

# VicHealth Postdoctoral Research Fellowships 2022

## Guidelines

### Overview of the program

The 2022 round of applications for the VicHealth Postdoctoral Research Fellowship program is now open. The Fellowships aim to support early career researchers to conduct high quality, rigorous research that will strengthen the evidence base for preventive health policies and programs and ultimately improve the health and wellbeing outcomes for the Victorian community. They emphasise the translation of results from cutting-edge academic investigation into policy and practice. In this round we will be appointing up to three Fellows, with a start date of March 2023 or soon thereafter.

We currently support five Fellows and are excited about expanding the program and continuing to nurture future leaders in health promotion and preventative health. Some key benefits of the Fellowship include:

- Three-year funding support for Fellows, paid to your academic institution
- Access to the VicHealth office space
- A collegial, supportive environment, with opportunities for the Fellows to collaborate with each other and with VicHealth staff
- Exposure to program and policy developments
- Translation of research outputs into real-world applications
- Links to public health networks
- Professional development opportunities, including training opportunities, and presentation of research to a wide range of stakeholders
- Upon completion of the fellowship, becoming part of the prestigious group of VicHealth Fellow alumni.

### What current Fellows are saying about the program

*"I am passionate about creating conditions that support healthy diets for all children. A VicHealth Postdoctoral Fellowship has allowed me to design a program of research that explores the food marketing targeting children and their parents, and identify opportunities for policy reform to improve children's diets and health."*

- 2021 Fellow Dr Alexandra Chung, Monash University

*"It's not just research opportunities but also interacting with VicHealth programs and understanding how my research might integrate with on-the-ground opportunities. It's bridging the gap between academia and real life."*

- 2021 Fellow Dr Hannah Pitt, Deakin University

*"Working with a team [at VicHealth] has been great for mental wellbeing and solidarity, and sense of camaraderie – having someone to talk to. Those conversations are really important, including across different disciplines outside of my area of specialisation."*

- 2021 Fellow Dr Jenn Lacy-Nichols, University of Melbourne

This Fellowship program operates as a partnership with eligible universities or research institutes (herein referred to as the 'administering institutions'). Through this model,

**VicHealth** aims to:

- Ensure that there is appropriate academic support and growth opportunities for the Fellows
- Maximise the depth, rigour and quality of research outputs
- Ensure that research and/or evaluation are undertaken according to appropriate ethical standards
- Provide a mechanism for Fellows to access both academic and industry experiences, and build capacity of a new generation of leaders in collaborative policy/practice focused research

For **the administering institutions**, the partnership benefits include:

- Strengthened capacity to identify innovative areas for research proposals
- Contributing to the development of a new generation of leaders in collaborative policy/practice focused research
- Increased profile through dissemination of jointly branded research findings
- The opportunity to strengthen its reputation as an innovator in public health industry-research partnerships
- Strengthened linkages with VicHealth and its partners.

### The 2022 Round of VicHealth Postdoctoral Research Fellowships

In this round, VicHealth will fund up to three (3) Postdoctoral Research Fellows to undertake **a three-year research project** addressing one of the research areas outlined in the following section. Fellowships will be distributed as follows:

- 1 Fellowship will be allocated to 'Children and young people's health and wellbeing'
- Up to 2 Fellowships will be allocated to the other research areas

We welcome applicants from a wide range of disciplines and fields, including **public health, economics, law, sociology, public administration, and political science, amongst others**. Prior to application, prospective applicants must secure the participation of an eligible university or research institute (*'administering institution'*), including a primary academic advisor.

VicHealth will provide a salary contribution of \$75,000 in year 1, \$76,125 in year 2, and \$77,267 in year 3, paid directly to the administering institution (see Funding and other VicHealth contributions section on page 7 for more detailed information). Funding and projects are expected to commence by March 2023 or shortly thereafter.

Central to the success of this program is the integration of the Fellows to VicHealth's environment. It is expected that approximately 75% to 80% of the Fellows' time will be spent on the research project agreed with VicHealth. Fellows will maintain continuous contact with VicHealth and/or our partners, through regular days spent in the VicHealth office on a weekly basis, regular check-ins with the VicHealth advisor, and attendance at professional development opportunities, such as training or networking. Fellows will also maintain close linkages with the administering institution for the purposes of academic advice and growth.

Fellows can expect to be integrated into relevant networks, communities and other forums of relevance to their research area and be supported by VicHealth to conduct highly translatable applied health promotion research.

