Victorian Medical Research Acceleration Fund – Precision Medicine Round

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Precision Medicine

In this round, projects need to apply an approach specific to the field of precision medicine. How will this be assessed?

Eligible applications will be assessed by an independent assessment panel and will be scored against the assessment criteria specified in section 7.2 of the Program Guidelines. The assessment criteria will include consideration of the extent to which the Applicant's Project aligns with and meets the Program objectives and outcomes and whether it applies an approach specific to the field of precision medicine, as defined in the Program Guidelines.

Why is this round of the Victorian Medical Research Acceleration Fund focusing on precision medicine?

Precision medicine is growing rapidly worldwide, and Victoria has strong research, clinical and industry capabilities in this field. This targeted funding round aims to build on this strength by supporting the pipeline of discovery and early-stage research and accelerating research translation in this strategic growth area.

Eligibility

Who is eligible to apply for funding?

The Program is available to organisations in the health service, education or research sectors, or an organisation that has a commercial relationship with an organisation in one of these sectors. Applicants must also hold an active Australian Business Number (ABN) and have current insurance policies for Public Liability (of at least $10 million) and Professional Indemnity (at least $5 million).

Information on eligible and ineligible entity types can be found in sections 3.2 and 3.3 of the Program Guidelines respectively.

Is collaboration mandatory?

Yes. To apply for this Program, collaboration with at least one other organisation is required. Applicants must state their preferred Collaborative Partner and must attach relevant proof of collaboration to their application.

Further information on eligibility requirements for Collaborative Partners can be found in section 4.2 of the Program Guidelines.

Can there be more than 2 Collaborative Partners?

Yes. Applicants can add the details of any additional Collaborative Partners as an optional attachment to the application.

Can international partners be involved in the project?

Yes. Project partners can be international or interstate companies or researchers, provided that the Project, including the majority of Project personnel, is primarily led from and undertaken in Victoria and that the research activities are predominately led from and conducted in Victoria.

Gender balance weighting

Does the Chief Investigator need to identify as a woman to apply for this Program?

No. This is not an eligibility criterion. However, if the Chief Investigator does identify as a woman at the time of project commencement, the application will be awarded an additional 2.5% assessment weighting. To access the additional weighting, Applicants will have to attest that they meet the criteria in the application form.

If successful, ensuring the project team is be led by a Chief Investigator who identifies as a woman will also become a requirement in the funding agreement, as per the template available on the Program webpage.

Does the research team need to consist of 50% women?

No. This is not an eligibility criterion. However, if the project team consists of at least 50% women at the time of project commencement, the Applicant will be awarded an additional 2.5% assessment weighting. To access the additional weighting, Applicants will have to attest that they meet the criteria in the application form.

If successful, ensuring the project team consists of at least 50% of people who identify as women will also become a requirement in the funding agreement, as per the template available on the Program webpage.

What if my project team isn't decided yet? Can I still attest that it will consist of 50% women when the project commences?

Yes. As long as you attest in the application form that at the time of project commencement the project team will consist of 50% women, you will be eligible for the additional 2.5% weighting. To access the additional weighting, Applicants will have to attest to meeting this criterion in the application form.

If successful, ensuring the project team consists of at least 50% of people who identify as women will also become a requirement in the funding agreement, as per the template available on the Program webpage.

What is the maximum additional weighting my application can receive?

Applicants may be eligible to receive a maximum of 5% additional weighting – that is, up to 2.5% additional weighting for each of the following criteria:

- Project teams where at least 50% of members identify as women at the time of project commencement.
- A Chief Investigator (CI) who identifies as a woman at the time of project commencement.

Where Applicants attest to meeting these criteria in the application form, the department will conduct due diligence checks to verify they have been met.

What if I attest to one or both of these criteria/criterion being met and by the time of project commencement one or both of these criteria/criterion are no longer met?

If an Applicant attests to meeting either criterion and subsequently fails to meet it, the department will reassess scoring and has at its absolute discretion the option of terminating the Funding Offer or Grant Agreement.

Funding

Can grant funding from another funding source be used as the required 1:1 cash co-contribution?

Grant funding awarded specifically to support the project submitted to the Program cannot be used as the required 1:1 cash co-contribution if it comes from another Victorian Government grant program or a grant program of another state or territory government or the Commonwealth Government. However, Applicants may use their own operating budgets, reserves or discretionary funds as Co-contribution Funding, including where those funds are supported by government funding not provided specifically for the purposes of the VMRAF Project.

