

VicHealth Innovation Research Grant 2017

Guidelines for Applicants

For funding commencing in 2018

VicHealth is calling for grant applications for innovative research that relate to the strategic imperatives outlined in the VicHealth **Action Agenda for Health Promotion 2013-2023**, specifically the **2016 Update**, and VicHealth's research priorities outlined on page three of these guidelines.

There will be a two-stage application process to VicHealth. Applications will be rigorously assessed before funding in principle is offered. If successful, funding will commence in April/May 2018.

VicHealth will provide up to \$200,000 over two years for each project. Up to three (3) projects will be funded in this round.

Submission of applications

Applications must be submitted from researchers at an eligible administering institution in Victoria. Please see the frequently asked questions for further information.

Applications must be submitted using the online application form available on the VicHealth [website](#).

Acknowledgement will be by return email. Please email jschirmer@vichealth.vic.gov.au if you do not receive a confirmation email.

If you have any problems using the online application form please contact our help desk on (03) 9667 1380 or email helpdesk@vichealth.vic.gov.au.

Late applications will not be accepted.

Before applying, please ensure you have thoroughly read and understood both the Terms and Conditions and these guidelines.

Important information

Key dates

Opening date for Stage 1: Expression of Interest	9am, Monday 2 October
Closing date for Stage 1: Expression of Interest	3pm, Thursday 26 October
Announcement of shortlisted applications for Stage 2: VicHealth Full Application	Wednesday 15 November
Opening date for Stage 2: VicHealth Full Application	9am, Thursday 16 November
Closing date for Stage 2: VicHealth Full Application	3pm, Wednesday 13 December
Peer review process	December 2017–March 2018
Announcement	Mid-March 2018
Commencement of VicHealth funding	April/May 2018

About VicHealth

VicHealth is a pioneer in health promotion. We work with partners to discover, implement and share solutions to the health problems facing Victorians. We seek a Victoria where everyone enjoys better health and wellbeing.

VicHealth is the champion of health for all Victorians. We work to keep people healthy, happy and well – preventing chronic disease and keeping people out of the medical system.

VicHealth is committed to five strategic imperatives that have the greatest potential to reduce disease burden and bring about the greatest measurable health gains. These are: promoting healthy eating, encouraging regular physical activity, preventing tobacco use, preventing harm from alcohol and improving mental wellbeing.

Health promotion is a powerful, cost-effective and efficient way to maintain a healthier community. It enables people to increase control over and improve their health. Rather than focusing on people at risk for specific diseases, health promotion involves the population as a whole in the context of their everyday lives. Activities are geared toward promoting health and preventing ill-health.

For further information about VicHealth, check our website: www.vichealth.vic.gov.au

About the VicHealth Innovation Research Grant

The VicHealth Innovation Research Grant provides an opportunity for research teams to discover how to accelerate health promotion in Victoria. This scheme will fund researchers to trial a unique idea, research a new concept or methodology, or develop new insights and evidence with the aim of influencing the theory, policy and practice of health promotion. Researchers will undertake a two-year research project addressing specific research priorities related to the [VicHealth Action Agenda for Health Promotion strategic imperatives](#) - promoting healthy eating, encouraging regular physical activity, preventing (or reducing) tobacco use, preventing harm from alcohol and improving mental wellbeing.

VicHealth is seeking submissions that aim to generate knowledge that can be easily translated and used for health promotion practice, particularly projects designed to address health inequities in areas that are aligned to the [VicHealth Action Agenda for Health Promotion](#). Applicants are advised to read VicHealth's Action Agenda for Health Promotion to ensure their application is aligned with our approach, goals and priorities before applying.

VicHealth is an active partner in collaborative, action-orientated research for health promotion in Victoria. Successful applications must demonstrate the capacity to generate research findings that are immediately useful for health promotion policy and/or practice and must engage in knowledge translation activities with VicHealth.

The funding available for this round will allow up to three (3) projects to be funded for up to \$200,000 per project over two years. Funding and projects are expected to commence by mid-2018.

Health Equity Focus

VicHealth will prioritise the funding of research that will help strengthen approaches to improving health equity and result in more equitable outcomes for Victorians. By world standards, most Victorians enjoy good health and our life expectancy is one of the highest in the world.

