



Alcohol and Drug Research Innovation Agenda

Grant Guidelines

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1. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Alcohol and Drugs Research Innovation Agenda (**ADRIA**). This Victorian Government initiative offers grant funding for eligible organisations to undertake research on Alcohol and Other Drugs (**AOD**).

The grants will fund research:

- based in Victoria
- focused on AOD

ADRIA represent a unique opportunity for the Victorian AOD sector to undertake research and contribute to the evidence base for reducing harms associated with AOD. The grants will help to establish Victoria as a national leader in AOD research.

These guidelines are to assist organisations in preparing their application.

Please note: These guidelines will be updated regularly. Please ensure you have the latest version, available on the ADRIA website.

This document is organised into the following sections:

- ❖ ABOUT THE GRANTS
- ❖ HOW TO APPLY
- ❖ FUNDING ALLOCATION
- ❖ KEY CONTACTS AND OTHER INFO

For further information or clarification on any matters relating to these guidelines, please contact James Petty, Grants Administration Officer, VAADA on 03 9412 5600 or jpetty@vaada.org.au

2. ABOUT THE GRANTS

2.1 Purpose

The Alcohol and Drug Research Innovation Agenda (**ADRIA**) is an initiative by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (**DHHS**). ADRIA's purpose is to:

Support innovative and responsive AOD research aimed at improving social and health outcomes for Victorians by informing program design, service excellence and policy development.

And

Support Victorian organisations providing funded AOD services to undertake and participate in research.

Please see ADRIA's Research Agenda for more detail, including ADRIA's core principles. See **2.10 Research Agenda**

2.2 What ADRIA funds

Areas of research suitable for ADRIA grant funding include:

- patterns of AOD use
- social attitudes toward AOD
- determinants of AOD risk and/or harm
- support, intervention or treatment for AOD dependence and/or harms
- prevention[†] and early intervention
- AOD-focused service provision and workforces
- priority populations[‡]
- improving client outcomes in AOD service provision
- improving AOD responses outside of the AOD sector
- AOD best practice and models of care
- improving links and collaboration between the AOD and other sectors
- innovation in any of these areas.

[†] Projects with a focus on prevention should be specific rather than general (i.e. involve cohorts or groups identified as being at-risk of AOD-related harms or dependence).

[‡] Priority populations refers to groups or cohorts of people who are identified as being at-risk of AOD-related dependence or harms; over-represented in AOD harms; underserved by AOD (or other) supports and services; or facing additional challenges relating to AOD.

2.3 Funding

Applicants can apply for grants of up to \$200,000 per year of the research.

Funding is available for between 12 and 48 months.

Note: Collaborative projects and those identifying additional funding sources will be considered favourably.

TIP

You can request a grant of any amount up to \$200,000 per year. The length of the project is also up to you, but should be in six-month blocks (i.e. 12, 18, 24 months etc.).

However, the larger the amount or longer the research, the greater impact your project should have. Do not request \$400,000 over 24 months for research that could be done in half the time and for half the money.

2.4 Funding streams

ADRIA has committed 25% of total grant funding to Aboriginal led or focused research. This decision reflects the fact that Victoria's Aboriginal communities are over-represented in experiences of AOD-related harms and are disproportionately impacted by AOD-related interventions and responses.

Reflecting this decision, ADRIA will have two funding streams: a General Stream and an Aboriginal Stream.

VAADA will continue to administer the general funding stream. Lowitja Institute – Australia's peak body for research in Aboriginal health– will administer Aboriginal Stream.

There will be a separate application process for the Aboriginal stream. To enquire about the Aboriginal Stream, please contact Lowitja Institute at grants@lowitja.org.au

Please note: applications from Victorian ACCOs, Aboriginal researchers, or focusing primarily on Aboriginal issues or communities are still eligible to apply through the general funding stream. These applications will be assessed in consultation with Lowitja Institute.

