

VicHealth Impact Research Grants 2022–2023

A Fair and Healthy Future for all Victorians

Application Guidelines

About this grant:

VicHealth is pleased to announce the 2022–2023 round of our Impact Research Grants funding. These grants aim to generate new evidence and support innovative research that have high potential to influence health and wellbeing promotion and/or practice, and lead to sustainable and equitable health and wellbeing outcomes for all Victorians.



The 2022 Priorities: A Fair and Healthy Future for all Victorians

All Victorians have the right to the resources and environments they need to live a healthy, happy life. Yet many in our community face multiple barriers to good health and wellbeing. This is particularly the case in a complex and rapidly changing world.

(VicHealth's Action Agenda for Health Promotion 2019–2023)

The coronavirus pandemic, climate change, and environmental disasters in Victoria have all contributed to place health and wellbeing at the forefront of government and community concerns. Across all sectors, we have been called to recognise our interdependence with other humans and with our planet, and to collaboratively act for a fair and healthy future for all Victorians.

As research has indicated, while all Victorians have been to some extent exposed to these macro events, different population groups have faced higher risks and more barriers to recovering. In the next two years, as we align the recovery of our systems and communities towards increasing the health and wellbeing of all Victorians, there is an urgent need to better understand the *systemic relationship between the socioeconomic drivers of inequities, and their impact on health and wellbeing outcomes*.

The Impact Research Grants 2022–2023 round invites collaborative proposals that will expand the current understanding of the health and wellbeing impact of social, cultural, ecological, commercial, and digital determinants of health (see specifically [MJA Supplement 2021](#)), and help to guide evidence-based actions to tackle health and wellbeing inequities.

Proposals must:

1. Address at least one of the following determinants of health and wellbeing: social, cultural, ecological, commercial, or digital
2. Have a clear focus on addressing health and/or wellbeing inequities
3. Specify which population groups are more likely to benefit from the research
4. Work in partnerships with policy makers, practitioners, and/or communities
5. Specify how findings will be disseminated and communicated to the public more broadly.

We are particularly interested in cross-disciplinary research that can benefit the Victorian community in one or more of the following areas: physical activity and sport, social connection and mental wellbeing, or healthy and sustainable food systems.

Determinants of health and wellbeing

As events such as the pandemic, bushfires and floods have indicated, a range of factors that are not strictly defined within the domains of health can impact on people's ability to recover and on their health and wellbeing outcomes. Proposals must address at least one of the following determinants of health: such as social, cultural, ecological, commercial, or digital (see [MJA Supplement 2021](#), [Fair Foundations: The VicHealth framework for health equity](#)).

Clear focus on health and/or wellbeing inequities

This requirement reflects our view that everyone should have a fair opportunity to attain their full health potential, and that no one should be disadvantaged from achieving this potential if it can be avoided. *Inequities are the observed differences between population groups (e.g. a subpopulation group and the Victorian population) that stem from socioeconomic, political and cultural drivers of social position* (see [Fair Foundations: The VicHealth framework for health equity](#)).

Population groups are more likely to benefit from the research

A focus on specific groups that are more likely to benefit from the research helps to better see the equity dimension and strengthen its potential application in policy and practice.

Work in partnership with policy makers, practitioners, and/or communities

We know that research that is conducted in partnership with policy makers, practitioners, and impacted communities has the highest potential for real world change. When working with communities, participatory methodologies are preferred.

Specify how findings will be disseminated and communicated to the public more broadly

We consider research fundamental to inform evidence-based policy and practice that are inclusive of all Victorians, in our diverse needs. For those links to be built across industries and communities, we require a strategy for dissemination of research findings and for communicating it to the broader Victorian community.

What's on offer

VicHealth Impact Research Grants will provide up to \$200,000 in funding over a maximum of 2 years, for a maximum of 5 projects. Funding will commence in June 2022.

Eligibility criteria

VicHealth is committed to working with Indigenous communities and views Indigenous-led research as key to self-determination and to just and equitable health and wellbeing outcomes in Victoria. VicHealth will accept applications for an Impact Research Grant from Indigenous-led organisations that do not meet the definition of administering institution. Applications from Indigenous-led organisations must include an academic partner, with an affiliation to an Australian university.

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

Applications must:

- be submitted from researchers at an eligible administering institution, that is, a university or a research institution linked to a university as defined by the NHMRC*
- have an Australian Business Number and a bank account for Electronic Funds Transfer of grant funds
- deliver activities or products 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
- 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
- not have a relationship with the tobacco industry within the past 5 years. Learn more about 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 of policy makers, practitioner and/or communities
- have high potential to directly influence health promotion or primary prevention policy and/or practice to ultimately improve the health and wellbeing outcomes for all Victorians
- include PhD students or early career researchers, thus supporting the development of the next generation of researchers with applied 'industry' experience
- include creative resources, such as audiovisual resources, as part of their strategy to communicate research findings.

VicHealth will not fund:

- biomedical and clinical research that does not have a clear link to health promotion
- laboratory-based science or health services research *unless* there is a strong rationale for its relevance to health promotion
- research which is unrelated to the research priority outlined in the Application 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)
- researchers or organisations with a relationship with the tobacco industry within the last 5 years
- projects that have commenced or have already been funded to commence
- videos, films, publications, conferences or travel in isolation of the specific project
- international travel or international conference registration.

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 5 years. If this has occurred, you are **ineligible** to apply.

If you, your research team, or your organisation* has 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 however that relationships within the relevant faculty/college are also declared.

How to apply

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

Applications **open at 12:00 midday, Monday 14 February 2022** and **close at 12:00 midday, Monday 21 March 2022 AEDT**.

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. Align with the research grant priorities and address specific determinants of health,
- b. Have potential to directly influence health promotion policy and practice in Victoria, and
- c. Have potential to reduce inequities and increase the health and wellbeing of the most disadvantaged populations in Victoria.

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

- Scientific quality of the proposal and methodology. (35%)
- Benefit and potential scalable impact for direct application to health and wellbeing policy and/or practice. (30%)
- Viability of the project considering diversity in team's disciplinary expertise, and resourcing, e.g. budget; timeline, organisational capacity to deliver. (20%)
- Demonstrated partnerships with policymakers, practitioners and/or communities to address a real-world health and wellbeing problem. (10%)
- Clear strategy to disseminate 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 generate new and relevant evidence that will have a direct influence on health promotion policy and/or practice and 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 May 2022.

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 5 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 – Up to 3 documents confirming in-principle support from key policy and/or practice partners can 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 Partnership Grant contract departure proposal form may also be required if your organisation is unable to comply with any clause detailed in the **standard VicHealth Funding Agreement Terms and Conditions**.

If you are successful

Successful applicants are required to:

- enter into a Funding 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
- 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 5 strategic imperatives. |
| MJA Supplement 2021: Australia in 2030 | A Medical Journal of Australia's Supplement, sponsored by VicHealth, outlining the determinants of health which are the focus of this grant round. |
| VicHealth Coronavirus Wellbeing Impact Study: Follow-up Survey | This survey of 2000 Victorians was conducted in May/June and September 2020. It provides valuable insights into the impact of the pandemic on Victorian's health and wellbeing, and how this impact varied across sub-populations. |
| 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 2022-23 Impact Research Grant Guidelines, including relevant documents under the 'Recommended reading' section, and still have questions, please submit an enquiry 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.



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