However, good health is not distributed evenly in the community. People with low incomes, limited education or unskilled occupations, those from culturally diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal people, women, people with a disability and LGBTI communities often experience poorer health than the rest of the population.

To achieve health equity, we need to address the underlying drivers of health and wellbeing and the social processes that distribute them unequally across society.

Fair Foundations: the VicHealth framework for health equity is a tool which describes how the differences in health and wellbeing outcomes between sub-population groups in the Victorian community are the result of the complex interplay of deep structural drivers of health and the social position occupied by these sub-population groups. People in lower social positions generally have reduced access to the resources required for good health when compared to the general population.

See '[Fair Foundations: the VicHealth framework for health equity](#)' for more information.

Applying to VicHealth

Project Criteria

To be considered for funding:

- Projects MUST contribute to the evidence base for achievement of at least one of the five VicHealth strategic imperatives, particularly our three year priorities and ten year goals. Please refer to [VicHealth's Action Agenda for Health Promotion](#) on pages 24 to 35 for more information.
- Projects MUST address one or more of the five VicHealth specific research priorities on the next page (3).
- We will NOT fund biomedical and clinical research that does not have a clear link to health promotion. In particular, we will not fund laboratory-based science, medical devices or health services research unless there is a strong rationale for its relevance to health promotion.

Research Priorities

Healthy eating

VicHealth will prioritise funding research that aims to advance our understanding of how to enable more Victorians to adopt a healthier diet, with an emphasis on groups who have the poorest diets as well as environments that influence food choices. VicHealth is seeking submissions that have the potential to contribute to changes in policy and practice — particularly those that focus on increasing fruit and vegetable consumption, and on reducing junk food promotion.

Physical activity

VicHealth will prioritise funding research that explores new ways of engaging Victorians in physical activity as part of daily living, for example through walking and active recreation. We focus on people who are inactive or somewhat active. These include groups where social drivers contribute to low physical activity levels, such as people with a disability, indigenous Australians, socio-economically disadvantaged groups and females. We also focus on life stages where reduction in physical activity levels occur, in particular amongst young people. VicHealth invites submissions that will advance our understanding in these areas, particularly submissions that have the potential to contribute to changes in policy and practice.

Tobacco

VicHealth will prioritise funding research that explores approaches to motivate and support people to quit smoking. These approaches must target people from population groups where smoking remains disproportionately high. VicHealth is seeking submissions that can contribute to changes in policy and practice with a view to accelerating reduction in smoking rates.

Alcohol

VicHealth will prioritise funding research to test interventions in physical and social environments that aim to change behavioural norms and minimise harm associated with risky drinking. VicHealth is seeking submissions that address these factors with a view to identifying effective approaches that can accelerate change through application in policy and practice.

Mental wellbeing

VicHealth will prioritise funding of research that endeavours to increase the protective factors for mental wellbeing. Specifically, VicHealth will prioritise research that will generate evidence of what works in; youth participation and co-design for mental wellbeing; building social connection and resilience and reducing loneliness particularly among vulnerable young people; and programs that work across multiple domains concurrently, such as community, school and individuals, to maximise impacts.

Other criteria

To ensure VicHealth funds impartial and high quality research free from real, potential or perceived conflicts of interest, all applicants are required to declare conflicts of interests when applying for research funding.

If a conflict of interest is declared, applicants are required to propose how the conflict will be managed so as to maintain confidence in the research.

A declared conflict of interest generally DOES NOT automatically preclude the applicant from being eligible for funding. VicHealth will assess all declared conflicts of interest on a case-by-case basis. However, VicHealth will not grant funding if any of the researchers and/or their host organisations are in or have been in receipt of:

- i. Any support from a tobacco company, the Australian Tobacco Research Foundation, or other like bodies. Note, e-cigarette companies, fully or partially owned by the tobacco industry, are also considered tobacco companies.
- ii. Funding for RESEARCH purposes from an alcohol company over the last five years. 'Alcohol company' is defined as the commercial company involved in the production of alcoholic beverages.

In the interests of equity, funding may be prioritised towards applicants who are not currently in receipt of VicHealth funding for any other project.

Please note, Research Officers, Research Assistants, and current PhD students cannot usually apply as Chief Investigator for these grants.

Projects funded under this grant must be conducted in Victoria, and be about Victorians. The administering organisation may be based interstate.