2.5 Timeline

Please note: Due to COVID-19, the opening of ADRIA grant applications has been delayed.

One application round per year. ADRIA has a two-stage application process:

- Expression of Interest (**EOI**)
- Full Application

Applicants who submit a successful EOI will be invited to proceed to the next stage: Full Application.

Table 1: Key dates for the 2020 ADRIA grant round

Milestone	Date
EOI submissions	21 October - 30 November 2020
Successful applicants invited to submit Full Application	18 December 2020
Full Application submissions	18 December 2020 - 1 March 2021
Applicants notified and grant monies allocated	April/May 2021

2.6 Eligibility

To be eligible for an ADRIA grant, the applicant organisation must be:

- i. funded by DHHS to deliver AOD-related supports, services or treatment (including harm reduction); OR
 - ii. a Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO); OR
 - iii. Partnered for the purposes of the proposed research with one (or more) eligible organisations (**note:** the organisation applying should meet one of the above criteria);
- AND
- iv. Have public and product liability insurance covering professional indemnity, entity and employer liability cover.

Applicants may submit multiple applications, however, only one grant will be awarded per lead investigator (if successful).

The lead investigator on one successful application may be named as a secondary investigator on an additional two successful applications.

TIP

If you are unsure if your organisation is eligible for an ADRIA grant, talk to your manager or someone in the Executive.

If you are still unsure, contact VAADA (see page 4 of this document for contact details).

2.7 Exclusions

Applications that include any of the following **will not** be considered:

- **Animal testing** – Projects that involve animal testing.
- **Lab research as sole method** – Research conducted solely in labs (for example, pre-clinical pharmacology).
- **Commercial research and/or development** – Projects involving commercial market research or developing new commercial products (including drugs and medicines).
- **Retrospective funding** – Finished projects or those where the research component is complete.
- **Scholarship top-ups** – for undergraduate, masters or doctoral students.
- **Auspecting** – The organisation applying must be directly involved in the running and operation of the project.
- **Inappropriately sponsored** – Projects sponsored financially, otherwise supported by or associated with inappropriate sources (such as the tobacco or alcohol industries) or sources that pose a risk, reputational or other, to VAADA or the Victorian Government.

2.8 Research Agenda

ADRIA's Research Agenda establishes the scope of research suitable for grants, and outlines the principles underpinning ADRIA. The Research Agenda is available on the website.

ADRIA's Research Agenda comprises two domains: Purpose and Principles. Applicants will be required to demonstrate their proposed research alignment with ADRIA's Research Agenda.

2.8.1 Purpose

ADRIA's purpose is:

To support innovative and responsive AOD research to improve social and health outcomes for Victorians by informing program design, service excellence and policy development.

2.8.2 Principles

ADRIA is guided by the following five principles:

Inclusive

Applicants demonstrate an inclusive approach to the proposed research. The inclusion of affected communities and their perspectives is prioritised in research design, activities and analysis. Project outcomes and benefits are accessible by all project partners including participants.

Research involving diverse¹ and/or marginalised communities demonstrates respect for the experiences and perspectives of these communities and acknowledges and responds to the enduring patterns of social inequality experienced by marginalised communities.

Person-centred

The proposed research demonstrates respect and compassion for research participants and an understanding that people are at the heart of AOD issues and harms.

Outcomes-focused

The research is aimed at improving or otherwise strengthening outcomes for clients, affected communities and workforces in tangible ways. Outcomes are not imposed upon affected communities and applications clearly articulate the anticipated benefits of the project for involved communities and workforces.

Applications for funding demonstrate an awareness of the broader context of the research, such as sector capacity; current or emerging trends in patterns of use or harm; social, economic and/or political factors, and identifies opportunities and potential outcomes related to these.

