

FAQs - VicHealth Local Government Partnerships

Why VicHealth is partnering with Local Governments

Local governments are well-placed to provide local solutions and they know how support is best delivered in their community.

Local governments provide a wide range of community services, facilities, strategic policy and planning that directly affect the daily lives of children and young people and their opportunities for better health and wellbeing.

Through their Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and other strategic plans, local governments play a critical role in providing children and young people with opportunities to give them the best start in life.

Why are we focusing on children and young people?

Creating communities where children can thrive in early life – where they can grow up active, connected and healthy – significantly influences lifelong health.

And creating communities that support the health and wellbeing of children, will also support the health and wellbeing of their families, friends and neighbours. Creating a future that is healthy for children means creating a future that is healthy for us all.

Children and young people have unique and valuable perspectives on the world where they live, which can provide local leaders and health promotion practitioners with new ways of delivering for their community.

Why are we focusing on Local Government Areas with high rates of socio-economic disadvantage?

VicHealth will identify Local Government Partners who are best placed to create opportunities for people facing barriers to good health and wellbeing.

An expression of interest process will be open to the 39 local governments with the highest rates of socioeconomic disadvantage in Victoria.² These local partnerships will provide greater support for people who are doing it tough.

Why are we doing this work now?

In the midst of the global coronavirus pandemic, protecting our health and wellbeing is more important than ever, especially that of our children. We must do what we can to set them up for the best possible future – that is active, connected and healthy. A future where they can thrive.

An effective way to do this is to ensure children are front and centre in Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans 2021-25 – and the time to influence those plans is now.

Application process

Can multiple local governments work together?

Yes. How you then complete your application should account for how you will manage the partnership.

If you are seeking to *share* resources from the partnership across two Local Government Areas, you should complete a joint application nominating the lead local government. If you are making a joint application, it should describe the additional benefits of working together rather than separately. If you are seeking to access funding and support for two (or more) local governments to concurrently participate in the partnership, with a view to joining forces going forward, you should complete one application for each local government. Use your project summary to clearly note:

- the nature of your proposed joint-working
- if you are open to being considered separately if one or the other is unsuccessful.

If I've recently applied and been successful for a Reimagine Health grant (or currently have VicHealth funding for a different project), can I apply for this partnership?

Yes you can. As long as you have delivered successfully on previous VicHealth funding you are eligible.

Can I apply more than once?

No. The partnerships have a specific focus on the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and we are only able to accept one application per local government for this application.

If unsuccessful can I reapply?

No. These partnerships are timed to provide support to local governments during the planning and development of Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans 2021-25.

Can I get feedback on my application before I submit it?

In fairness to all applicants we cannot provide feedback on individual applications, however we are happy to discuss clarification relating to the parameters of the partnerships, the context for your application or support use of the Stakeholder Portal.

Can you provide some more detail about the Harmful Industries Relationships Policy?

VicHealth will require applicants to declare relationships with the food, sugary drink, alcohol, gambling and tobacco industries.

For more information on what you need to declare, please see VicHealth's [Harmful Industry Relationship Funding and Procurement Policy](#).

Partnership conditions

If we have a different project idea that would support child and youth wellbeing in our municipality, could we submit this for this partnership?

This partnership is focused primarily on the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans 2021-25. Project ideas that vary significantly from the parameters of this partnership, but are focused on promoting health and wellbeing of children and young people may be eligible for [other funding](#) from VicHealth.

Our Council has Administrators in place and will not have Council elections until next year or an endorsed plan until 2022. Are we still eligible?

Yes, provided that you are able to meet the goals of the partnership and will be able to include children and young people's health and wellbeing in the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan when it is endorsed.

How will leadership commitment be interpreted ahead of the new Councils being inducted in mid-November 2020.

You should ensure you have commitment from your CEO and executive management when preparing your application.

What is the expected level of in-kind contribution/allocation of council resources (ball park)?