What will not be funded

VicHealth will not fund:

- Biomedical and clinical research that does not have a clear link to health promotion. In particular, we will not fund laboratory-based science, medical devices or health services research unless there is a strong rationale for its relevance to health promotion.
- Research which is unrelated to the research priorities listed in these guidelines.
- 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).
- Organisations that accept any form of sponsorship or support from tobacco companies, or research income from the alcohol industry.
- Projects that have commenced or have already been funded to commence.
- Videos, films, publications, conferences or travel in isolation of the specific project.

Process

The VicHealth Innovation Research Grant will be conducted via a two stage application process. We are not seeking fully developed proposals in the first instance.

Stage 1: Expression of Interest

Applicants can apply online by completing a short EOI which will cover:

- Administering organisation details.
- Project Contact/Chief Investigator.
- Project title.
- Research team.
- VicHealth strategic imperative, focus area and research priority addressed.
- Project summary - a brief overview of methodology, objectives, expected outcomes and policy and practice implications.
- Innovative component of the research.

Stage 2: VicHealth Full Application

Shortlisted applicants will be required to complete a VicHealth Full Application which will be rigorously assessed.

Applications for Stage 1 and Stage 2 will be via an online application form on our website, under '[Funding - Innovation Research Grants](#)'.

Selection criteria and assessment

Stage 1: EOI applications will be assessed for eligibility and shortlisted by senior VicHealth staff against the following criteria:

Criteria	Weighting
Potential to deliver significant new knowledge or fill a gap in knowledge, in alignment with VicHealth's research priorities	60%
Potential impact on policy and practice in Victoria	40%

Successful applicants will be asked to complete a full application to VicHealth via our online application form (Stage 2).

Stage 2: Full applications will be assessed by two external experts who hold a PhD in the specific or broader field of the proposed research project, on the basis of established selection criteria. Conflict of interest processes are managed and transparent.

Stage 2 applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

Criteria	Weighting
Potential to deliver significant new knowledge or fill a gap in knowledge, in alignment with VicHealth's research priorities	40%
Potential practical application and/or policy relevance of the research outcomes	30%
The degree to which the project addresses health inequities	20%
The applicant's track record in research, expertise in the area of enquiry and knowledge translation	10%

A panel will make the final decision on successful applications based on the alignment with the above criteria and external reviews.

Funding available

VicHealth will provide up to \$200,000 cash per project over two years. In this round, up to three (3) projects will be funded. Expenditure must be justified in Stage 2 and VicHealth reserves the right to negotiate with successful applicants in relation to their requested funds. Funding and projects are expected to commence in April/May 2018.

Grant conditions

All applicants are required to accept the Terms and Conditions relating to the grant. In addition, the successful applicants will be required to enter into a Standard Funding Agreement with VicHealth and must:

- Agree on a partnership project plan.
- Produce an annual progress report after the first full year of funding.
- Complete a final report.
- Complete a 3000-5000 word research summary.
- Comply with VicHealth branding, acknowledgment and publication guidelines.
- Comply with VicHealth evaluation and reporting processes.

Research summary reports must be suitable for publication on the VicHealth website, within three months of the end of the funding period. Funding recipients may also be requested to participate in VicHealth research forums or further evaluation activities.

Funding agreements

By submitting an application, you agree to be bound by the Terms and Conditions and the VicHealth Standard Funding Agreement if successful in receiving VicHealth funding. For a copy of the funding agreement, please email jschirmer@vichealth.vic.gov.au.

The conditions of funding within these documents relates to:

- timely completion of the project
- appropriate financial management, and
- compliance with VicHealth evaluation and reporting processes.

In addition to these conditions, it is expected that successful applicants will work closely with VicHealth staff to set additional project-specific deliverables and requirements, such as a projects plan and meeting schedule.

Further information

Applicants are advised to consult the 2017 VicHealth Innovation Research Grant FAQs and Terms and Conditions on the VicHealth funding page.

If you have queries after reading these documents, or wish to speak with VicHealth staff regarding the VicHealth Innovation Research Grant, please email Jessica Schirmer on jschirmer@vichealth.vic.gov.au

Victorian Health Promotion Foundation
PO Box 154 Carlton South
Victoria 3053 Australia
T +61 3 9667 1333 F +61 3 9667 1375

vichealth@vichealth.vic.gov.au vichealth.vic.gov.au



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