### **What will we prioritise in this round?**

To be considered for funding, applicants must apply for a Fellowship under one of the research areas below. Whilst we have provided a brief description for each area, **applicants may propose a reframing or different approach to the issue than what is outlined here.**

Within these priority areas, we are particularly interested in proposals that adopt a systems approach to the problems they aim to investigate. By this, we mean focusing on the complex systems within which these problems exist – the different actors and factors that make up a problem, how they are interconnected, and the nature of those relationships.

VicHealth is committed to **health equity** and to enabling all Victorians to have the means to a good and healthy life, regardless of cultural background, gender, sexual orientation, ability, income, educational attainment, occupation or location. We prioritise the funding of research which will help strengthen approaches to increasing health equity. In achieving that, we seek to address the underlying drivers of health and wellbeing, including a range of socioeconomic processes that distribute them unequally across society.

For more information on our approach, see VicHealth's [Fair Foundations: the VicHealth framework for health equity](#).

### **One Targeted Fellowship:**

#### **Children and young people's health and wellbeing**

Global events such as climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic have placed a particular burden on the health and wellbeing of younger generations. This Fellowship aims to attract researchers from a variety of disciplines with expertise in the health and wellbeing of children and/or young people, and who have a strong interest in data analysis, monitoring and measurement of progress in health and wellbeing policies related to those populations. This Fellow will be part of a larger group of leading scientists and institutions currently collaborating with VicHealth in the development of a national monitoring and accountability mechanism for children and young people's health and wellbeing. They will have the opportunity to coordinate academic publications in addition to their own, and to regularly engage in research translation.

## Up to two Fellowships, addressing one of the following areas:

### **The economics of health promotion and disease prevention**

The economic case for investing in health promotion and prevention is stronger than it has ever been. In Australia chronic, non-communicable diseases (NCDs), are the main cause of death and disability despite the fact that the main risk factors associated with NCDs are largely preventable. VicHealth is committed to ensure that the multidimensional value of health promotion and preventative initiatives is properly understood and applied to inform public health investment. This Fellowship aims to conduct applied research that contributes to the evidence behind investment in health promotion and/or NCD prevention, as well to innovative models of public health financing that take into consideration the economic benefits of prevention. Whilst this Fellowship is more likely to attract early career economists, candidates from other relevant disciplines will be also considered, with experience in public health and health policy being highly regarded.

### **Creating resilient, inclusive, connected communities**

The strength of social cohesion within neighbourhoods is associated both with improved individual health and wellbeing and with better resilience in response to disasters or extreme weather events. This Fellowship will examine taking a community approach to [improving social connection](#) at the local government and neighbourhood level. Approaches considered may include targeted interventions such as social prescribing (e.g., linking individuals with community programs), or whole-of-community approaches (e.g., organised events). Of particular interest are identifying processes that promote mutual learning across difference while increasing agency and inclusion for groups experiencing structural discrimination. This fellowship will align well with some of the work VicHealth is currently doing through the [Future Healthy initiative](#).

### **Climate change, health and local level adaptation**

While there is a strong focus on mitigating climate change, communities are experiencing the impacts now, including hotter summers and more extreme weather events such as increased risk of flooding or fire. Also concerning are the direct and indirect effects of climate change on mental health. This Fellowship will explore pathways for increasing community resilience to climate change impacts. This may include increasing community cohesion and information networks for improving the response to extreme weather events, researching and designing community preparedness training, considering practical changes to the physical environment (e.g., increased green space or more practical building codes), and/or identifying specific interventions for improving mental health related to climate change. A particular focus on groups that are traditionally excluded from disaster preparedness (e.g., women, recent arrivals to Australia, people with a disability) is preferred. This project may also specifically identify under-served areas, particularly rural and remote communities, and propose innovative methods for preparedness.

## Grant eligibility criteria

### Applicants

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- A PhD in a discipline or field to the research priorities outlined above.
- Have been awarded<sup>1</sup> a PhD **no more than three years** (minus valid career disruptions<sup>2</sup>) prior to the Fellowship application closing date.
- Be based in Victoria.
- Have identified an eligible administering institution (see criteria below) that agrees to provide academic advice and support, administer the Funding Agreement and provide full employment services associated with the Fellowship position.
- Nominated Primary Academic Advisor at the eligible administering institution who agrees to provide academic advice and support. The Primary Academic Advisor must have demonstrated current or past partnerships with policy makers and/or practitioners.
- Funding will NOT be granted if you, your primary academic advisor or organisation have had a relationship with the tobacco industry within the past five years (see VicHealth's [harmful industry relationship funding and procurement policy](#) for more information).

