

Media Release

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THE WORLDS OF TECHNOLOGY AND THE ARTS COMBINE TO INSPIRE VICTORIANS TO GET ACTIVE

VicHealth today announced the winning projects in the inaugural *VicHealth Innovation Challenge: Arts*.

The new funding scheme is designed to foster and nurture innovative ideas that have the potential to improve Victorians' physical and mental wellbeing through the arts and digital technologies.

VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter said the health benefits of the arts were well known.

"Getting involved in the arts – whether it's enjoying a museum exhibition, taking a dance class to get your heart pumping or going to a gig – provides people with an opportunity to gain new skills and express themselves, be inspired, and feel good about life in general. And we know that being around and involved with others reduces loneliness and helps people to make new friends. However, we live in a digital world that's changing all the time and we need to look at new ways to use digital media or technologies to increase physical activity and social connection," Ms Rechter added.

More than 40 submissions were received to *VicHealth Innovation Challenge: Arts*.

"We were thrilled to receive some really innovative proposals from a range of arts organisations and look forward to supporting two dynamic projects that will use technology to promote people's physical and mental wellbeing," Ms Rechter said.

The successful projects are:

Dance Break – No Lights, No Lycra

Dance Break is an app to get people active - at home, at school, in the office, on the street. Once a day the app will override your phone with an energising dance track. Anywhere, anytime, thousands of people will dance to the same song, regardless of time-zone or location. After every dance a map will appear showing the number and location of the people you just danced with. Dance Break is an effective way for large organisations, schools and institutions to promote physical and mental health and to increase productivity.

The Cloud – Pop Up Playground

The Cloud is a city-wide immersive participatory performance. It uses game systems and technology in the real world to create a storytelling event, driven by on-street competitive and covert play. In The Cloud, participants can play as humans or androids, or can follow along online. Set against story events and reports online on the day's activity, players are given missions to carry out in the city, from delivering 'secret' documents to retrieving 'lost items' and evading 'capture' by the other side. The Cloud uses reward strategies to motivate physical activity and participation to increase socialisation. As players progress through the game, their actions contribute to the overarching story being told.

For more information, see <http://challenge.vichealth.vic.gov.au>.

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