



Victorian
Cardiovascular
Research Network



Heart
Foundation

Vic CVRN Career Development
Grant 2026

VIC CVRN – CAREER ADVANCEMENT GRANT 2026: GUIDELINES

The Victorian Cardiovascular Research Network (**Vic CVRN**) is funded and hosted by the National Heart Foundation of Australia (Heart Foundation) and additionally financed by Victorian universities and research institutes, collectively known as the 2026 Vic CVRN Institutional Members (see [Appendix 1](#)). The Vic CVRN Career Development Grant provides funding to support Early-and Mid-Career Researchers (EMCRs) to undertake activities that build research capacity and capability and strengthen their career track records. It is designed to be flexible and responsive to individual career needs. The scheme aims to enhance the recipient's competitiveness when applying for future research funding.

On behalf of the Vic CVRN, the Heart Foundation, will award up to **ten (10)** individual grants, each valued at up to **\$1,500**, as a one-off grant to be used within a period of up to **12-months** from the start date of the grant agreement.

The Vic CVRN and Heart Foundation reserves the right to make changes to the grant guidelines at their discretion.

1. Eligibility

To be eligible to receive this grant, applicants must:

- Be a researcher working in cardiovascular health, including prevention, diagnosis, management, or related conditions (e.g. stroke, diabetes, kidney disease)
- Be an early- to mid-career researcher, defined as <10 years post-PhD (excluding career disruptions, see below)
 - Note: Academic title (e.g. Associate Professor) does not determine eligibility. Applicants must meet the career stage definition, and the proposed activity must align with the objectives of the scheme.
- Be a current member of the Vic CVRN
- Be from an NHMRC Administering Institution.
- Be an Australian or New Zealand citizen, an Australian permanent resident, or have applied for Australian permanent residency at the time of the application.
- Only apply once per funding round.
- Declare conflicts of interest if they are a member of the Vic CVRN Rising Stars Subcommittee or their supervisor or manager is a member of the Vic CVRN Steering Committee. Appropriate conflict of interest processes will be implemented during the review process.

2. Leave of absence

A career disruption is defined as a prolonged interruption to an applicant's capacity to work, due to:

- Pregnancy
- Major illness or injury
- Carer responsibilities

A period of career disruption will be defined in accordance with the Heart Foundation Research Program Funding Guidelines [2026 Research Program Funding Guidelines](#).

3. Evidence of leave of absence

Leave must be evidenced via a letter from, or endorsed by, the applicants administering institution confirming the amount of time, dates, and reason for the absence.

4. Application

Applications must include a letter of support from a supervisor or head of department outlining their support for the application.

Only one application can be made per funding round by any one applicant.

5. Use of funding

The grant funding may be used for or towards any activity justified to significantly contribute to and advance the recipient's career and career track record. The grant must be expended within 12 months of the start date of the grant agreement regardless of the recipient's FTE.

Possible uses of the funding include:

- **Subscription fees** such as professional journals, platforms
- **Journal publication fees** where institutional coverage is not available
- **Professional and specialist services** such as grant writing support, mentoring fees
- **Course fees** to attend a specialist career development or professional skills workshop (e.g. grant writing, leadership, methods training)
- **Conferences and meetings** including contributing to the registration cost to attend national or international scientific conferences, workshops, or meetings relevant to cardiovascular research
- **Travel and accommodation** associated with training, conference attendance, to visit labs, receive training, or for regional members to attend an in-person Vic CVRN event
- **Lived experience and community consultation**-related costs, including payments to participants, venue hire, printing, and catering.
- Funds can be used for a **combination** of activities.

6. Excluded expenditure items

The grant funding cannot be used for:

- Project associated costs
- Activities already funded or currently being funded
- Salary or salary oncosts.

7. Exclusion of overlapping funding

Applications are not to include activities already covered or that will be covered by another grant or award.

8. Unspent funds

Any grant funds unspent at 12 months from the start date of the grant agreement must be returned to the Vic CVRN via the Heart Foundation.

9. Assessment criteria and review

Applications will be reviewed by Vic CVRN Steering Committee members, subject to conflict-of-interest assessment and management, and/or members of other state CVRNs as needed. Funding will be allocated to the applications that score the highest against the following selection criteria:

- The impact and outcomes on career trajectory of the proposed activities
- Activities most likely to address priority areas in cardiovascular disease, including:
 - Advance heart health equity
 - Create environments and systems that enable healthy behaviours
 - Prevent, detect, and manage risk early
 - Manage heart disease effectively and prevent further events

The Vic CVRN Steering Committee will not provide feedback or comments on their review of the applications. The decision reached by the Vic CVRN Steering Committee will be final.

10. Funding provisions

- Funding will be provided to the administering institution (AI) of the applicant.
- The AI must issue an invoice to the Heart Foundation to enable payment.
- The AI will be responsible for distributing the funds.
- Funding must be spent within 12 months from the start date of the grant agreement.

11. Reporting

Grant recipients will be required to provide a brief post-award report outlining how the funded activity contributed to their career development and must include a financial acquittal of grant expenditure. A template will be provided by the Vic CVRN. The report is to be submitted within 13 months of the start date of the grant agreement.

12. Publicising, acknowledgements, and publication

Once recipients have been notified and accepted, the Vic CVRN will publicise the grant recipients via its communication channels.

Acknowledgement of the Vic CVRN's support must be included in publications, conference presentations, and media statements, where relevant, including the grant identification number.

Examples of appropriate wording for acknowledgements include:

- '(Title) (Surname) was supported by a Career Development Grant (Grant ID number) from the Victorian Cardiovascular Research Network.'
- 'This work was supported by a Career Development Grant (Grant ID number) from the Victorian Cardiovascular Research Network.'

13. Evaluation

All applicants may be invited to provide feedback and contribute to the evaluation of this funding initiative.

TO APPLY:

- (a) Complete the [Application Form](#) and return it, along with the required attachments and signatures, to viccvrn@heartfoundation.org.au by **5pm Wednesday 8th July**.
- (b) Please note only one application per applicant will be accepted
- (c) For more information please see [Appendix 2](#), the FAQs on the [Vic CVRN web page](#) or contact viccvrn@heartfoundation.org.au.

Appendix 1

2026 VIC CVRN Institutional Members

- Australian Catholic University
- Baker Heart & Diabetes Institute
- Deakin University
- La Trobe University
- Monash University
- Murdoch Children's Research Institute

Appendix 2

FAQs

What happens if the funding is not spent within 12 months?

- Unspent funds must be returned to the Vic CVRN via the Heart Foundation.

Can the funding be used to pay for part of an activity?

- Yes, you can use this funding to pay for part of the cost of an activity.

Can I defer/change the start date of the funding if awarded?

- All funding must be expended within the 12 months from the start date of the grant agreement. If the career development activity cannot be taken within those 12 months, the grant must be relinquished and funds returned.

What is overlapping funding, and why is it not allowed?

- Overlapping funding refers to the practice of claiming the same costs from multiple funding sources. The Vic CVRN prohibits this.

Can I apply for a Vic CVRN grant if I have already received funding for part of my career development activity?

- Yes, you can apply for a Vic CVRN grant, but you must clearly outline which parts of the activity are already funded and ensure that you are not requesting funding for those same costs in your application to the Vic CVRN. The final report requires an acquittal in which this can also be proven.

How is PhD award date defined?

- PhD award date is defined as the date applicants are notified that they have passed their PhD, even if they may not yet have had it formally conferred. **Formal conferral of the PhD must occur prior to commencement of the Grant.**