*VicHealth is committed to ensuring appointments represent the diversity of our community. Aboriginal and Torres Islander people, people with disability, women and gender diverse people, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are strongly encouraged to apply.*

Applicants with demonstrated current or past partnerships with policy makers and/or practitioners and the capacity to work effectively with these non-academic partners will be considered favourably, but this is not mandatory. Applicants with a strong track record of publications, presentations and projects with a research translation focus will also be considered favourably.

To enable equitable access to research funding, *Relative to Opportunity* considerations will be assessed during the selection process. Consistent with the [NHMRC Relative to Opportunity Policy](#), Relative to Opportunity circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- the amount of time spent as an active researcher

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<sup>1</sup> This is the date when you PhD was passed NOT the date of the conferral ceremony.

<sup>2</sup> Valid career disruption is defined as a prolonged interruption to an applicant's capacity to work due to major illness/injury, parental leave or carer responsibilities, or time employed outside of academic where industry experience has been gained, e.g., within government or the NGO sector. A prolonged interruption is defined as a continuous absence from work for 90 calendar days or more, and/or continuous, long-term, part-time employment (with a defined % FTE) due to the above stated valid career disruption circumstances with the absence amounting to a total of 90 calendar days or more.

- research outputs and productivity considering time employed in other sectors such as industry
- available resources, including situations where research is being conducted in remote or isolated communities
- clinical, administrative or teaching workload
- relocation of an applicant and his/her research setting or other similar circumstances that impact on research productivity
- the typical performance of researchers in the research field in question
- carer responsibilities that do not come under the defined valid career disruptions
- disability (including mental health conditions and psychosocial disability) or illness
- building relationships of trust with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities over long periods that can impact on track record and productivity
- for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants, community obligations including 'sorry business'
- calamities, such as pandemics or bushfires.

**In the Fellowship application form (specifically the track record section), applicants will need to provide a Relative to Opportunity statement clearly outlining information they want considered during the peer review process.**

## Grant eligibility criteria

### Administering institution

The Funding Agreement will be between VicHealth and the administering institution.

The administering institution must meet the following criteria:

- Be based in Victoria
- Be an eligible administering institution, as per the [NHMRC Approved Administering Institutions list](#), or an Aboriginal-led organisation<sup>3</sup> with an affiliation to a Victorian-based university
- Have an Australian Business Number and a bank account for Electronic Funds Transfer of grant funds
- Deliver its activities in Victoria, including health and wellbeing research and teaching
- 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

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<sup>3</sup> VicHealth is committed to working with Aboriginal people and Aboriginal-led research is viewed as being key to self-determination and improving the health and wellbeing of our First Nations people. VicHealth will accept applications from researchers from Aboriginal-led organisations that do not meet the definition of administering institution. Applications from researchers at Aboriginal-led organisations must have an affiliation to a Victorian-based university.

- 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 had a relationship with the tobacco industry within the past five years. The institution is **ineligible** if this applies

## Harmful Industry Relationships

All Applicants are required to declare harmful industry relationships.

Funding will **NOT** be granted if you, your primary research advisor, or your administering institution has had a relationship with the tobacco industry within the past five years. You are **ineligible** to apply.

If you, your primary research advisor, or your administering institution<sup>4</sup> has had a relationship with the gambling, alcohol, food or sugary drink industry within the past 12 months, you **must declare** this. Please see Appendix 1 for declaration requirements. Providing a declaration DOES NOT automatically preclude the applicant from being eligible for funding. VicHealth will assess all declarations on a case-by-case basis during Phase 1 of the Assessment process. For more information, see the [VicHealth Harmful Industry Relationship Funding and Procurement Policy](#).

## Funding and other VicHealth contributions

In this round, up to three (3) Fellowships will be funded.

VicHealth will provide the below salary contributions based on **a full-time commitment, over three-years:**

|        |          |
|--------|----------|
| Year 1 | \$75,000 |
| Year 2 | \$76,125 |
| Year 3 | \$77,267 |

Payments will be made quarterly. Standard funding is exclusive of on-costs such as superannuation contribution, workers compensation, leave loading and payroll tax. Top-up funding might be considered on an exceptional basis, depending on factors such as relevance for the agreed project with VicHealth and/or the performance of the Fellow, amongst others.

Funding and projects are expected to commence in March 2023 or shortly thereafter.

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<sup>4</sup> 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.

The Fellowship is subject to a probationary period of three months, annual reviews and satisfactory adherence to contractual conditions. Requests for part-time appointments and related changes in funding will be considered only on an exceptional basis.

### Support by and integration into VicHealth

It is anticipated that the Research Fellow will spend regular time at the VicHealth office (or online according to any safety plans) on a weekly basis, while maintaining links with their administering institution.