This will vary depending on the size and existing capacity of your organisation and should also be relevant to the needs you identify in your application. Our priority is to work with local governments who are committed to creating local change for children and young people in their community. Regardless of size, we would expect to see some hours committed from management/leadership and officer level staff, as well as program budget that would help you undertake activities in planning and implementing your plan.

How many councils will be funded?

Up to ten.

What if we are already running initiatives for children and young people's healthy eating, physical activity and mental wellbeing, for example, the Achievement Program?

Great! Consider how you might use the partnership to value-add or accelerate the benefits of the existing initiatives you have underway, through your Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. You may identify barriers to health outcomes external to these dedicated programs, or you may identify that having a more coordinated, community-wide, or child-led approach to this work will achieve greater impact.

Why the focus on healthy eating, physical activity and mental wellbeing?

Providing options to ensure children and young people can grow up healthy, active and connected has significant benefits throughout their lives. There is increasing evidence to show that local governments are well-placed to affect change in their communities to increase local options for healthy eating, physical activity and mental wellbeing.

Through the partnerships, your organisation may identify underlying drivers that contribute to healthy eating, physical activity and mental wellbeing outcomes at a local level.

To what extent can we involve our local Community Health or PCP as lead project delivery partners in this project?

Does the funded project staff member need to be an employee of the local government or can they be located at a partner agency?

Local governments must be the lead organisation and they may be supported by other relevant community partners, such as a community health or Primary Care Partnership organisation.

We will consider proposals for locating staff at a partner agency on a case by case basis, however the Local Government must be the lead organisation submitting the application, and the work of this employee must be dedicated to the goals of the partnership including the connection with the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

Will we be entitled to additional funding throughout the partnership?

This will be determined throughout the partnerships. Local government partners may be supported to access funding for implementation of identified priorities through VicHealth during the partnership.

Additionally, we will provide support local governments to broker further relationships with external agencies. VicHealth may also commission collective services from external agencies where there are shared priorities across the local government partners.

Can we address other topics and population groups through our Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan?

Yes, you should prepare your MPHWP to ensure it meets the needs of your whole community and you are not limited from undertaking strategies and actions toward any other community priority as a result of being a VicHealth partner. The support and funding through this partnership will be dedicated toward children and young people's health and wellbeing through this plan.

Given the target cohorts, has the Department of Education and Training been engaged?

The Department of Health and Human Services are the primary Victorian Government Department involved in these partnerships, due to their responsibility of overseeing and endorsing the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans. While in some areas, local governments will work through school settings to engage with children and young people, the focus of these partnerships is on creating change through the policies, services and facilities in the remit of local governments.

What is the extent of the partnership support from Deakin University? What will local governments do and what will Deakin do?

Deakin University will provide:

- Training for staff from local governments and their agency partners to undertake systems mapping of children and young people's health and wellbeing
- The software (and training to use) to undertake systems mapping and data collection
- Organisation and coordination of child health data collection, analysis and feedback to communities
- Organisation and support for the collection of local causal maps
- Digital storage and protection of data collected
- A dedicated support person to liaise with and support local project staff

Local governments will provide:

- Identification and relationship building with key local leaders (who can contribute to the partnership goals)
- Staff to attend/participate in the training workshops

- Management of stakeholder relationships with key children and young people's settings (for example, schools) to undertake data collection activities
- Local staff support may be required to undertake data collection (particularly in larger populations)

What topics would be covered in the modules

Local government representatives will be engaged to co-design and test VicHealth's health promotion modules throughout development. Module topics can be added or amended to suit the identified needs of local governments. The indicative list of modules includes:

- Alcohol Harm Prevention
- Children and Young People's Voices - Kids co-designing healthy and sustainable environments
- Mental Wellbeing
- Active Neighbourhoods
- Healthy Food and Drink Environments
- Gender Equality
- Healthy and Sustainable Food Systems
- Active Women and Girls
- Tobacco Control
- Young People's Voices – Leadership and Advocacy approaches
- Early Years Nutrition