

VicHealth Impact Research Grants 2021

Application Guidelines

About the grant:

VicHealth is seeking applications for research grant funding for our Impact Research Grants funding scheme. The purpose of these research grants is to generate new and relevant evidence that will have a direct influence on health promotion policy and/or practice to ultimately improve the health and wellbeing outcomes of the Victorian community.

Research Grant Priority:

Building Back Better - Guiding an Equitable Recovery for Victorians

The coronavirus pandemic has brought disruption to every aspect of our lives. While no Victorian has remained unaffected, certain individuals, families and communities have been harder hit than others (read our [VicHealth Coronavirus Wellbeing Impact Study](#)). In recovery, there is an opportunity to build back better and build back fairer – reimagining our communities and societies to be healthier, more equitable and more sustainable. There is a much-needed role for bold, timely and innovative research to guide us through recovery and we would like to hear your ideas.

Responding to the health promotion needs of Victorians now and into the future, proposals **must**:

- have a strong equity focus,
- work in partnership with relevant policy makers and practitioners, and
- aim to meaningfully engage communities through embedding co-design principles.

We are particularly interested in research ideas that will lead to improvements in mental wellbeing, physical activity and healthy eating for the Victorian community.

The equity focus refers to the fundamental notion that everyone should have a fair opportunity to attain their full health potential and that no one should be disadvantaged from achieving this potential if it can be avoided. Inequities are the observed differences between population groups (e.g. a subpopulation group and the Victorian population) that stem from socioeconomic, political and cultural drivers of social position (see [Fair Foundations: The VicHealth framework for health equity](#)). This research grant round is focused on identifying equity enhancing approaches to address inequity, that is, those aimed at closing the gap in outcomes for different population groups. This may mean providing additional support for people experiencing disadvantage in order to achieve equal outcomes or tackling the underlying drivers of inequity.

Regarding partnership, we know that strategic research project partnerships between researchers, policy makers and practitioners will result in research outcomes that have the greatest potential for real world impact. Therefore, applications with strong contributions from policy or practice partners are required. This includes policy makers and/or practitioners being actively involved in guiding the development of the research design, delivery of the research and dissemination of findings.

What's on offer:

VicHealth Impact Research Grants will provide up to \$200,000 in funding over two (2) years for a maximum of five projects. Funding will commence in July 2021.

Eligibility criteria

The following are mandatory eligibility criteria for VicHealth Impact Research Grants :

- applications must be submitted from researchers at an eligible administering institution, that is, a university or a research institution linked to a university as defined by the NHMRC*
- have an Australian Business Number and a bank account for Electronic Funds Transfer of grant funds
- deliver activities or products solely in Victoria, with a primary focus on undertaking health and wellbeing activities that achieve positive outcomes for the Victorian community
- be able to work in partnership with VicHealth and others
- if applicable, have satisfactorily fulfilled the requirements of any previous and/or current grants from VicHealth
- have insurance cover, including professional indemnity or public liability insurance, for the purpose of this project and agree to provide insurance certificates if requested by VicHealth
- not be subject to any current or impending legal action which could impact its financial viability
- must not have a relationship with the tobacco industry within the past five years. Learn more about VicHealth's Harmful Industry Relationships Funding and Procurement Policy.

* VicHealth is committed to working with Indigenous communities and views Indigenous-led research as key to self-determination and to improving the health and wellbeing of Indigenous Australians. VicHealth will accept applications for an Impact Research Grant from Indigenous-led organisations that do not meet the definition of administering institution. Applications from Indigenous-led organisations must include an academic partner with an affiliation to an Australian university.

What can VicHealth Impact Research Grant funding be used for?

VicHealth will consider Impact Research Grant proposals that:

- address the requirements outlined in the 'Building Back Better - Guiding an Equitable Recovery for Victorians' research priority outline.
- demonstrate active involvement of policy makers and/or practitioners.
- have a direct influence on health promotion or primary prevention policy and/or practice to ultimately improve the health and wellbeing outcomes of the Victorian community.
- include PhD students or early career researchers as this will support the development of a workforce of researchers with applied 'industry' experience.

VicHealth will not fund:

- biomedical and clinical research that does not have a clear link to health promotion
- laboratory-based science or health services research *unless* there is a strong rationale for its relevance to health promotion
- research which is unrelated to the 'Building Back Better - Guiding an Equitable Recovery for Victorians' research priority outline
- capital works (e.g. buildings or maintenance or purchase of major equipment, purchase and lease of land/vehicles)
- commercial activities or individual persons
- core organisational operating costs
- projects that are considered by VicHealth to be the funding responsibility of local, state or federal government (e.g. population-based surveillance)
- researchers or organisations with a relationship with the tobacco industry within the last 5 years
- projects that have commenced or have already been funded to commence
- videos, films, publications, conferences or travel in isolation of the specific project
- international travel or international conference registration

Harmful Industry Relationships

All applicants are required to declare harmful industry relationships.

