

Sunshine Coast Council - Historian in Residence Program 2025 - 2026



Introduction

The Sunshine Coast Council has significant cultural heritage collections, which are managed by Cultural Heritage Services and the Heritage Library. These teams are responsible for preserving, interpreting, exhibiting, and making accessible council's collections for present and future generations to explore and enjoy.

Historians (including archaeologists, heritage librarians, museologists, archivists, teachers, and heritage architects) are invited to be part of Sunshine Coast Council's annual Historian in Residence Program, funded by the Arts and Heritage Levy.

The program offers qualified and experienced historians the opportunity to immerse themselves in a research project that will reveal, document, and showcase aspects of the region's history and heritage.

Outline

The Historian in Residence will undertake research into Sunshine Coast's history and heritage with specified outcomes (refer to page 2-3).

The story or stories could evolve from existing council collection items, be related to an historic event or topic (including contemporary) or respond to an identified gap in the existing body of historical work (refer to page 2). Projects can also be drawn from the council's Heritage Library collection, Bankfoot House collection, Landsborough Museum collection or council's other collection items. Additional resources include relevant online sources and material held with other organisations, such as Queensland State Archives and State Library of Queensland.

Positions

There are two positions available for the Sunshine Coast Council Historian in Residence Program. Historians may be associated predominantly with one of the following: Heritage Library (Nambour), Bankfoot House Heritage Precinct (Glass House Mountains) or Landsborough Museum (Landsborough).

The successful applicants will be contracted for a period equating to three months duration, commencing at an agreed date, and delivered by 12 June 2026.

The final decision for the topic, timeframe and schedule of payment will be negotiated between the Coordinator Cultural Heritage Services and successful applicants.

Each Historian will receive:

- Payment of \$12,500 (to be paid in instalments)
- Support from council's Coordinator Cultural Heritage Services (and nominated staff)
- A workspace (as required) at the Heritage Library (Nambour), Bankfoot House Heritage Precinct (Glass House Mountains) and Landsborough Museum (Landsborough)
- Access to physical and digital heritage collections held by council.

Application

Applicants can select one of the prioritised topics identified below or detail their own topic that identifies a gap in the knowledge of Sunshine Coast's history.

A storyline concept must be provided as part of the application. The concept should outline the theme (overall topic) and the concept of three stories that will be the focus of the historian's research (refer to outcomes page 2-3).

While we anticipate the two selected historians will utilise the resources and collections of council's heritage facilities at Bankfoot House Heritage Precinct, Landsborough Museum and the Heritage Library (Nambour), the goal of the project is to respond to identified gaps in the existing body of historical research and is likely to involve research beyond the Sunshine Coast Council's collections.

Identified topics and themes for 2025-26

- 60th Anniversary of the naming of the Sunshine Coast
 - On 1 August, 1967 the Maroochydore, Noosa and Landsborough shires officially adopted the name "Sunshine Coast", replacing the previous "Near North Coast". In 2027 the Sunshine Coast will commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the naming of the region. This name change was a significant milestone, reflecting the area's growing popularity and tourism appeal. The aim of this topic is to highlight the region's identity, showcasing its past, present and future. This theme could include and be based off:
 - Development of tourism on the Sunshine Coast
 - Photographic survey and/or regional development
 - Regional identity
 - Contemporary heritage
 - Unique groups and their contribution to the community
- Topic pertaining to Jinibara or Kabi Kabi peoples – by First Nations peoples.
- Collections-based research:
 - Medical History, local hospitals and health retreats on the Sunshine Coast - focussing on the Heritage Library collections of Dr Short, Fay Miller (Sunny Brae), and Caloundra Hospital Improvement Committee correspondence.
 - Bankfoot House Heritage Precinct Property History - the changing nature and development of the property and the surrounding landscape.

If you have a topic/theme other than what is listed above that is new and unpublished, please phone 5420 8600 or send an email to culturalheritage@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au to discuss your topic.

