

Exegesis Guide - History Council of NSW Annual Awards

2024

The intention of the HCNSW's annual awards is to recognise history in various forms - including non-essay submissions, such as exhibitions, creative works, websites, and podcasts. To allow the judging panel to make a considered assessment of works that are not contained within an essay format and to compare them with varying forms of submission, we ask that applicants write an 'exegesis' of up to 1000 words with full referencing (footnotes do not count towards the word limit).

What is an exegesis? It is an essay-style explanation that accompanies a non-traditional research submission, explaining the logic of the project, its themes, engagement with historical narratives, and methods of research and production. An exegesis allows for explanation of the elements of production that are not required to face the audience of creative and multi-media submissions, but are essential to guide assessment of the work by our judging panel.

The format of an exegesis varies depending on the applicant/s and the project, but here are some questions that you might answer:

- What was the overall purpose or aim of the piece?
- What inspired the piece? What is the background?
 - This can draw from other works in a similar or different mode or discipline. Please reference these using [Chicago Style footnotes](#). *External link to Chicago Style 'Quick Guide'*.
- What themes and issues did the piece hope to engage in and/or evoke for the audience?
- How did you go about integrating historical ideas and sources into this piece?
 - What methods or techniques did you employ?
 - How did these methods enable you to explore themes or issues?

As per other criteria, please ensure that the applicant/s name/s does not appear in the exegesis so that our judging panel can assess submissions fairly. Some works are intricately related to a person/group's identity - in this case, please do the best you can to anonymise the writing by using non-specific words such as 'the author', 'the producer', or 'the creative team', and so on.

If you have any questions about what should or should not be included in the exegesis, or about the application process in general, please reach out to:

programs@historycouncilnsw.org.au