

MEDIA RELEASE

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Outstanding commitment to health and wellbeing celebrated as 2021 Victorian Health Promotion Awards finalists unveiled

41 incredible organisations and individuals committed to improving the health and wellbeing of their communities have been unveiled today as finalists in the 2021 Victorian Health Promotion Awards.

Victorian Minister for Health Martin Foley said the awards acknowledge extraordinary people, groups and projects that have made a vital difference to communities across Victoria in the past 2 years.

“The 2021 Victorian Health Promotion Awards recognise some of our state’s remarkable people and organisations. The 41 finalists unveiled today have gone above and beyond to support their community’s health and wellbeing during what has been an incredibly challenging time,” Minister Foley said.

“This year’s awards recognise a wide range of initiatives, many of which have supported communities to reconnect and rebuild following the impacts of the global pandemic and the 2020 bushfires.”

VicHealth CEO Dr Sandro Demaio said more than 150 outstanding organisations and individuals were nominated for awards this year.

“These awards are a chance to recognise and celebrate the inspiring individuals and dedicated organisations working tirelessly to make our communities happier and healthier,” Dr Demaio said.

“The 41 finalists include a vast range of people and projects, including those working to empower young people, deliver healthy food to communities doing it tough, and support people to take care of their mental wellbeing or get active.

2021 Victorian Health Promotion Awards finalists by category

Outstanding Health Promotion: There are many incredible organisations and programs working hard to improve community health and wellbeing. This category recognises a health promotion organisation or program that was able to be flexible and innovative in supporting people across the state to improve their health and happiness in 2019-21.

The finalists are:

- Bendigo Community Health Services – 5 Ways to Wellbeing
- Cancer Council Victoria – Achievement Program
- City of Melbourne – Smoke-free Melbourne Policy
- Geelong Cats Football Club – GMHBA Healthy Heroes
- Maribyrnong City Council – Get Active! at Home Series
- Smiling Mind – School Principal Mental Health and Wellbeing Program

Driving Health Equity: Everyone in Victoria deserves to live healthy happy lives regardless of their postcode, bank balance or background. This category recognises a health promotion organisation or program that works to support people facing greater barriers to health and wellbeing, including people with disability, people on low incomes, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from culturally diverse backgrounds, those living in regional/rural areas and people who identify as LGBTIQ+.

The finalists are:

- Banyule Community Health – We Love Stories

- Cultivating Community – Food Relief Program
- I CAN Network – National Online Group Mentoring Program
- Neami National – Wadamba Wilam
- Zoe Support Australia – Service Engagement Officer

Building Back Better: We have been challenged like never before by the global pandemic and extreme weather events, but the resilience of people across Victoria has shone through. This category recognises a health promotion organisation or program that has been creative and impactful in supporting recovery and improving the health and wellbeing of their community following the impact of coronavirus and/or the bushfires.

The finalists are:

- Central Highlands Association of Neighbourhood Houses – Wellbeing Scripts System Building
- cohealth – Cooking, Recovery and Connections
- Flemington Mission – Caring for our Community
- Mirboo Country Development Inc – BooFIIT
- North Richmond Community Health – High Risk Accommodation Response

Future Healthy Award: Supporting young people's health and wellbeing now sets them up for a healthy future. This category recognises a health promotion organisation or program working with Victoria's young people to improve their health and wellbeing.

The finalists are:

- Asking For Trouble – Art Attack
- Bicycle Network – Open Streets
- Brophy Family and Youth Services – STOKED
- Kids Thrive – Various programs
- Monash University – Healthy Eating, Active Living Matters (HEALing Matters) Program

Community Legend: Volunteers are the heart and soul of our communities. This category recognises the individuals and groups working in health promotion who dedicate their time, passion and energy to improve the health and wellbeing of their community.

The finalists are:

- Gina Poulos – founder of Theodora House Inc
- Joanne Watkins – event director of Albert Melbourne parkrun
- Josh Collings – founder of the Acres & Acres Cooperative
- Volunteers for the Phillip Island Community and Learning Centre Inc
- Volunteers behind Port Welcomers

Leading Health Promotion Research: Research changes lives. This category recognises a researcher/team that has conducted invaluable health promotion research, contributing significantly to our knowledge about what works to prevent chronic disease and improve health and wellbeing of people across Victoria.

The finalists are:

- GLOBE – Global Obesity Centre – Australia’s Food Environment Dashboard
- La Trobe University – FitSkills Partnership Project
- Monash University – Supporting LGBTIQ+ inclusion in community sport
- National Ageing Research Institute – ENJOY
- Turning Point – SWiPE-app

Outstanding Media Reporting: A powerful media story can be the catalyst for real change. This category recognises a journalist that has delivered accurate, impactful and/or compelling health promotion reporting, helping people to increase control over their health and wellbeing.

The finalists are:

- 9News Melbourne’s Coping With Covid series – Emily Rice
- ABC Radio Melbourne’s Life and Other Catastrophes (various segments) – Raf Epstein, Jane Fisher, Erin Mathews, Tess Armstrong, Nadia Hume, Jess Lukjanow and Ross Richardson
- ABC Radio Melbourne’s The Conversation Hour (various health-related episodes) – Richelle Hunt and Jonathon Kendall
- Geelong Advertiser (various health-related articles) – Tamara McDonald

Excellence in Health Promotion Marketing: The way we communicate about health and wellbeing matters. This category acknowledges an effective and innovative health promotion campaign and/or communications activity.

The finalists are:

- Alcohol and Drug Foundation – You Haven't Been Drinking Alone Campaign
- Centre for Non-Violence – You Are Not Alone Campaign
- enliven Victoria – Food From Home Campaign
- Peninsula Health – Feed Happiness Campaign
- Smiling Mind – Feeling It! Campaign
- Thorne Harbour Health – Drama Downunder Seasons Campaign

About the 2021 Victorian Health Promotion Awards

The new-look Victorian Health Promotion Awards celebrate and champion the achievements of volunteers, grassroots initiatives, ground-breaking research and everything in between.

2021 sees the introduction of new categories, including the Future Healthy Award and Community Legend Award.



While we acknowledge the incredible efforts of frontline health workers during the pandemic, these awards are about celebrating the broader health and wellbeing initiatives that have taken place across the state.

Winners will be announced in early 2022.

For information, please visit vichealth.vic.gov.au/awards or email awards@vichealth.vic.gov.au

MEDIA CONTACT: Tony Wells, PR Lead, twells@vichealth.vic.gov.au