Evidence-informed

Applications demonstrate a robust understanding of and experience in areas relevant to the proposed research (i.e. Alcohol and Other Drugs, social and community services provision, program design, public health, Aboriginal health, etc.). The project's rationale, method and approach are informed by current accepted understandings of the issues the project intends to address.²

Innovative

Applications seek to explore or engage with novel or emerging methodologies, models, programs, interventions or concepts. Projects identify limitations, barriers and weaknesses in current systems and seek to improve, change or traverse these.

¹ Diverse in respect of gender; ethnic, national or cultural background; class and poverty; religion; CALD and migrant experience; geography; health status including mental health, wellbeing and experiences of trauma; disability and neuro-diversity; experiences of trauma, histories of incarceration and/or inequality. Gender refers to all expressions of gender and sexual identity including normative expressions (i.e. cis-gendered, heterosexual).

² This can include projects that seek to challenge current accepted understandings of an issue. However, such projects must demonstrate sufficient understanding of the issue and engage critically with the understandings they plan to challenge.

TIP

Applicants should demonstrate an understanding of and engagement with these principles in their application.

Your proposed research does not need to align with all five Principles. However, it must align with ADRIA's Purpose and should align with at least two of the Principles listed above.

2.8.1 Priorities

Due to several factors including the impact of COVID-19, priority areas of research will not be identified for ADRIA's inaugural grant round.

Please note: Research priorities are subject to change and priorities may be added in response to changing needs and demands in the Victorian AOD sector.

2.9 Research Ethics

Research projects involving human research will need approval from a Human Research Ethics Committee (**HREC**) *before data collection begins*.

The National Health and Medical Research Council's [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research](#) defines human research as:

Research conducted with or about people, or their data or tissue. Human participation in research is therefore to be understood broadly, to include the involvement of human beings through:

- *taking part in surveys, interviews or focus groups;*
- *undergoing psychological, physiological or medical testing or treatment;*
- *being observed by researchers;*
- *researchers having access to their personal documents or other materials;*
- *the collection and use of their body organs, tissues or fluids (e.g. skin, blood, urine, saliva, hair, bones, tumour and other biopsy specimens) or their exhaled breath;*
- *access to their information (in individually identifiable, re-identifiable or non-identifiable form) as part of an existing published or unpublished source or database.*

TIP

Obtaining research ethics can be a complicated and time-consuming process. If your proposed research will require ethics approval but you are unfamiliar with the process, you should consider a project partnership with an organisation or researcher familiar with the research ethics process.

Please note: The provision of grant monies is subject to obtaining ethics approval (for projects that require it). If a project requiring ethics approval fails to obtain it, the project cannot proceed and allocated grant monies will be reacquired.

Please see the ADRIA FAQ for further information on research ethics.

2.10 Other criteria

2.10.1 Collaborative projects

Applications for collaborative projects are strongly encouraged and will be considered favourably. Applications for collaborative projects should include letters of support from project partners' Executive Officer OR Director OR Head of Research OR equivalent.

Applicants proposing collaborative projects will be required to nominate a 'lead agency'. The lead agency will:

- be required to submit the online application forms;
- be the sole recipient of grant funding (VAADA will not 'split' funding payments between project partners);
- take sole legal responsibility for meeting agreed milestone and delivering outcomes (including consequences for not meeting or delivering these);
- be responsible for ensuring project partners are suitable, and for effectively communicating the conditions of the partnership to project partners;
- be responsible for managing relationships with project partners.

Please note: VAADA will only deal with the lead agency on matters pertaining to ADRIA funding and/or the research activities supported.

2.10.2 Public dissemination

Research funded through ADRIA should be suitable for public dissemination. VAADA and/or DHHS reserve the right to identify research funded through ADRIA in promotional activities.

2.10.3 Research involving Aboriginal communities

25% of total ADRIA funding is dedicated to research focusing on Aboriginal people and communities, to be administered by Lowitja Institute. See Section 2.4 of these guidelines for more information and for contact details.

Research focusing on Aboriginal people and communities is eligible for funding through the general stream.

