

GUIDELINES

Social Cohesion Research Grants Program 2017-18

Round 3

MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY PREMIER AND THE MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS



Community cohesion is vital for a healthy and vibrant society. For the Victorian Government, social cohesion means ensuring our society is inclusive, fair, respectful, protects freedoms, enables equal rights, and provides access to opportunities. It includes and compels us to engage in reciprocal, intercultural learning and understanding of each other and celebrates the strength of our diversity.

Victoria values, respects and celebrates its history of diversity. It's what this state is built on and what we are proud of.

We are living in complex times. Technology, people movement, communications and global connections have created new and exciting ways to live in the world, but at the same time these elements have created occasions for fear and uncertainty to take hold. To address the multifaceted issues that we face, we need to work together to remain resilient and capable of responding to those challenges that seek to divide us.

Since the establishment of the Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Ministerial Taskforce in 2015, there have been a number of significant global events; the ramifications of which we are seeing in our own community through divisive rhetoric and action. We have and continue to work with community, researchers and governments to challenge these fears and to build on our successes in shaping the positive and diverse Victoria we have today and which underpins our future prosperity.

A key principle of the *Strategic Framework to Strengthen Victoria's Social Cohesion and the Resilience of its Communities* is the commitment to building an evidence base.

The Research Institute on Social Cohesion (RIOSCI) was established to support research in our local Victorian context, and to deliver practical research outcomes which can influence policy and practice.

To date, we have delivered two rounds of the Social Cohesion Research Grants Program (the Program). Outcomes from these rounds are expected from late 2017. Through the Program's research projects we partner with researchers and communities to gather and share new knowledge to ensure we can address complex social issues together.

This final research round is no different. Like previous rounds, we are building on our learnings and trying to address gaps in our knowledge. The research priorities for this third round focus on more challenging aspects of our local context that negatively impact upon Victoria's social cohesion. However, understanding ways of addressing these difficult issues are essential if we are to maintain and strengthen our cohesive society.

We look forward to working with you to foster a strong, vibrant and cohesive Victoria built on the strength of our evidence.

The Hon James Merlino MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education

Robin Scott MP
Minister for Multicultural Affairs



OVERVIEW

In May 2015, the Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Ministerial Taskforce (Taskforce) was established to lead Victoria in adopting a whole-of-government whole-of-community collaborative approach to building resilience and strengthening social cohesion. Integral to this approach is the aim to support Victorians to identify, reject, respond and recover from violent extremism.

The Taskforce is chaired by the Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, the Hon James Merlino MP. Other members include the Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Robin Scott MP, the Minister for Police, the Hon Lisa Neville MP and the Minister for Youth Affairs Jenny Mikakos MLC, Chief Commissioner Graham Ashton, Victorian Multicultural Commissioner Helen Kapalos, and Executive Director Emergency Management Mark Duckworth.

The Community Resilience Unit in the Department of Premier and Cabinet has been created by the Taskforce to administer the research program and other programs and projects as directed by the Taskforce.

Research priorities for the two previous grant rounds were informed in association with advice from the RIOSC Expert Reference Group. This third and final round builds on the research priorities from the last two rounds and narrows the focus to those knowledge gaps that have not yet been addressed.

Approved grants will align with the *Strategic Framework to Strengthen Victoria's Social Cohesion and the Resilience of its Communities (Strategic Framework)* and support the evaluation of the effectiveness of policies and programs relating to social cohesion, community resilience and the prevention of violent extremism.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

FUNDING AVAILABLE

The Social Cohesion Research Grants Program (Program) supports the objectives of the *Strategic Framework*. The long-term, overall objective of the Program is to:

- Fill gaps in knowledge and respond to the rapidly evolving environment associated with social cohesion, community resilience and factors which contribute to violent extremism;
- Understand the development of effective whole-of-community initiatives on building key resilience features;
- Better understand the protective factors that prevent people being drawn to violent extremism;
- Support Government and other stakeholders to make evidence-based decisions for program and policy design and implementation;
- Support a socially cohesive Victoria underpinned by social justice and equity in which all Victorians have a sense of belonging, acceptance and worth; and
- Promote partnerships between researchers, government and community.