Do I need to provide evidence of having secured matched co-funding in my application?

Yes. All Applicants are required to provide evidence to the department's satisfaction that they have secured Co-contribution in line with the requirements articulated in section 2.1 of the Program Guidelines. Co-contribution funding can be provided by the lead organisation, the Collaborative Partner, or another source.

Does the matched Co-contribution funding need to be dollar for dollar? How is this assessed?

Yes. Applicants must provide at least dollar ($AUD) for dollar ($AUD) matched cash Co-Contribution Funding. The department will assess the Evidence of Co-contribution Funding (outlined in section 6.2 of the Program Guidelines) submitted with each application. The department will determine at its absolute discretion whether the evidence of Co-Contribution Funding satisfies Program requirements and may request additional information to make this determination.

Can the matched Co-contribution funding be in-kind support?

No. In-kind funding cannot make up your co-contribution for the Program.

Is the matched Co-contribution funding subject to the eligible and ineligible expenditure items outlined in the Program Guidelines?

No. Applicants are only required to provide the department with evidence, to the department's satisfaction, that the Co-contribution Funding has been used for the purposes of the Applicant's project.

Any grant funding received as part of the Program must be expended in accordance with the Program Guidelines, including but not limited to the eligible and ineligible activities and expenses outlined in sections 5.2 and 5.3 respectively.

How much funding is available through the Program?

The budget for VMRAF Precision Medicine is expected to be around $2 million (GST exclusive). Grants can be applied for as follows:

Tier	Description	Available grant funding	Co-contribution Funding
Tier 1: Discovery and early-stage research	Early-stage innovative research proposals for Projects that demonstrate potential for translation at a later stage.	Up to $125,000 (GST exclusive)	1:1 (at least $1 Applicant contribution for every $1 of Grant funding)
Tier 2: Research translation	Accelerate translation of research into products, services or clinical practices.	Up to $500,000 (GST exclusive)	

Applications

What are the key dates for the Program?

The key dates for Program will be listed on the Program's webpage (link below). Key Program dates are indicative only and may be subject to change.

How many applications can each organisation submit?

Organisations may apply for funding for up to 4 independent research projects in total across the two tiers of the Program. For universities, this limit applies per Faculty: each Faculty may apply for funding for up to 4 independent research projects in total across the two tiers.

Does the research need to be conducted in Victoria?

As part of their application, Applicants must attest that they will ensure that the project, including the majority of project personnel, is primarily led from and undertaken in Victoria. Applicants also must attest that they will ensure that their research activities will predominately be led from and conducted in Victoria.

Is there a timeframe in which the project needs to be completed?

Funded projects must be commenced by the Applicant following execution by the Applicant and the department of an Agreement and completed within two years of the commencement date recorded in that Grant Agreement.

When will I hear about the outcome of my application?

It is anticipated that all Applicants will be advised via email of the outcome of their application in the first half of 2027.

What will happen if my application is successful?

Successful Applicants will be invited to enter into a legally binding Grant Agreement with the State of Victoria (State) as represented by the department and will be required to sign the Grant Agreement within 30 days of offer. As outlined in section 9.2 of the Program Guidelines, the Grant Agreement details all funding obligations and conditions.

Can I dispute the outcome of my application?

No. The decision to recommend and award funding under this Program is at the discretion of the portfolio minister and the department.

Who will own the Intellectual Property Rights of the project?

The entity that enters into the funding agreement with the department to deliver on the Project will own all research project Intellectual Property.

What are the conditions of the grant?

As a condition of funding, successful Applicants will be required to deliver regular project reports throughout the lifecycle of the Grant Agreement. Further conditions will be detailed in the funding agreement. A template Grant Agreement is available on the Program webpage.

Where can I find more information?

For more information regarding the Victorian Medical Research Acceleration Fund Precision Medicine, please view the Program Guidelines available on the Program's webpage: https://djsir.vic.gov.au/medical-research/sector-support/Victorian-Medical-Research-Acceleration-Fund

For email inquiries relating to the Program, please contact the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions at OHMR@ecodev.vic.gov.au

Important

Please note, to support the integrity and competitiveness of the Victorian Medical Research Acceleration Fund, departmental staff will not provide advice to Applicants regarding individual circumstances relating to their eligibility.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the Program Guidelines and this FAQ document which provide clear details on eligibility requirements.