Each Fellow will have an assigned VicHealth Project Advisor. This Advisor will contribute towards shaping the research to ensure relevance to VicHealth and its stakeholders, i.e., support the Fellow in the design, implementation, analysis and reporting of the research from an end-user and policy/practice perspective.

Fellows will be engaged in a cohort support program involving a range of initiatives which may include formal skills training and professional development, meetings and networking with industry leaders, cohort-building activities amongst Fellows and opportunities to showcase their research to the broader VicHealth staff.

Fellows will be integrated into a VicHealth team, as well as relevant stakeholder networks, communities and other forums of relevance to the research area, including working with any relevant partners. Collegiate relationships between Fellows and VicHealth staff will also be encouraged and supported.

The Manager of the relevant team at VicHealth will be responsible for the day-to-day line management of the Fellows when at the VicHealth office.

### Management of the Fellow and program of work

Specific research activities to be undertaken in the fellowship will be captured on an annual workplan, to be developed in agreement with VicHealth.

Management and support of the Fellow will be via a small partnership group comprising at minimum the primary academic advisor and the VicHealth Project Advisor. This group will meet at least bi-annually and will be responsible for oversight and monitoring of the work-plan, probation and performance management processes.

### Basic office accommodation

VicHealth will contribute basic office accommodation, equipment (including computer facilities) and administrative support during the period that the Fellow is based at the VicHealth offices.



## Obligations of successful applicants

The Research Fellow will undertake a program of work in the research area which is concordant with relevant VicHealth strategic planning documents and programs of work. This will include:

- Conducting high-quality, rigorous, translatable research and evaluation activities relating to research area
- Undertaking ongoing review of the evidence related to the research topic area
- Supporting the translation of research findings to practice, policy and program development
- Identifying and exploring new and emerging research questions
- Contributing knowledge to VicHealth's efforts to support good policy and practice (e.g., policy submissions to government, media presentations).
- Documenting and disseminating research findings through both peer-reviewed publications and conferences as well as through means accessible to broader policy and practitioner audiences (e.g., reports, policy papers)
- Collaboratively participating in networks, policy and practice communities, meetings and other forums relevant to the research area
- During the contractual process researchers will be expected to work with VicHealth to create a translation plan which describes how the research will be translated to inform policy or practice and undertake translation activities in accordance with the plan
  - Being physically present at the VicHealth premises at least part-time
  - Meeting regularly with VicHealth and your Primary Academic Advisor
  - Producing financial acquittals for each year of funding
  - Completing VicHealth reporting requirements, including:
    - Reporting progress against the agreed workplan
    - Annual presentation of research progress at a VicHealth forum
    - Other reporting requirements as agreed with VicHealth. This may include a 3,000 - 5,000-word research summary including executive summary (no more than 2 pages), visual representation of findings and implications for policy and practice in Victoria, list of plain language talking points and recommendations for researchers and policy makers, and actionable plain language quick tips for a consumer audience, i.e., what do findings mean for the general public?
- Knowledge translation activities in relation to these projects must be agreed with VicHealth in advance and must comply with VicHealth knowledge translation acknowledgment requirements as follows:
  - VicHealth reserves the right to review and comment on all academic papers, conference presentations and publications arising as a result of the fellowship funding agreement. The researcher should contact VicHealth

- well in advance** (at least 15 business days) of papers and publications being published or conference presentations occurring, and accommodate any reasonable requests from VicHealth.
- VicHealth should be acknowledged in any media publicity arising from research and requests that funding recipients are available to participate in media or promotional initiatives relating to the research project if called upon by VicHealth.
  - VicHealth should be acknowledged in all citation references for papers and publications produced as a result of the fellowship funding agreement. **For example:** Smith, J et al (2021) *Health promotion and equity*. A report prepared for the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Melbourne.
  - All publications arising from the research should acknowledge VicHealth as partner; where possible this should include the VicHealth logo on the front cover and an acknowledgement on the inside front or back cover. For example, **Acknowledgements:** VicHealth Postdoctoral Research Fellowships program
  - All logo approval or logo file requests should be submitted to: [logo@vichealth.vic.gov.au](mailto:logo@vichealth.vic.gov.au). All review requests and final published papers or publications should be submitted to: [researchgrants@vichealth.vic.gov.au](mailto:researchgrants@vichealth.vic.gov.au)
- Funding recipients may also be requested to participate in VicHealth research forums or further evaluation activities.

### Conduct of research and ethics requirements

Research funded by VicHealth shall be conducted in accordance with the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018)*. Ethics approvals required for the project must be obtained and maintained for the duration of the project and copies of these approvals shall be provided to VicHealth within 30 days of approval or as requested.

