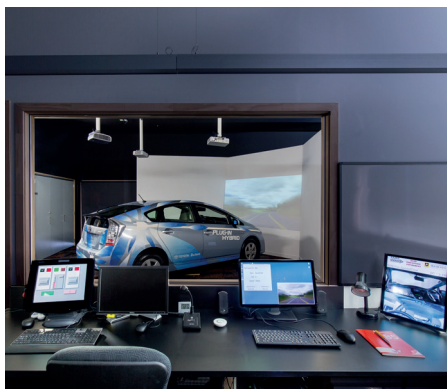
Applications should be signed off by an appropriate academic supervisor. Entry must be in PDF format and send to [tracksafe@tracksafe.co.nz](mailto:tracksafe@tracksafe.co.nz) by 1 December. The winner will be notified by 1 March.

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS

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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.



The first recipient of this award was Waikato University PhD student Helen Clark.

Ms Clark's research interests are in the areas of vision science and traffic and transport psychology with a particular interest in exploring the factors behind railway level crossing collisions and the use of eye tracking technology to aid research in traffic psychology.

Her PhD topic is an investigation into the factors affecting the perception of a train's travelling speed and aims to look at why people perceive trains as travelling slower than smaller vehicles.