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**VICHEALTH INNOVATION CHALLENGE: ARTS – TIME TO GET VICTORIANS  
MOVING USING TECHNOLOGY AND THE ARTS**

A new funding scheme for innovative ideas that have the potential to improve Victorians' physical and mental wellbeing through the arts and digital technologies has been unveiled.

Speaking at the Art of Good Health and Wellbeing Conference at the National Gallery of Victoria today, VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter announced funding of \$100,000 for ideas that will bring Victorians together to be involved in active and participatory arts.

“The health benefits of the arts are well known. Whether it’s a group of dancers taking to the stage each night or people gathering across Melbourne for events like White Night, the arts have a way of bringing people together, fostering a sense of community, supporting mental wellbeing by building confidence and self-esteem, and inspiring us to get moving.

“We live in a digital world and the *VicHealth Innovation Challenge: Arts* is about encouraging new approaches that use digital media or technologies to increase physical activity and social connection. Digital technology is becoming an increasingly important tool for building engagement with events, activities and cultural content. We want to kick-start innovative arts initiatives that take advantage of digital technology to get more people moving,” Ms Rechter added.

VicHealth is inviting arts organisations, entrepreneurs and others from the creative industries to submit pitches that will use technology to bring health benefits to Victorians through active and participatory arts.

Ms Rechter said, “We want to work with the sector to provide more active and participatory opportunities for participants and audiences by using new technologies. We want to support dynamic, eclectic and interactive initiatives to promote people’s physical and mental wellbeing. Using technology to bring these two sets of health benefits together holds promise for both the arts and for health promotion.

“More and more people are looking for creative, social and less structured ways to get active, get connected and participate. The *VicHealth Innovation Challenge: Arts* is about doing just that!”

Pitches must be submitted to VicHealth by **12 December**. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to participate in workshops to develop their ideas before submitting their business plans.

Successful applicants are expected to be announced in April.

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

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