### Obligations of administering institution

As early-career researchers, it is important that Fellows have access to peer support and academic mentorship available to researchers working in an academic environment. Accordingly, it is anticipated that the administering institution will provide the Research Fellow with access to:

- Academic mentorship, advice and support
- Academic peer and collegial support
- Academic professional development opportunities

The administering institution will also be required to provide the Research Fellow with:

- Provision for securing ethical clearance of research led/overseen by the appointee
- Library facilities
- Administration services for the purposes of contractual management and employment services normally associated with an academic position.

The administering institution will be required to nominate:

- A senior researcher who agrees to be the **Primary Academic Advisor** to the applicant and to facilitate the Research Fellow's access to the other forms of academic support identified above.
  - The Primary Academic Advisor should have demonstratable experience of working with industry and influencing practice, policy or programs in the field
- A senior member of staff (e.g., Head of Department, Chief Executive Officer) who agrees to contribute to the management of the position (see information under VicHealth obligations).

### Recommended reading

Before applying, please ensure you have thoroughly read and understood the following documents:

- [VicHealth Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Guidelines \(this document\)](#)
- [Funding Information for all Applicants](#)
- [VicHealth Harmful Industry Relationship Funding and Procurement Policy](#)
- [Research Fellowship Agreement template](#)

Prospective applicants are encouraged to read the following VicHealth documents:

- [VicHealth Action Agenda 2019 – 2023](#)
- [VicHealth strategies](#) relevant to the research area that you are applying for.
- [Fair Foundations: The VicHealth framework for health equity](#) A conceptual and planning tool to guide action on the social determinants of health inequities.
- [Partnership Analysis Tool](#). This is 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.

Further information about VicHealth's current activities can be found on our website.

### Application process

Applications must be completed online via an application form through the [VicHealth Stakeholder Portal](#). Applicants are required to submit a full application to be considered for funding.

For more detail regarding the information you will need to provide via the VicHealth Stakeholder portal, please see Appendix 1.

### Application checklist:

- Read these guidelines, and other recommended supporting documents, carefully and thoroughly
- Check all key dates, processes and requirements
- [Register on the VicHealth Stakeholder Portal](#)
- Obtain the following signed certification letters:
  - From the Primary Academic Supervisor, certifying they will make available the advice and support described in the application.
  - From the CEO or University Responsible Officer (e.g., Vice Chancellor or Head of Department) that the Administering Institution certifies that the information provided in the application satisfies the requirements of organisation.
  - From the Head of Department (or equivalent) at the administering institution/research body, certifying that the department/institution will make available the advice and support described in the application.
- Provide a tabulated requested departures from proposed VicHealth funding agreement clauses (if applicable)
- Provide three professional referees who can attest to your qualifications and work style.
- Complete eligibility check and submit full online application via the [VicHealth Stakeholder Portal](#) before the specified closing time.

### Important dates

|  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Applications open  | 12noon AEDT, Monday 17 October 2022  |
| Applications close   | 12noon AEDT, Monday 28 November 2022 |
| Eligibility check and shortlisting                           | 28 November–5 December 2022          |
| Full assessment and interviews with shortlisted applications | 6 December – 16 December 2022        |
| Assessment team recommendations                              | 20 December 2022                     |
| Funding notifications  | 20 January 2023                      |
| Contracting  | January–February 2022                |
| Commencement of Fellowship                                   | March 2022                           |
| Public announcement of new Fellows                           | March 2022                           |

## Application assessment

Applications will be subject to the phased assessment process outlined below. Applicants will be assessed on their response to the range of criteria outlined below.

### Phase 1: Eligibility and shortlisting

**1.1:** Applications will be reviewed for adherence to the funding criteria and completeness. Applications that are incomplete or do not meet the funding rules will be deemed ineligible and will not be considered further.

**1.2:** The Executive Summary provided in the application will then be assessed by VicHealth against the following criteria:

| Criteria  | Weighting |
|---|-----------|
| Applicants track record: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Relevance of PhD to research project to research priorities outlines by VicHealth</li> <li>2. Research experience in, or relevant to, research project including conduct of research to inform policy/practice development</li> </ol>  | 50%       |
| Research environment and support: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Alignment of research environment to research project</li> <li>2. Primary Academic Advisor's track record considering alignment to research project; experience of working with industry and influencing practice, policy or programs in the field; and mentoring of postdoctoral scholars</li> </ol> | 30%       |
| Proposed research topic: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Feasibility of indicative approach</li> </ol>  | 20%       |

### Phase 2: Full assessment

**2.1:** Shortlisted applications will be fully assessed by two VicHealth staff and one external expert who holds a PhD in the specific or related field of the proposed research project (herein referred to as the Assessment Team). Applications may be excluded after this assessment if deemed unsuitable.

