

A CREATIVE SOLUTION TO GENDER INEQUALITY

Health promotion foundation VicHealth is hoping to use art to combat gender inequality with up to \$300,000 in new funding announced today as part of its Gender Equality Through the Arts initiative.

Councils partnering with organisations and individual artists working in the arts and creative industries are encouraged to apply for the [grants](#) of up to \$85,000 which open today.

Minister for Women Gabrielle Williams said the funding was about shifting community attitudes on gender equality.

“To achieve gender equality in Victoria we need to work with sectors that influence community attitudes and the arts sector is one important place to do this,” Minister Williams said.

VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter said the arts had an important role in disrupting gender stereotypes and shining a light on unhealthy attitudes and behaviours that lead to gender inequality and violence against women.

“Artists have enormous potential to drive social change. Throughout history we’ve seen the power of art to alter social norms, such as music during the civil rights movement and film and theatre changing the way we thought about AIDS and HIV in the nineties,” Ms Rechter said.

“We believe that women and girls deserve the same opportunities to experience good health and wellbeing as men.

“Gender inequality is the key driver of violence against women – which is the leading contributor to death and disability in Australian women.

“This funding will allow councils to partner with a diverse range of arts organisations like theatre companies, music groups, festival organisers and filmmakers to inspire locals to reconsider their views on gender inequality and family violence.

“Whether its dance, music, visual art or theatre – we want to inspire the community to think about gender equality in a different light and question some of the outdated and dangerous stereotypes many of us take for granted.”

Ms Rechter said councils were in a unique position to develop local solutions to a global issue like gender inequality.

“Local councils have a deep understanding of the issues impacting their communities and significant reach across diverse groups and local partners,” she said.

“These grants are about using the transformative power of the arts to celebrate Victorian women and girls as independent leaders, and as equal, capable and valued members of the community.

“Promoting gender equality is a key priority of VicHealth and state and local government so we’re excited about partnering with councils to taking a new approach to make our state healthier and more equal.”

VicHealth’s Gender Equality Through the Arts grants open today and close Friday 8 February 2019. Councils can apply at <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/funding/gender-equality-arts>

Councils and arts organisations keen to find out more about the funding can also [register for an information session](#) held on Thursday 13 December.