

VicHealth Impact Research Grants 2023

Guidelines

The [Victorian Health Promotion Foundation \(VicHealth\)](#) is a pioneer in health promotion. Founded in 1987 as the world's first health promotion foundation, we enable people and communities to increase control over and improve their health. Our primary focus is promoting good health and preventing chronic disease, by reducing and eliminating the barriers to healthy lives and futures.

We create and fund world-class programs and initiatives, and produce and support innovative health promotion campaigns. We provide transformational expertise and insights to policy-makers and practitioners, and we support vital research to advance health promotion in Victoria.

For more than thirty years, VicHealth has been investing in innovative research and evidence to inform policies and programs that can shape healthier communities. Through our Impact Research Grants, we support and champion research that have the highest potential to influence policy and practice and contribute to sustainable and fairer health and wellbeing outcomes for all Victorians.

About the Impact Research Grants 2023: Catalysing action for a healthier and fairer Victoria

How might we leverage existing knowledge to create real-world improvements to the health and wellbeing of all Victorians?

Many promising health promotion research projects gain support to be initiated and piloted, but later on, due to a lack of available funds – or other reasons beyond their control – they are discontinued or disrupted. These interruptions mean that the potential of hard-won health promotion knowledge, community efforts, and investments are not fully realised. These losses are especially significant when research projects have already established an impressive track record for impact and have high translational value for supporting evidence-informed policy and practice.

In 2023, our Impact Research Grants round aims to focus our investment on this gap. We will fund research proposals that can build on an already initiated body of work and catalyse its potential to create greater health promotion impacts in the real world.

For this round, **the priority themes are:**

Area	Theme
Healthy and sustainable food systems	Place-based systems interventions focusing on increasing equitable access to nutritious and affordable food from sustainable food systems
Active communities and sport	Improvements in the built and social environment to promote physical activity in geographic areas or communities that experience greater systemic inequities
Social connection and mental wellbeing	Community-centred, strength-based models to improve mental wellbeing of people and communities facing significant systemic inequities
Climate, environment and health	Place-based research to support improved community health, wellbeing, and resilience in areas in Victoria that are more vulnerable to climate change impacts

In addition to addressing at least one of the priority themes, proposals must satisfy the following criteria:

Criteria	What it means
1. Build on a successfully initiated research project	<p>Proposals must demonstrate how they will build on existing evidence and a previously initiated body of work. Applicants must outline how additional IRG funding will catalyse the potential impact of the research project by enabling it to advance further in its implementation, for example, enabling uptake by additional community and/or population groups (which may take a demographic and/or place-based focus).</p> <p><i>We will favour research proposals that demonstrate the strongest potential for implementation, scalability, and having a direct influence on health promotion policy and/or practice to improve the health and wellbeing outcomes of Victorians.</i></p>
2. Embed equity considerations throughout all stages of the research project	<p>Proposals must clearly articulate the community and/or population groups that are more likely to benefit from the proposed research.</p> <p>VicHealth is committed to health equity and to enabling all Victorians to have the means to living a good and healthy life, regardless of cultural background, gender, sexual orientation, ability, income, educational attainment, occupation or location.</p>

	<p>We prioritise the funding of research which will help strengthen approaches to increasing health equity. For more information on our approach, see VicHealth’s Fair Foundations: the VicHealth framework for health equity.</p> <p>Applications must address how equity considerations have been considered in all parts of the research project – from the conceptualization and design, to data collection and analysis, implementation considerations, and translation of the research.</p>
<p>3. Actively work in partnership with policy makers, practitioners, and communities</p>	<p>Proposals must demonstrate active and genuine partnerships by detailing the proposed roles and contributions of policy, practice and community team members. For projects with significant community involvement, clearly describe the proposed methodologies and benefits to participating communities . When involving communities, clearly describe the relevant methodologies and how they benefit them.</p>
<p>4. Specify how the research findings will be strategically disseminated and communicated to communities, policy makers, practitioners and the public more broadly</p>	<p>To accelerate research uptake and encourage the greatest possible impact on policy and practice, proposals will need to consider knowledge translation strategies from the outset. Proposals must outline how key stakeholders will be involved and made aware of your research findings and knowledge as your project progresses.</p> <p><i>We will favour proposals which articulate how the intended audiences will be involved in the design, development and progression of your research translation strategy.</i></p>

Whilst not mandatory, we will strongly favour applications that can demonstrate collaboration across disciplines, integrating various forms of knowledge (including lived expertise) and a wide range of expertise from fields such as public health, law, sociology, public administration, and political science, among others.

What's on offer?

VicHealth has invested in seventeen Impact Research Grants since 2018 and we are excited about expanding this program in 2023. Some key benefits of the 2023 round include:

- Funding between \$180,000–\$230,000, for research projects to be conducted over 18 to 24 months. We anticipate that up to five grants will be given in this round, with projects to commence by July 2023.
- Access to our Victorian Health Promotion Hub – co-located with VicHealth's offices in Melbourne's CBD. As a grant recipient and VicHealth partner, you'll be able to book a range of workspaces and meeting rooms and connect with other health promotion partners, researchers, and the VicHealth team.
- Access to training opportunities to enhance the knowledge translation and health communications potential of your project .

