

AND THE WINNER IS: WOMEN AND SOCIAL SPORTS

The first round of VicHealth's new-look Active Club Grants will offer more sport opportunities for women and girls, and social or modified sport programs across the state, through \$400,000 in funding to get people moving in fun, flexible and social environments.

As part of VicHealth's long-term plan to get more Victorians living healthier and happier lives, Active Club Grants are providing funding of up to \$3,000 to 136 community sport clubs and up to \$10,000 to 9 community sport clubs throughout Victoria.

Active Club Grants have been supporting local clubs in remote, rural, regional and metropolitan areas for nearly three decades. However, female participation is still lower than males, and due to a lack of time, lack of confidence, and societal pressures, many Victorians just aren't fitting the recommended 2.5 hours of moderate physical activity into their week.

That's why VicHealth has prioritised two new focus areas:

- **Female participation:** A key area for VicHealth because we know female participation levels in sport and recreational clubs are much lower than males. To successfully apply for this grant, clubs had to demonstrate how they will get more women and girls involved in physical activity, through new or recently established programs, activities and opportunities.
- **Participation in social and modified forms of sport:** Clubs could also apply for funding to start up a social or modified sport program where they were able to demonstrate how a modified program will attract more people to be regularly physically active. Social sport includes more flexible, fun and less-structured opportunities with a focus on social interaction, and less emphasis on performance, results and competition.

Victorian Minister for Health, Jill Hennessy, said: "We want everyone to get active and embrace a healthy lifestyle, no matter what age or ability.

"Congratulations to all of our grassroots clubs who have won this grant to get more people moving and involved in new and fun social ways of playing sport.

"For too long female sport participation rates have been lower than males. We're fixing that, creating more opportunities for women and girls to play sport and building the world-class facilities they deserve," Ms Hennessy said.

VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter said the new focus of Active Club Grants will inspire more Victorians to make physical activity a routine part of everyday life, and these programs will make a lasting impact into the future.

"Our research shows many Victorians are not fitting the recommended amount of moderate physical activity into their week. Physical activity participation rates are down because of a lack of suitable opportunities and difficulty choosing physical activity over other commitments like family, education and work.

"With these Active Club Grants, VicHealth is helping Victoria's local sport clubs provide a wider range of opportunities for everyone to get active, regardless of ability.

We've seen clubs put a lot of thought into how they can offer competitions and programs for women and girls within their club. In particular, we have seen many football, cricket and soccer clubs offering new opportunities, in response to the growing momentum of female participation within their sport.

"Non-traditional, social and modified sports are also becoming an increasingly popular choice, and some of the successful clubs in this grants round will use innovative and creative ways to fit physical activity into our busy daily routines.

Some of the new programs include a junior ten pin bowling initiative using carpet floors called 'Bowl Patrol', a wheelchair basketball program, a mums and bubs tennis program and a variation on lawn bowls called 'Jack Attack'.

"We can't wait to see clubs across Victoria putting these grants to work and trialling a range of exciting new programs and innovative ideas." Ms Rechter said.

VicHealth encourages all eligible Victorian clubs to apply for Active Club Grants Round 2. As usual, special consideration is given to applications from clubs in areas of socioeconomic disadvantage, or where communities have suffered hardship such as floods, drought or bushfires.

For further information visit www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/activeclub.

Round 2 opens on Monday 6 February 2017, and closes at 4pm, Friday 10 March.

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