Note: First Nations topics must show written approval by claimant groups prior to submitting an EOI. Topics that sit outside this program may have the potential to be supported by other areas of funding.

Outcomes

The following outcomes are required of the Historian in Residence:

- Agreement with the Sunshine Coast Council on your topic and storyline to produce new work that has not been published
- Submission of **three** written stories of 1,000 words each, to be presented as a report with images and bibliography (PDF)
- Supply of images with captions and credits from the report for future application
- Supply of supporting research documentation, images and bibliography
- Participation in the following programs:
 - Publicity and promotion (including supplying a portrait photo and radio interviews)
 - Supporting council's invitation for the community to share their knowledge on the topic directly with the historian
 - Presentation of findings at the Research Revealed Historian Talks to take place at the Heritage Library and Bankfoot House Heritage Precinct or Landsborough Museum (2 presentations per historian).

The research outcomes of the Historian in Residence Program will be added to the Heritage Library collection and will be publicly accessible on council's heritage webpages (for examples, see the work of [past historians](#)).

The program will be promoted through council's media channels, including social media, and may be showcased in future public events. Historians will be asked to help promote the program via the media.

The historian will retain copyright of the material generated during the residency and will acknowledge Sunshine Coast Council as the original commissioner of the material.

Sunshine Coast Council will retain the right to publish material generated from the program in any format without further permission or remuneration.

The person

The historian ideally will:

- Hold tertiary qualifications in history or related discipline (such as archaeologists, heritage librarians, museologists, archivists, teachers and heritage architects)
- Have demonstrated experience in historical research and writing including the ability to critically assess and contextualize evidence and events of the past
- Have demonstrated ability to write effectively, engagingly and accessibly for a general audience
- Have the ability to relate to people from all backgrounds and communicate engagingly with community members

- Be familiar with the tenets of copyright, intellectual property and privacy legislation and have the ability to apply these to the creation of historical works
- Live locally or within reasonable travelling distance to the Sunshine Coast
- Have an ABN and relevant insurance.

First Nations peoples are encouraged to apply.

Applying for the position

Historians are required to submit an Expression of Interest using the **Historian in Residence Application Form**. This includes:

- Storyline concept (refer to itemised list on page 2) or your own topic
- Explanation of why the topic has been chosen referring to:
 - The collection items that have inspired the story ideas
 - How the proposed stories will enhance the existing body of documented history of the Sunshine Coast
 - How the proposed stories respond to a current event or topics
 - How the proposed story ideas will connect with the community.
- Project Plan with proposed schedule
- Three examples of work similar to that required for this program. If the work is a book, submit only a short chapter (as attachment)
- Names of two referees familiar with the applicant's research and writing skills
- Current resume/CV (as an attachment)
- Proof of insurance (as an attachment or when required).

Access the following sites to understand council's general heritage collections:

- <https://heritage.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/Bankfoot-House/Bankfoot-House-Collections>
- <https://heritage.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/landsborough-museum>
- <https://heritage.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/Collections>

Selection

A panel from Sunshine Coast Council will assess the Expressions of Interest against the above requirements, including:

- Proposal concept (such as connection to council heritage collections and Sunshine Coast's regional story)
- Qualifications, experience, and skills
- Outcome of referee checks
- Examples of prior work.

Key dates

- Expressions of Interest open: 11 July 2025
- **Expressions of Interest close: 16 August 2025**
- Successful applicants notified: early September 2025
- Project commencement: negotiated
- Preliminary research: Sept - Nov 2025 (*Payment 1*)
- Community invitation to share knowledge on historian's topic (Oct 2025 – Feb 2026)
- Historian Talks (April 2026 – one talk at Nambour Heritage Library and one talk at Bankfoot House Heritage Precinct or Landsborough Museum (*Payment 2*))
- Submission of documentation (*Payment 3*)

- Project completion: 12 June 2026.

Further enquiries

Any questions regarding the residency or the application process should be directed to:
Cultural Heritage Services: culturalheritage@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au