Eligibility criteria

Applications must be submitted by researchers based in Victoria, from:

- A Victorian [Administering Institution](#) (a university, or a research institution linked to a university, that is an existing Administering Institution as defined by the NHMRC, whose main business location is in Victoria), OR
- An Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander-led organisation, as long as the application includes an academic partner with an affiliation to a Victorian Administering Institution (as defined above). The academic partner must provide a Letter of Support confirming their support as part of the application.

VicHealth is committed to working with Indigenous communities and views Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led research central to self-determination and to just and equitable health and wellbeing outcomes in Victoria. VicHealth will accept applications for an Impact Research Grant from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led organisations that do not hold Administering Institution status with the NHMRC. Applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led organisations must include an academic partner, with an affiliation to a Victorian Administering Institution.

The following are additional mandatory eligibility criteria for organisations applying for VicHealth Impact Research Grants.

Organisations must:

- Have an Australian Business Number (ABN) and a bank account for Electronic Funds Transfer of grant funds
- Undertake research activities 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
- Hold all necessary insurances, including Worksafe certificate of currency and public liability insurance of \$2 million per event for the proposed project, or, if insurance is not currently held, commits to purchasing all necessary insurances before commencing the project
- Agree to provide insurance certificates when 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. See: [VicHealth's Harmful Industry Relationships Funding and Procurement Policy](#)

VicHealth will consider Impact Research Grant proposals that:

- Address the research priorities outlined above
- Demonstrate active engagement with policy makers, practitioners and/or communities
- Do not just describe a health problem, but work towards potentially having 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

Preferred proposals will:

- Include PhD students or early career researchers, thus supporting the development of the next generation of researchers with applied 'industry' experience

Eligible and ineligible expenditure for IRG 2023

Funded budget items must be directly related to the project, and may include:	VicHealth will not fund:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salaries of research team • Domestic travel and accommodation directly related to the research project • Program delivery expenditure • Research and evaluation costs including participant reimbursement fees and vouchers • Resource materials and costs related to the publication and/or other translation of research findings • Capital items (conditions apply) • Organisational overheads when incurred as a direct result of the funded project (Please note that value-for-money will be considered in our assessments, so these expenses should be kept to a minimum) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects led by and/or primarily undertaken by, universities or research institutions based outside of Victoria • Biomedical, clinical, laboratory-based or health services research that does not have a clear link to health promotion and reducing and eliminating barriers to health and wellbeing • Research focused on disease treatment and management • Research which is unrelated to the research priorities outlined in these Grant 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 organizational operating costs • Retrospective funding • 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 • Videos, films, publications, conferences or travel in isolation of the specific project. • International travel or international conference registration

How to apply

Applications must be completed by submitting a full online application form via VicHealth's [Stakeholder Portal](#).

Timeline

Opening date for applications	12noon AEDT, Thursday 12 January 2023
Closing date for applications	12noon AEDT, Wednesday 1 March 2023
Applications assessed	March – April 2023
Notification to successful and unsuccessful applicants; contracting	By 30 June 2023
Commencement of Impact Research Grants 2023 projects	From July 2023

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* have 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 that relationships within the relevant faculty/college are also declared.*

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 the following criteria:

- a) Alignment with the research grant priorities
- b) Have potential to directly influence health promotion policy and practice in Victoria, and
- c) Have potential to reduce or eliminate barriers to good health, and increase the health and wellbeing of the people and communities who face the greatest systemic inequities

Stage 2: Shortlisted applications will be assessed by an advisory panel of research, policy and practice experts, against the following criteria:

- a) Quality of the proposal and methodology (35%)
- b) Benefit and potential systems impact for direct application to health and wellbeing policy and/or practice (30%)
- c) Viability of the project, considering diversity within the team's disciplinary expertise, and resourcing (e.g. budget, timeline, and capacity to deliver) (20%)
- d) Demonstrated partnerships with policymakers, practitioners and/or communities to address a real-world health and wellbeing problem (10%)
- e) Clear strategy to translate, disseminate and communicate findings, including to the public more broadly (5%)

Stage 3: The advisory panel will make a recommendation to the CEO of VicHealth regarding which applications are most likely to align with the research grant priorities and have a direct influence on health promotion policy and/or practice to 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 June 2023.

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 up to five 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 – documents confirming in-principle support from up to four key policy and/or practice partners must 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 [contract departure proposal form](#) will be required if your organisation is unable to comply with any clause detailed in [the Standard Grant Agreement Terms and Conditions](#).

If you are successful:

Successful applicants are required to:

- Enter into a Grant 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 progress meetings and consider participating in research translation opportunities facilitated by VicHealth (eg. communications training workshops and events)
- 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, and highlights its five strategic imperatives.
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 2023 Impact Research Grant Guidelines (including relevant documents listed in the 'Recommended reading' section) and FAQs, VicHealth's [Information for All Applicants](#) page, and still have questions, please submit an enquiry in writing 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.