Aboriginal-focused applications submitted to the general stream will be assessed via the normal assessment process. However, VAADA will liaise with Lowitja Institute regarding assessment of the application. This may include Lowitja Institute reviewing the application and the notes from this being provided to those assessing applications in the general stream.

Those considering submitting an Aboriginal-focused application to the general stream should consult the following resources:

- *Researching Indigenous Health: A practical guide for researchers* - Lowitja Institute, available [here](#)
- *The making of a great relationship: A review of healthy partnership between mainstream and indigenous organisations* – VACCHO, available [here](#)
- *Korin Korin Dhalit Djak: Aboriginal health, wellbeing and safety strategic plan 2017-2027* Victorian State Government, available [here](#)

2.10.4 Research involving marginalised communities

Research involving marginalised and disadvantaged communities is historically complex. While research on the challenges facing these communities is important, how that research is done has often been exclusionary, disempowering or actively harmful to the communities being studied.

If your research involves members of disadvantaged or marginalised communities, there are several questions you should consider:

- Does the research account for and include voices and perspectives of community members?
- Do community members have the opportunity to contribute to the research, including the early stages such as design?
- Is the research topic or question identified as a priority by the community in question?
- Does the research prioritise the safety (psychological, cultural or otherwise) of the community members that are participating in the research?
- Does the community support the research?
- Do community members have an opportunity to review the finding prior to their publication or release?
- Is the research likely to benefit the community in question? How? Is this benefit specific to those who participate in the research or to their community generally?

- Does your project team include members of the community in question? If not, why not?
- Are there opportunities to increase consultation with or inclusion of members of the community in question?

TIP

Research that focuses primarily or exclusively on a marginalised or disadvantaged community (for example, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, LGBTIQ+ people, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities or sex workers) should involve, at the very least, extensive consultation with those communities.

A better approach is for researchers to partner with organisations representing these communities and do the research together. This approach is called 'co-design'.

2.10.5 Questions

If you have any questions regarding ADRIA, please contact VAADA (see section 5.1 for contact details)

Note: In the interest of fairness, responses to questions about ADRIA will be added to the Frequently Asked Questions (**FAQ**) page (excluding any identifying or sensitive information relating to a specific applicant or application). The FAQ are available on ADRIA's website.

2.11 Grant conditions

The following conditions are compulsory and will be included in the funding agreement successful applicants will be required to sign for funding to be allocated.

1. The Grantee (applicant) must use the whole of the grant exclusively for the research as described in the application for the grant and not for any other purpose.
2. If the research is not completed by the end date specified on the application (the 'Completion Date'), the Grantee's use of grant monies must be ceased and returned.
3. The Grantee must advise VAADA of any material change which may affect their ability to undertake or complete the research within the specified period.
4. The Grantee must keep detailed financial records to enable the use of grant funds to be checked and acquitted.
5. The Grantee must acknowledge the support of the Grantor (DHHS) in any published or display material related to the Project. You can request a digital copy of the ADRIA logo from adria@vaada.org.au

6. The Grantee must give the Grantor a financial acquittal and project report. Both the acquittal and report must be submitted by the due date specified.
7. If the project is not completed within 12 months of payment or, if the grant is payable in instalments then within 12 months of the first pay instalment, the Grantee must submit a progress report to VAADA.
8. The Grantee must ensure that all relevant rights, consents, ethics approvals, licenses and permissions have been obtained prior to the proposed research activity being undertaken.
9. By accepting payment of the grant, the Grantee accept these conditions and other obligations specified in project guidelines and funding contract.

Note: Failure to meet and comply with grant conditions will be taken into consideration if future application are submitted to ADRIA.

2.12 Monitoring, reporting and acquittal

Projects funded under ADRIA will be subject to monitoring, reporting and acquittal requirements as well as other restrictions and limitations.

