

# Hosting Guide: AAPS Biennial Conference and the Epeli Hau'ofa Annual Memorial Lecture

## Overview

The Australian Association for Pacific Studies (AAPS) is committed to building a vibrant, trans-disciplinary community of academics, artists, activists and others engaged in Pacific studies. Our biennial lectures, and annual public lectures (the Epeli Hau'ofa Annual Memorial Lecture) are key elements of this work. We welcome expressions of interest from members interested in hosting an AAPS Conference (including the Epeli Hau'ofa Lecture for that year), or a stand-alone Epeli Hau'ofa Lecture (held as a distinct event in the Conference off-years). This document provides information about these events, and about the principles and processes that are important to consider in bidding to host one of these events.

## Values and objectives

As key spaces of face-to-face relationality and community, AAPS Conferences and Epeli Hau'ofa Annual Memorial Lectures should reflect and embody core AAPS values:

- **Commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sovereignty.** AAPS takes seriously the work of reflecting on what it means to do Pacific studies from our particular situatedness in settler-colonial Australia. We recognise and foreground Indigenous sovereignty, and the ongoing work of seeking to build good relations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues, communities, and traditional owners of Country in the places where we meet.
- **Pacific studies, not just studies of the Pacific.** We approach and seek to strengthen the work of Pacific studies as a trans-disciplinary space that centres Pacific knowledges and relationality. In the words of Terence Wesley-Smith, our commitment is to scholarship that is 'of and for the Pacific', and not simply about it.
- **Accessibility and the creation of welcoming spaces** for early career researchers, PhD researchers and other students, Pacific community representatives, elders, and others for whom the institutional spaces of the University can be exclusionary. 'Accessibility' here is envisaged as financial, cultural, and social.

## Key information about the conferences and annual lectures

### Biennial conferences

- Take place every two years, and the location should ideally move across Australia. Previous recent conferences have been held in Melbourne (2021), Canberra (2023), and Sydney (2025). These typically take place in April during the Universities Australia common holiday week.
- Typically run for 4 days, with the first day consisting of the Epeli Hau'ofa Annual Memorial Lecture for that year, and a Masterclass (3-4 hours) run by the Epeli Hau'ofa lecturer for early career researchers and PhD students. The remaining days typically include around 3 keynote presentations (individual or panel), and concurrent panels with individual papers (following a Call for Panels, and a subsequent Call for Papers, issued in the lead-up to the conference).
- Typically, the AAPS AGM (2 hours) is also held as part of the conference program.
- Past examples of conference programs can be found on our website here: <http://pacificstudies.org.au/past-conference-programs/>

### Epeli Hau'ofa Annual Memorial Lecture

- The Epeli Hau'ofa Annual Memorial Lecture was established by AAPS in 2015 to honour the legacy of the Tongan scholar, creative writer, and artist Epeli Hau'ofa. Each year, the lecture is delivered by a leading Pacific scholar whose work reflects Hau'ofa's vision of an expansive and connected Pacific. We approach scholarship broadly, as including leading thinkers in the fields of community practice, churches, and activism as well as those formally within academia.
- In conference years, the lecture takes place as part of the conference, in off-years it is a stand-alone event (with a postgraduate/ECR masterclass on the same day or the following day)
- In non-conference years the lecture would still typically be held in April, and we would typically hold the AAPS AGM at the same time.
- The Lecture is held as a free event open to the public. We do not charge ticket prices for this.
- The winners of the AAPS Tracey Banivanua Mar Prize are announced as part of the lecture.
- It is expected that the hosts will organise a video recording of the lecture, to be uploaded to our YouTube account at a later date.
- Past examples of the Epeli Hau'ofa Annual Memorial Lecture can be found on our website here: <http://pacificstudies.org.au/epeli-hauofa-annual-public-lecture/>

### **Key principles for organisers**

- Organisers carry the responsibility for the logistical delivery of the events, and have autonomy in proposing the theme and focus. We would expect decisions about key speakers, particularly selection and invitation of the Epeli Hau'ofa Lecturer, to be made in dialogue with the AAPS Executive.
- Conference Convenors, and/or the organiser of the Epeli Hau'ofa Lecture (in off-years) sit on the AAPS Executive for the period they are active in their roles.
- Conference Convenors are expected to form an organising committee, based at their institution, that is able to carry the work of organising the conference. This work is typically done voluntarily, as professional service to the field and to our Association. Organisers of the Epeli Hau'ofa Lecture (in conference off-years) should also ensure that they have capacity to undertake the work required to organise the event successfully.
- AAPS HDR Representatives, who sit on the AAPS Executive, typically lead the organisation of the postgraduate/ECR Masterclass.
- Conferences are expected to be financially self-supporting, and ideally they will generate a small return for AAPS. They should also be as financially accessible as possible for attendees (i.e. registration costs should be kept as low as is feasible). This means that securing financial sponsorship and support is a key function of the Conference Organisers. AAPS can provide seed-funding for conferences, with the expectation that this would be returned after registration income is received. This ensures the financial sustainability of the Association, and enables its ongoing work in providing space and community for Pacific studies scholars.
- AAPS also supports the organisation of the conference through funding the Guy Powles Travelling Scholarships (registration costs and up to \$800 for travel and accommodation, provided to two AAPS postgraduate members each year). We will also mobilise our extensive communication channels (email, social media, website and newsletter) to promote both the conference and the lecture.
- In conference off-years AAPS will provide some financial contribution to the organisation of the Lecture, with the expectation that organisers will secure additional financial support or sponsorship also.

## **Benefits**

Hosting an AAPS Conference or Epeli Hau'ofa Annual Memorial Lecture is a wonderful opportunity to contribute to enriching the field of Pacific studies, and to build and enjoy the richness of our community. It can also be an opportunity for organisers to bring visibility and prestige to their own Pacific studies work and interests in the context of their own institutions. And it is a terrific opportunity for building service experience and professional development, including for early and mid-career academics and for postgraduate students. AAPS gatherings are special events!

## Process

If you are interested in potentially hosting an upcoming AAPS conference and/or Epeli Hau'ofa Annual Memorial Lecture, please submit a brief expression of interest to AAPS President A/Prof Victoria Stead [victoria.stead@deakin.edu.au](mailto:victoria.stead@deakin.edu.au), also cc'ing in AAPS Secretary Talei Mangioni [talei.mangioni@anu.edu.au](mailto:talei.mangioni@anu.edu.au). This should include at least indicative details on the following:

- Proposed themes, foci and speakers;
- Anticipated costings and anticipated sources of funding (e.g. financial co-contribution from your own institution, in-kind support, potential sponsorship sources);
- Proposing institution/s, locations and possible venues;
- Proposed conference committee - who would be involved, their experience and capacity.

If you don't have all of these details to hand yet, however, don't let that stop you reaching out with queries or with an initial expression of interest. We would love to hear from you, and can always work with you to firm up the additional details.

30 May 2025.