Total funding of \$500,000 (excluding GST) is available for the 2017-18 Program.

Research applicants can apply for project funding of up to \$75,000 (excluding GST) for projects up to 12 months of duration.





PROGRAM RESEARCH PRIORITIES

The research priorities for this Program have been reviewed in consultation with an expert academic reference group, and endorsed by the Taskforce. This round seeks to address those knowledge gaps from previous rounds that have not been addressed and therefore a narrower set of research priorities are outlined.

The Program aims to understand innovative approaches that strengthen open-mindedness, empathy and capacity for critical thinking and tackle issues around violent extremism in culturally and context-sensitive ways.

We are interested in understanding practical initiatives for strengthening social cohesion, community resilience and the prevention of violent extremism. Outcomes from research projects would, where relevant, feed into the development of evidence-based policy and programs in government and community contexts. We want to build on existing research and knowledge by addressing gaps and providing nuanced understanding of our contemporary context.

Round 3 research priorities are seeking to:

- Understand the impact of online environments and/or media on:
 - Building networks including the link between global and local connections;
 - Building or diminishing resilience to social challenges and adversities;
 - Disrupting or strengthening social networks;
 - The relationship between online and offline engagement;
 - Conditions enabling resistance or attraction to violent extremist narratives;

- The scale, spectrum and nature of violent extremist narratives relating to or impacting on social cohesion and resilience in Victoria; or
- The utility of public health messaging strategies for reducing social harms caused by violent extremist attitudes and behaviours.

- Understand how young people build digital resilience when navigating and interacting with a range of online content.
- Understand how and why alternative/counter-narratives (both online and offline) may or may not be effective in preventing or undermining the appeal and uptake of violent extremism.
- Understand the breadth of program types, including online environments, that can develop bridging or bonding networks at community level and their effect in strengthening social cohesion and community resilience.
- Examine how online environments may promote a sense of grievance, resentment, frustration and/or disempowerment that makes violent extremist narratives attractive, and understand possible ways for dealing with these sentiments.
- Examine the positive role of online environments for promoting and strengthening individual and/or community resilience.

Definitions can be found at page 11.

Please note that although national and international contexts are interconnected with the local Victorian context, it is expected that all research outcomes will have direct relevance to, and be able to inform, decision making within Victoria.

PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are important for fostering innovation, cross-sector collaboration and whole-of-community approaches to finding effective responses to these complex issues.

Partnerships are strongly encouraged between lead applicants and other individuals or groups from research institutions, government agencies, community groups and/or not-for-profit organisations.

Lead applicants may establish interstate and/or international partnership(s).

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

Eligible lead applicants must meet all of the following requirements:

1. Be a member of the Research Institute on Social Cohesion (RIOSOC).
2. Be part of an institution, organisation or government agency which undertakes research, or has a proven history of being able to undertake research.
3. Be based in a locality with a Victorian postcode and have their head office in Victoria.
4. Be a legal entity, such as an incorporated body or association, and be able to enter into legal agreements with the Victorian Government represented by the Community Resilience Unit, Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC);
5. Have an Australian Business Number (ABN); and
6. Have at least \$10 million Public Liability Insurance to cover all aspects of the project.





TIMELINE

The timeline and details are:

Activity	Proposed timeframe
Applications open	Monday 3 July 2017
Applications close	11.59pm Friday 25 August 2017
Notification of outcomes	Late 2017
Completion of research project	Up to 12 months from commencement date of the relevant Funding Agreement (see Funding Conditions)

ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND CRITERIA



Eligible applications will be assessed by an Assessment Panel comprised of academic and government representatives. Panel members will have access to all applications submitted.

The Assessment Panel will meet to discuss assessments and make recommendations to the Taskforce for final approval. Assessment will take into account scoring, comments, and the balance of applications across the research priorities.

In some cases the Assessment Panel may request applicants to provide additional information. For example, evidence of support and partnership with other organisations, or how ethical considerations will be addressed.