Funding will NOT be granted if you, your research team, or your organisation* has had a relationship with the tobacco industry within the past five years. If this has occurred you are **ineligible** to apply.

If you, your research team, or your organisation* has had a relationship with the gambling, alcohol, food or sugary drink industry within the past 12 months, you **must declare** this.

Providing a declaration DOES NOT automatically preclude the applicant from being eligible for funding. For more information, see the [VicHealth Harmful Industry Relationship Funding and Procurement Policy](#).

*For universities, you must declare relationships at the school-level at a minimum. It is preferable however that relationships within the relevant faculty/college are also declared.

Application process

Applications must be completed online via an application form through the new VicHealth Stakeholder portal. Applicants are required to submit a full application to be considered for funding.

Applications **open at 12:00 midday, Tuesday 16th February 2021** and **close at 12:00 midday AEST on Monday 22nd March 2021**.

Application assessment

Applications will go through a multi-stage assessment process involving VicHealth staff and external content experts.

Impact Research Grant applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

Stage 1: Applications will be assessed for eligibility and shortlisted by VicHealth according to whether they adequately address 3 criteria: a. alignment with the research grant priority area, b. have potential to directly influence health promotion policy and practice in Victoria, and c. have potential to improve the health and wellbeing of Victorians.

Stage 2: Shortlisted applications will be assessed by a panel of academic peer reviewers who hold a PhD and have expertise in public health or health promotion policy and practice focused research. Shortlisted applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Scientific quality of the proposal and methodology. (35%)
- Benefit and potential scalable impact for direct application to health promotion policy and/or practice. (35%)
- Viability of the project considering team expertise and resourcing, e.g. budget; timeline; organisational capacity to deliver. (20%)
- Demonstrated partnerships with practitioners and/or policy makers to address a real-world health promotion problem. (10%)

Stage 3: An assessment panel of research, policy and practice experts in the field of health promotion and public health will review the applications and the peer review assessments. They will make a recommendation to the CEO of VicHealth regarding which applications are most likely to generate new and relevant evidence that will have a direct influence on health promotion policy and/or practice and improve the health and wellbeing outcomes of Victorians.

If a harmful industry relationship has been declared, this will be assessed and considered throughout the assessment process.

Applicants will be notified of assessment outcomes by the end of July 2021.

Attachments and supporting documentation

Mandatory

- a. Research team and partners template: List of research team members, list of policy or practice partners, and a 100-word biography for 5 leading research team members, summarising their experiences and expertise relevant to the application.
- b. Budget template – this must be completed and included in the application.
- c. Evidence of partnerships - Up to three documents confirming in-principle support from key policy and/or practice partners can be uploaded to support your application.
- d. Certification by Research Office of University and Head of Department - VicHealth requires the endorsement of the Head of Department and Research Administration Officer for your application to be considered.

Please note: A VicHealth Partnership Grant contract departure proposal form may also be required if your organisation is unable to comply with any clause detailed in the standard VicHealth Funding Agreement Terms and Conditions

If you are successful

Successful applicants are required to:

- Enter into a Funding Agreement with VicHealth and comply with its Terms and Conditions
- Comply with data collection requirements as requested by VicHealth
- Measure differential impact on sub-populations
- Submit progress and final reports in the format prescribed by VicHealth
- Submit financial acquittals
- Participate in face-to-face progress meetings
- Develop a knowledge translation plan and deliver activities as detailed in the plan
- Acknowledge VicHealth in all communications
- Maintain appropriate insurances throughout the partnership period.

Recommended reading

Before applying, we recommend you read and understand the following documents:

Name	Why is it recommended?
VicHealth Action Agenda 2019-23 and Strategies for imperatives	VicHealth’s Action Agenda for Health Promotion provides context for the work of VicHealth.
VicHealth Coronavirus Wellbeing Impact Study: Follow-up Survey	This survey of 2000 Victorians was conducted in May/June and September 2020. It provides valuable insights into the impact of the pandemic on Victorian’s health and wellbeing, and how this impact varied across sub-populations.
Fair Foundations Framework	A conceptual and planning tool to guide action on the social determinants of health inequities.
Partnership Analysis Tool	VicHealth’s most-downloaded resource. This tool helps organisations understand different purposes for collaboration, reflect on established partnerships and focus on ways to strengthen new and existing partnerships.

[VicHealth Harmful Industry Relationship Funding and Procurement Policy](#)

This webpage provides an overview of VicHealth's Harmful Industry Relationship Funding and Procurement Policy, when a declaration is required and how they will be assessed.

Still have questions?

- If you've read the 2021 Impact Research Grant Guidelines, including relevant documents under the 'Recommended reading' section, and still have questions, please submit an enquiry via researchgrants@vichealth.vic.gov.au.
- Please note: We are unable to provide advice or feedback on your ideas, however, we can clarify the intention of the grant round and the outcomes it is trying to achieve.