**2.2:** Shortlisted applicants will then be interviewed by VicHealth staff.

Applicants will be assessed in Phase 2 according to the selection criteria below:

| Criteria  | Weighting |
|---|-----------|
| <p><b>Applicant's track record</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relevance of the applicant's PhD to research area</li> <li>- Research experience in the research area and/or health promotion/public health and/or areas of inquiry relevant to research project</li> <li>- Conduct of research and/or evaluation activities (either previous or current) that informed the development of policy and/or practice</li> <li>- Conduct of primary research projects that required similar quantitative and/or qualitative research design and analytic skills to those proposed in research project plan</li> <li>- Top 5 (considering impact and relevance) books, reports, papers, newsletters, policy submissions and other 'grey' literature communicating research findings and analysis to a non-academic audience</li> <li>- Top 5 (considering impact and relevance) peer reviewed publications, book chapters, conference presentations</li> </ul>   | 30%       |
| <p><b>Applicant's work style, skills and personal attributes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The capacity to communicate, network and work co-operatively with academic, community and government partners relevant to research area, and evidence of experience working with these stakeholders</li> <li>- A broad understanding of the policy, program and practice context related to the research area and the potential role of applied research and evaluation in building capacity for health promotion in these contexts</li> <li>- The ability to undertake research activity in a manner which flexibly balances the requirements of academia with those of a program and policy context</li> <li>- The ability to work autonomously and to deliver agreed research outputs as part of a cross-discipline team</li> <li>- Capacity to play a leadership role in complex projects involving multiple partners and requirements</li> <li>- Superior communication skills – both written and in public speaking</li> <li>- High level conceptual and analytical skills</li> <li>- A well-developed understanding of public health approaches and frameworks and an ability to work in an integrated way across these and the approaches and frameworks of other disciplines relevant to understanding research area</li> <li>- Demonstrated understanding of social and economic determinants of health and in particular their influence on the social gradient in health</li> </ul> | 20%       |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <p><b>Research environment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Involves the conduct of public health research or has close links with other research departments doing so</li> <li>- Provides contact with peers undertaking research activity in areas related to the focus of the grant</li> <li>- Fosters the development of the applicant as an independent researcher</li> <li>- Is undertaking innovative research and is seen as a leader in its field</li> </ul>   | 20% |
| <p><b>Academic advice and support (Primary Academic Advisor)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Seniority and leadership capability of adviser</li> <li>- Nature and extent of support committed by the advisor</li> <li>- Track record <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Experience of working with industry and influencing practice, policy or programs in the field</li> <li>o Provision of input into policy and program areas through partnerships, participation on Boards, Committees and other relevant forums</li> <li>o Mentoring of post-doctoral scholars and research staff</li> <li>o Securing research funding and support and oversight of research projects</li> <li>o Top 5 relevant peer reviewed publications, books, conference presentations</li> <li>o Participation in professional associations</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | 15% |
| <p><b>Research project</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feasibility of delivering the project based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Indicative approach</li> <li>o Relevance of indicative partnerships with practitioners and/or policy makers</li> <li>o Proposed research translation approach for the project to directly impact on evidence informed health promotion policy and practice in Victoria for optimal public benefit</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   | 15% |

The Assessment Team will make recommendations based on alignment with the above criteria. Recommendations will be considered by VicHealth in accordance with the delegation of authority.

VicHealth reserves the right to have applications assessed by several appropriately qualified academics who are not members of the Assessment Team.

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

Conflict of interest processes are managed and transparent.

## **Funding agreement**

By submitting an application, you agree to be bound by the terms and conditions set out in these Guidelines and in the VicHealth Research Fellowship Agreement if successful in receiving VicHealth funding.

The conditions of funding within these documents relates to:

- delivery of agreed workplans
- timely completion of the project
- compliance with other VicHealth processes such as progress and final reporting, and
- harmful industry relationships.
- It may also be necessary to enter into other agreements, deeds of confidentiality or memorandums of understanding as measures of assurance. This will depend on project details and circumstances, for example if the research project involves working with VicHealth partners to deliver the project, VicHealth would require the above-described deeds to be executed.

