



ACSL

Australian College of Strata Lawyers

The Australian College of Strata Lawyers is delighted to announce the inaugural

GARY BUGDEN ESSAY PRIZE

Named after Gary Bugden OAM in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the study and practice of strata and community title law in Australia.



PAPERS ARE NOW INVITED

The Australian College of Strata Lawyers is delighted to announce the following prize offering for 2027:

GARY BUGDEN ESSAY PRIZE – JUNIOR LAWYER– A\$2,000

GARY BUGDEN ESSAY PRIZE - STUDENT– A\$1,000

ENTRY DETAILS AND RULES:

1. All entrants awarded a prize will, in addition, be granted complimentary membership of ACSL for one year. The Gary Bugden Essay Prize winner is invited to present their paper at ACSL's 2027 Conference. Complimentary conference registration together with a travel and accommodation allowance (if the conference is not held in the winner's home city) of \$1,000.00 will also be provided by ACSL.
2. ACSL intends to offer the Gary Bugden Essay Prize annually for the best essay submitted in the field of strata and community title law.
3. The Gary Bugden Prize is named after Gary Bugden OAM in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the study and practice of strata and community title law in Australia. This is the first year the Gary Bugden Essay Prize has been offered by ACSL.
4. Candidates may select any subject matter concerning the theory or practice of Common Interest Subdivisions. A Common Interest Subdivision is the subdivision of land (with or without airspace) into lots and common areas whether or not a body corporate or association is established to administer the common areas, including without limitation, subdivisions commonly known as strata titles and community titles.



5. ACSL encourages entries from both students at a recognised Australian or New Zealand University (including students enrolled in a Bachelor of Laws, Juris Doctor, Masters of Law or a PhD relevant to Common Interest Subdivisions or the Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice at the College of Law or equivalent ("Student") and legal practitioners who have up to five years' post-admission experience in their home jurisdiction in the law and practice associated with Common Interest Subdivisions ("Junior Lawyers").
6. Entries within the Junior Lawyers and Student Divisions will be judged separately. The Judging Panel will allocate marks as follows:
 - 40% - 'Originality of thought or approach and contribution to the study or practice of strata and community title law or its application in the industry'.
 - 50% - 'Quality and scholarly rigour of analysis, explanation and discussion of chosen topic'.
 - 10% - 'Clarity of presentation, grammar, spelling, punctuation and any referencing'.
7. Entries should conform to a recognized academic style guide – for example, the Australian Guide to Legal Citation available via law.unimelb.edu.au/mulr#aglc.
8. Entries must be original. This means that papers submitted for the Gary Bugden Essay Prize cannot have been:
 - published in any form prior to the submission deadline referred to below; or October 2026
 - submitted for judging prior to that date for any essay prize (whether or not the judging has been undertaken for such prize and whether the paper has received any award in relation to that prize), nor can papers be substantially similar to any paper which has been published or submitted in this way.
9. ACSL reserves the right to publish any entries in soft or hard copy and/or on its website, with copyright being held jointly by the author and ACSL. ACSL will not unreasonably refuse publication elsewhere of any entry provided that a note acknowledging the paper's original submission to (and, if applicable, publication by) ACSL in respect of the Gary Bugden Essay Prize is included in such publication.
10. Entries are to be:
 - Not more than 3,000 words in total (including all footnotes, headings and other references). The judging panel's usual practice is to disregard the text of the paper to the extent it exceeds 3,000 words. The word count must be stated at the end of the paper.
 - Identifiable by essay title only: It is important that the author's name, company name or any other identifier does not appear anywhere on the paper itself!
 - Submitted online (details to be found at acsl.net.au/gary-bugden-essay-prize). All fields on the submission form must be completed and include:
 - the title of entry, author's name, mobile telephone number, postal address and email address;
 - confirmation that the author accepts the terms set out in this invitation;
 - an indication of whether the essay is submitted in the General or Student Division (entrants in the Student Division must be currently enrolled students and provide the name of their institution and student number; the same entry may be entered in both divisions, but only one prize or commendation may be awarded per entry).



11. ACSL retains absolute discretion as to whether to award a prize in any category and, where a prize is awarded in a category, whether to award it to more than one entry (in which case the advertised prize would be shared equally). ACSL's decisions in relation to award of Prizes and commendations is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
12. Joint entries (no more than two authors) will be accepted but joint authors are to share any prize awarded.
13. Entrants to the Gary Bugden Essay Prize are expected to comply with recognised standards and principles of academic integrity in their writing. These include the avoidance of plagiarism and academic misconduct their various forms (for an example of these, see academicintegrity.unimelb.edu.au/forms-of-plagiarism).
14. All papers submitted for judging in the Prize will be analysed via A.I. checking software such as Turnitin (see www.turnitin.com). If the Chair of the judging panel is reasonably satisfied, using that software or otherwise, that there has been a contravention of recognised standards or principles of academic integrity, they will take any action they consider appropriate (in their absolute discretion) in relation to the judging of the paper, which may include rejection of the paper from the judging process or instructions to the judging panel as to the manner in which they judge the paper.
15. Entries must be submitted in WORD format and received by 4.00pm Sydney time on Friday, 30 October 2026, by online submission at acsl.net.au/gary-bugden-essay-prize . Late entries will not be forwarded to the judges. These rules are to be posted on acsl.net.au/gary-bugden-essay-prize and may be altered at any time by ACSL.
16. Please direct any queries to the Chair of the Judging Panel, Allison Benson, ACSL Committee Member, via E: generalmanager@acsl.net.au