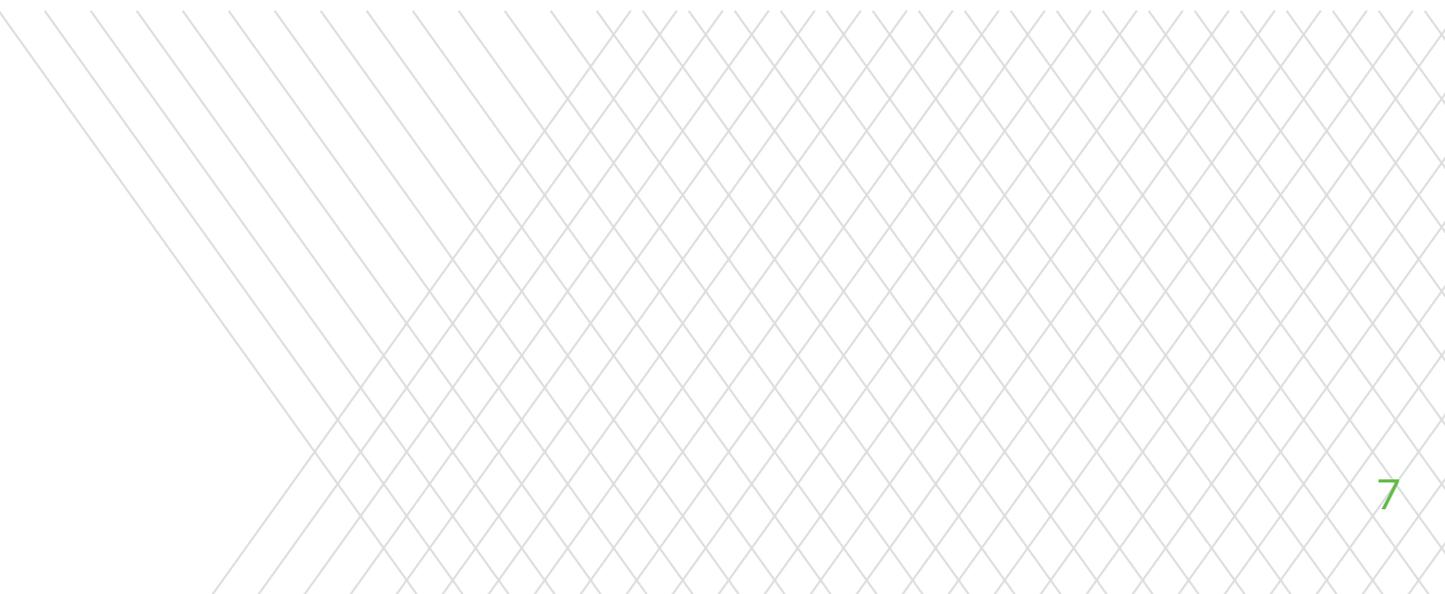
Applications will be assessed against the following selection criteria:

Selection Criterion 1 (35%): Alignment with the Strategic Framework and the research priorities approved by the Taskforce. This includes the degree of alignment with one or more of the research priorities, the extent to which it may address existing knowledge gaps, and originality.

Selection Criterion 2 (20%): Capability (experience and expertise) of the proposed research team, including demonstration of sound knowledge of current theory and practice, and awareness of previous and ongoing research.

Selection Criterion 3 (30%): Quality of project design, value for money and proposed methods. This includes clarity of research objectives, human research ethics considerations, feasibility and probability of success, strength of multi-disciplinary approach, capacity for staged-release of research findings and capacity to leverage other research activities, cooperative linkages (including in-kind contributions), and access to additional funding sources.

Selection Criterion 4 (15%): Value for money, as evidenced by a budget detailing reasonable expenditure for each budget item, and the availability other funding sources and contributions from your organization or partners.