2.12.1 Project activities

Projects funded under ADRIA will be required to carry out the activities described in their proposal. Any change to the project activities will need to be submitted, reviewed and approved by the Evaluation Panel.

2.12.2 Funding Agreement

All successful applicants will be required to sign a funding agreement. This sets out the applicant's obligations in relation to the grant. No funding will be allocated without a signed funding agreement.

2.12.3 Reporting

Applicants are required to submit progress reports (as stipulated in their funding agreement). Applicants who fail to meet these reporting requirements will be subject to audit and may be required to return grant funding.

At the conclusion of the project, applicants will submit a final report on the project that acknowledges the source of funding, describes the research methodology (including ethics process and approval if applicable), findings, a discussion of project outcomes and any ongoing changes or benefits arising from the project.

2.12.4 Acquittal

Applicants are required to provide a financial acquittal of the grant. A copy of the acquittal form will be provided to you once the funding agreement is signed.

Applicants that do not submit a final acquittal will be subject to audit and may be required to return grant funding.

2.12.5 Restrictions and limitations

Successful applicants are not entitled to any further funding beyond that described in the funding agreement. No funding beyond the amount specified in the funding agreement will be provided in support of the original application.

2.12.6 Publications arising

Any publications arising from the funded research activity must appropriately acknowledge ADRIA grant funding as a Victorian Government initiative. For example:

This research was funded (partially or fully) by the Victorian Government through the Alcohol and Drug Research Innovation Agenda (ADRIA).

Publications include journal articles, project reports, evaluations, promotional and advertising activity, editorial and any other outward facing media.

3. HOW TO APPLY

ADRIA has a two-stage application process. The first stage is an Expression of Interest (**EOI**). Applicants who submit a successful EOI will be invited to progress to the second stage: Full Application.

3.1 Expression of Interest

EOIs are submitted online via the online submission portal on the ADRIA website. EOIs must be submitted via the online portal.

3.1.1 Assessment criteria

EOIs will be selected on the following criteria:

- i. The applicant and proposed research are eligible for ADRIA grant funding;
- ii. The proposed research demonstrates alignment with ADRIA's Research Agenda;
- iii. The proposed research activity:
 - o Is feasible (within both the timeframe and budget);
 - o Demonstrates understanding of the issue(s) to be researched and engagement with appropriate evidence;
 - o Has clearly identified a research question(s);
 - o Is likely to answer the research question;
 - o Is likely to contribute to the health and wellbeing of Victorians impacted by AOD-related harms.

Expressions of interest must be submitted online by 5pm on 30th November 2020.

3.2 Full application

Applicants who submit a successful EOI will be invited to submit a Full Application.

Full Applications **must be** submitted online via the online submission portal on the ADRIA website.

3.2.1 Assessment criteria

Full Applications will be assessed on the following criteria:

Research Agenda – 20%

- The proposal demonstrates alignment with ADRIA's Research Agenda.

Benefit to be derived (demonstrated need) – 20%

- The application identifies anticipated benefits of the project. These may be broad (e.g. addressing a gap in knowledge), specific (for the population served by the project) and organisational (benefits for the applicant organisation).

Research design – 30%

- The proposed research is feasible within the proposed timeframe and budget; has a clearly define research question; identifies and describes an appropriate method of investigation (research activity).

Project team – 20%

- The project team has relevant experience, expertise and skills (relative to opportunity). This may include a track-record of research, experience working with relevant groups or issues, or lived experience.

Innovation – 10%

- The proposal demonstrates innovation in one or more of the following areas: research topic or focus, research design, project partnerships (including with communities of interest) or other areas of the project.

Note: Projects demonstrating partnership and collaboration (for example, between an eligible organisation and university or research institute), will be considered favourably.

Applicants will receive a confirmation email upon receipt of their full application. If a confirmation email is not received within two business days of submission, please contact VAADA (see section 5.1 for contact details).

Full applications must be submitted using the online application form by 1st March 2021.