## **Further information**

If you have queries after reading this document or wish to speak with VicHealth staff regarding the VicHealth Research Fellowship program, please email [researchgrants@vichealth.vic.gov.au](mailto:researchgrants@vichealth.vic.gov.au)



## Appendix 1: Preview of online Application Form

Preview only. Applications must be submitted through the [VicHealth Stakeholder Portal](#)

### Eligibility and compliance check (Yes/No responses)

#### The researcher applying for funding:

1. Has a PhD in a relevant discipline to the Fellowship research area you are applying for?
2. Has been awarded a PhD **no more than three years** (minus valid career disruptions) prior to the Fellowship application closing date?
3. Has identified an eligible administering institution that agrees to provide academic advice and support, administer the Funding Agreement and provide full employment services associated with the Fellowship position?

#### The administering institution applying for funding:

1. Has an Australian Business Number (ABN) and a bank account for Electronic Funds Transfer of grant funds?
2. Is listed on the NHMRC Approved Administering Institutions list?
3. Is located in Victoria and intends to deliver activities in Victoria, with a primary focus on health and wellbeing outcomes for Victorians?
4. Has satisfactorily fulfilled previous and/or current VicHealth grant requirements\*, if applicable? \*For universities, consider grants received within your school, at a minimum.
5. Has insurance cover, including professional indemnity or public liability insurance for the purpose of this project and agrees to provide insurance certificates if requested by VicHealth?
6. Is **not** subject to any current or impending legal action which could impact its financial viability?

#### Tobacco industry relationships:

1. Do you, your Primary Academic Advisor or the administering institution\* applying for funding have any current, planned or past five (5) year relationships with a tobacco company, the Australian Tobacco Research Foundation, or other tobacco industry funded bodies?

### Administering Institution details & certification

1. Administering institution's ABN
2. Is the administering institution registered for GST? (Yes/No)
3. Business name
4. Postal address
5. Does the Administering Institution agree to comply with the proposed Funding Agreement for this grant? If 'No' is selected, you will be required to upload a tabulated statement clearly detailing any requested departures from clauses in the proposed Agreement. These will be assessed by VicHealth on a case-by-case basis.
6. Details of the administering institution's Authorised representative (person who will sign the funding agreement if this application is successful, typically the head of the organization)
7. Agreement by the Administering Institution to abide by the funding agreement (or a detailed explanation attached as a certified letter if the response is 'no').

8. A signed certification letter by CEO or University Responsible Officer (e.g., Vice Chancellor or Head of Department) that the Administering Institution certified that the information provided in the application satisfies requirements of organisation.

#### **Executive Summary (using sub-headings; 400-word limit)**

Provide a **plain language Executive Summary** of your application, including:

1. Your track record. *You must include, at a minimum, information on your PhD, and research experience in, or relevant to, the research area including conduct of research to inform policy/practice development.*
2. Research environment and support to be provided by the administering institution. *You must include, at a minimum, information on the alignment of the research environment to the research area, and your Primary Academic Advisor's track record considering alignment to research area; experience working with industry and influencing practice, policy or programs in the field; and mentoring of postdoctoral scholars.*
3. Research project. *Specify which research project you are applying for, what excites you about it and indicative approach.*

#### **Applicant's details, track record, workstyle, skills and attributes statement and referees**

1. Applicant's details including PhD title, brief summary of PhD, PhD awarding institution, date of PhD Award, other academic qualifications, and details of any valid career disruptions after PhD award date that you would like considered.
2. Summary of track record (using sub-headings, 800-word limit), against the following criteria:
  - Relevance of PhD to research area
  - Research experience in the research area and/or health promotion/public health and/or areas of inquiry relevant to research area
  - Conduct of research and/or evaluation activities (either previous or current) that informed the development of policy and/or practice
  - Other experience that informs your skills and approach to the Fellowship opportunity (e.g., practice or policy experience)
  - Conduct of primary research projects that required similar quantitative and/or qualitative research design and analytic skills
  - Top 5 (considering impact and relevance) books, reports, papers, newsletters, policy submissions and other 'grey' literature communicating research findings and analysis to a non-academic audience
  - Top 5 (considering impact and relevance) peer reviewed publications, book chapters, conference presentations
  - Relative to Opportunity statement (if applicable)
3. Summary of work style, skills and personal attributes (using sub-headings, 500-word limit), against the following criteria:
  - Capacity to communicate, network and work co-operatively with academic, community and government partners relevant to research area, and evidence of experience working with these stakeholders
  - Broad understanding of the policy, program and practice context related to the research area and the potential role of applied research and evaluation in building capacity for health promotion in these contexts