FUNDING STRUCTURE

FUNDING CONDITIONS

Payment milestones will be discussed with each grant recipient during the preparation of the Funding Agreement. The length of time of the research project may impact on the number of payment milestones. There will be a minimum of three payment milestones for each project including:

- 40% on signing of the Funding Agreement. Funding Agreements will only be signed subject to the provision of any additional information requested by the Assessment Panel.
- 40% on the receipt of a progress report including methodology, methods, preliminary outputs and analysis.
- 20% upon submission of the final report, including any data sets collected whilst undertaking the research.

Payments will be made via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). All claims must be submitted on a tax invoice and be endorsed by the Chief Executive Officer or equivalent of the recipient organisation.

Non-financial milestones including project plans and draft reports may be included as part of the Funding Agreement.

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a Funding Agreement with the Victorian Government through the Department of Premier and Cabinet. The terms and conditions of the Funding Agreement by DPC are fixed and no substantive changes will be accepted.

You may request a copy of the Funding Agreement template by contacting the Community Resilience Unit on (03) 7017 8112.

All successful applications will be required to maintain at least \$10 million Public Liability Insurance to cover all aspects of the project for the term of the agreement. Successful applicants will be required to produce a certificate of currency to verify their insurance.

APPLICATION PROCESS OVERVIEW



STEP 1 – Read these Guidelines to see if your organisation and your proposal is eligible.

STEP 2 – Consider the selection criteria in relation to your proposal.

STEP 3 – If you have any questions, discuss your application with the Grants Enquiry Line on 1300 366 356 or communityresilience@dpc.vic.gov.au.

STEP 4 – Submit your form online at <https://dpc1force.com/publicform/scrgrant3>

Applicants will be notified of final outcomes in late 2017.

For information please visit the Research Institute on Social Cohesion at www.vic.gov.au/riosc



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

CONTACTS AND ENQUIRIES

Please refer to the following links for additional information related to the Program:

- Research Institute on Social Cohesion
www.vic.gov.au/riosc
- Community Resilience Unit
www.dpc.vic.gov.au/CommunityResilience
- Strategic Framework to strengthen Victoria's Social Cohesion and the Resilience of its Communities – www.dpc.vic.gov.au/CommunityResilience
- Mapping Social Cohesion – The Scanlon Foundation Surveys 2016 <http://scanlonfoundation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/2016-Mapping-Social-Cohesion-Report-FINAL-with-covers.pdf>
- Australians Today – The Australia@2015 Scanlon Foundation Survey <http://scanlonfoundation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Australians-Today.pdf>

For more information and to discuss your application, please contact the Community Resilience Unit:

- Frequently Asked Questions: <http://www.vic.gov.au/riosc/social-cohesion-research-grants.html>
- Phone: 1300 366 356
- Email: communityresilience@dpc.vic.gov.au
- Website: www.vic.gov.au/riosc



DEFINITIONS



The following definitions are provided for the purpose of these Guidelines.

Resilience - The capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, businesses and systems to survive, adapt and grow no matter what kinds of chronic stresses or acute shocks they experience. (100 Resilient Cities 2016)

Partnerships – Partnerships means financial or non-financial collaboration between two or more parties to undertake the research.

Violent Extremism – A willingness to use violence, or support the use of violence by others, to promote a political, ideological or religious goal. Violent extremism includes a willingness to use or support terrorism, other forms of politically-motivated violence (e.g. violent protests) and some forms of communal violence (e.g. racially-motivated assaults).

Social Cohesion – The degree to which a society creates a sense of belonging and promotes trust. In Australia, the key measurement of social cohesion is achieved through the Scanlon-Monash Index (SMI) of Social Cohesion which provides an overview in the five core domains of social cohesion:

- Belonging: shared value, identification with Australia, trust.
- Social justice and equity: evaluation of policies, views on the adequacy of financial support for people on low incomes, the gap between high and low incomes, trust in the Australian government.
- Participation: voluntary work, political and cooperative involvement.
- Acceptance and rejection, legitimacy: experience of discrimination, attitudes towards minorities and newcomers.
- Worth: life satisfaction and happiness, future expectations.