4. FUNDING ALLOCATION

4.1 Funding agreements and conditions

Successful applicants will be required to sign a funding agreement to receive funding. Grant monies will not be allocated until the funding agreement is agreed to and signed.

The agreement spells out the conditions of funding including reporting obligations and other requirements. Funded projects will be required to submit progress reports as part of their funding agreement.

Grantees must also submit a final report and financially acquit the grant upon completion of the research.

Under no circumstances will funding be transferred into a personal account. Applicants will provide organisational bank account details.

4.2 Grant instalments

Grantees will receive their allocated funding in instalments. This is to ensure project oversight and compliance with funding agreements.

4.2.1 *Single year (12-month) projects*

Single year projects will receive 75% of allocated funding at the beginning of the project, with the final 25% received upon satisfactory completion and acquittal.

4.2.2 *Multi-year projects*

Multi-year projects will receive 40% of allocated funding at the beginning of the project, 40% upon reaching a key project milestone (progress report), and the final 20% upon satisfactory completion and acquittal.

5. KEY CONTACTS AND OTHER INFO

5.1 Key contacts

For questions relating to ADRIA and the application process, please contact VAADA Project Officer – Special Projects, James Petty at jpetty@vaada.org.au or 03 9412 5600.

For questions for the Victorian Government and their funding of ADRIA, please contact the Department of Health and Human Services.

5.2 Frequently Asked Question

FAQ are available on the ADRIA website.

5.3 ADRIA roles and Responsibilities

This section outlines the roles of key decision-making groups in the ADRIA grant program.

5.3.1 *Victorian Department of Health and Human Services*

The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (**DHHS**) provided the funding for ADRIA.

The Minister will make the final determination for which projects are successful, based on recommendations from the ADRIA Evaluation Panel.

5.3.2 *The Victorian Alcohol & Drug Association*

The Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association (**VAADA**) has been commissioned by DHHS to administrate ADRIA. VAADA is responsible for establishing and running the ADRIA grants program.

VAADA is committed to ensuring ADRIA operates to a very high standard of transparency, probity and professionalism. VAADA's role **does not** include determining how funding is allocated

VAADA has convened two independent bodies – the ADRIA Advisory Group and the ADRIA Evaluation Panel – to oversee ADRIA and to evaluate individual applications respectively.

5.3.3 *ADRIA Advisory Group*

The ADRIA Advisory Group provides independent guidance to VAADA on various aspects of ADRIA. The approval of the Advisory Group is required for various key components of ADRIA and any changes to ADRIA will require the Advisory Group's approval.

Advisory Group members come from a range of relevant backgrounds and professional experience such as research, service delivery, AOD advocacy and lived experience. Membership of the Advisory Group is voluntary.

The primary tasks of the Advisory Group are to:

- Establish a research agenda and priorities for the first two years of the program.
- Oversee various aspects of the administration of ADRIA, such as convening the Evaluation Panel, approving key program documents and providing relevant guidance and expertise to VAADA in its role as administrator of ADRIA.

The ADRIA Advisory Group has no direct role in determining the outcomes of specific grant applications.

5.3.4 ADRIA Evaluation Panel

The Evaluation Panel is comprised of independent experts from a variety of fields (research, service delivery, public health, lived experience, etc.).

The Evaluation Panel's role is to evaluate and provide feedback on ADRIA applications and make recommendations to DHHS regarding the eligibility and merit of each application.

The Minister will make the final determination regarding successful applications.

Members of the Evaluation Panel will be required to declare any conflicts of interest regarding applications and will not assess applications for which a conflict is identified.

5.3.5 Lowitja Institute

Lowitja Institute are the national peak body for Aboriginal health research. They will be administering ADRIA's Aboriginal funding stream (see section 2.4 in this document). Lowitja Institute are based in Melbourne and can be contacted at grants@lowitja.org.au or 03 8341 5599.