- Ability to undertake research activity in a manner which flexibly balances the requirements of academia with those of a program/policy context
- Ability to work autonomously and to deliver agreed research outputs as part of a cross-discipline team
- Capacity to play a leadership role in complex projects involving multiple partners and requirements
- Superior communication skills – both written and in public speaking
- High level conceptual and analytical skills
- Well-developed understanding of public health approaches and frameworks and an ability to work in an integrated way across these and the approaches/frameworks of other disciplines relevant to the research area
- Demonstrated understanding of social and economic determinants of health and in particular their influence on the social gradient in health

4. Details of three professional referees

**Primary Academic Advisor details and supporting information**

1. Primary Academic advisor details
2. Describe the nature and extent of the support the Primary Academic Advisor has agreed to provide. Include an indicative time allocation (400-word limit)
3. Summary of your Primary Academic Adviser’s track record (using sub-headings, 500-word limit), against the following criteria:
  - Experience of working with industry and influencing practice, policy or programs in the field
  - Provision of input into policy and program areas through partnerships, participation on Boards, Committees and other relevant forums
  - Mentoring of post-doctoral scholars and research staff
  - Securing research funding as well as providing support and oversight of research projects
  - Top 5 (considering impact and relevance) peer reviewed publications, books, conference presentations
  - Participation in professional associations
4. The nature and extent of the support the Advisor has agreed to provide (400-word limit)
5. A signed certification letter by the Primary Academic Supervisor certifying they will make available the advice and support described in the application.

**Research environment details including Head of Department (or equivalent) details and supporting information**

Information of sponsoring department and head of department.  
 Overview of the department, research group or centre. This should address features such as research focus and interests, staff/discipline composition and relationship to post graduate teaching programs. Describe in detail, with reference to the guidelines and research area, what support this environment will offer to you. If public health research is not its main focus, indicate what links exist with other relevant research departments that would be accessible to you (400-word limit)  
 Attach a signed certification letter by the Head of Department (or equivalent) certifying the department/institution will make available the advice and support described in the application.

### Research project details

Outline your interest in the research project and provide us with some of your ideas about how you could progress the research project (400-word limit). Include:

- Framing and approach you would take to the project
- Proposed partnerships with practitioners and/or policy makers
- Proposed research translation approach for the project to directly impact on evidence informed health promotion policy and practice in Victoria for optimal public benefit.

### Harmful Industry Relationships Declaration

1. Do you, your primary research advisor or your organisation have any current, planned, or past 12 months relationships with the tobacco, food, sugary drink, alcohol or gambling industries?

If Yes:

2. Please detail the brand/company/organisation, the length of the relationship and when it occurred/is occurring/is planned. List all harmful industry relationships if you have more than one.
3. What was/is/will be the nature of the relationship, with the food, sugary drink, alcohol or gambling industry? Please tick all that apply.
  - Board membership or other governance membership
  - The harmful brand/company is activated/promoted. Please detail how the harmful brand is activated/promoted through your organisation's activities (e.g. naming rights, branding on materials, signage, text or verbal acknowledgement, distribution of product vouchers, etc)
  - Access to membership lists and data
  - Market or other research/evaluation
  - Campaign/project development or delivery
  - Consultancy services
  - Receipt of donations or in-kind benefits.
  - Other. Please provide detail:
4. Please detail how the harmful industry relationship will be risk-managed to ensure that VicHealth's statutory role to improve the health and wellbeing of Victorians isn't undermined. This could include, for example, separating project teams or not activating harmful industry brands alongside VicHealth's brand. You are still required to respond to this question even if the harmful industry relationship is not current (i.e., past or future).

### Mandatory additional supporting documents required. You will be asked to upload these documents.

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|---|---|
| <b>Certification by CEO or University Responsible Officer (e.g., Vice Chancellor or Head of Department)</b> | VicHealth requires a signed certification letter by CEO or University Responsible Officer (e.g., Vice Chancellor or Head of Department) that the Administering Institution certifies that the information provided in the application satisfies requirements of organisation. |
| <b>Certification by Head of department (or equivalent)</b>  | VicHealth requires a signed certification letter by the Head of Department (or equivalent) at the administering institution,  |

|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | certifying that the department/institution will make available the advice and support described in the application.  |
| <b>Certification by Primary Research Advisor</b>  | VicHealth requires a signed certification letter by the Primary Academic Supervisor, certifying they will make available the advice and support described in the application.  |
| <b>Requested departures from proposed VicHealth funding agreement clauses (if applicable)</b> | You will be required to upload a tabulated statement clearly detailing any requested departures from clauses in the proposed Agreement if you indicate that the Administering University <i>does not</i> agree to comply with the proposed Funding Agreement for this grant. |

Victorian Health Promotion Foundation

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