



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME
A U S T R A L I A

Media Release

Thursday, 5 June 2025

Notre Dame announces new research fellowship

The University of Notre Dame Australia is delighted to announce the establishment of the Williams Papworth Research Fellowship, made possible by a major philanthropic gift.

The Williams Papworth Research Fellowship is a postdoctoral research position in the University's Centre for the History of Philosophy (CHOP).

It was established through the generous support of Mrs Hilary Papworth, who donated \$230,000 to fund a four-year fellowship in memory of her late husband Mr Bill Papworth.

The fellowship is held by Dr Aden Cotterill, who comes to Notre Dame following doctoral studies at Clare Hall and the Faculty of Divinity at the University of Cambridge, where he was a World Universities Ramsay Postgraduate Scholar.

Dr Cotterill will work with researchers from the Centre for the History of Philosophy on a project titled *Zeal: An Intellectual History*.

This research project will analyse the conceptual history of zeal in European philosophy and religion, with the aim of clarifying the contemporary meaning, value and risks of zeal today.

Co-Director of the Notre Dame Centre for the History of Philosophy, Associate Professor Nathan Lyons, said the Williams Papworth Fellowship was an important initiative that would make a significant contribution to Australian and international scholarship.

"Aden Cotterill is a brilliant scholar and his research will help us all to understand better why we think the way we do about zeal and passion in our own lives and in society," he said. "Zeal can be good; but sometimes it can be bad, and paying attention to our inherited concept of zeal can help us think more clearly about its role today.

"Aden's work will be an important addition to our Centre's growing set of intellectual history projects and it's a great example of the vitality that we reckon can be found in the history of ideas—we can only think critically today by understanding how and why we came to think the way we do. Aden's project will be a fascinating demonstration of that dynamic between the past and the present.

"We are incredibly grateful to Hilary Papworth for her visionary generosity in establishing this fellowship."

Notre Dame sincerely thanks Mrs Papworth for her generous support for research at Notre Dame.

[Read more about the Centre for History of Philosophy here.](#)

Media contact: media@nd.edu.au