



Role title	Scientist - Victoria
Role kind	Casual
Hours	Variable- up to 3 shifts a week
Location	Victorian Pill Testing Service, 95 Brunswick St, Fitzroy
Award	Professional Employees Award
Pay rate	\$53.42 p/h (Casual)
Reports to	Victoria Lead Scientist

About The Loop Australia

The Loop Australia is a not-for-profit organisation established in 2018 to develop sustainable drug checking services in Australia. We are a sister organisation to The Loop UK, which was founded in 2013 and has provided drug checking services to the public since 2016. Our team includes chemists, health professionals, and researchers working across Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland.

The Loop Australia Vision: A safer society where everyone can access accurate, timely, and relevant information to make more informed decisions about drugs.

The Loop Australia Mission: "Deliver a high-quality, trusted drug checking service and provide accurate information about drugs to individuals, service providers, and policy makers"

Background

In 2024, the Victorian Government announced its commitment to funding drug checking services across the state. The Department of Health invited proposals from service providers to deliver services from both fixed and mobile locations, including music festivals. A consortium led by Youth Support and Advocacy Service (YSAS), in partnership with Harm Reduction Victoria (HRVic), Melbourne Health, Youth Projects (YP), and The Loop Australia (TLA), was successful and contracted to deliver the Victorian Pill Testing Service (VPTS). Service delivery commenced in late 2024, with the current contract running through to 30 June 2028.

Position Overview

The scientist is responsible for the operation of the mobile or fixed site laboratory, using techniques including Paper-Spray Mass Spectrometry, ATR-FTIR, Portable GC-MS, colourimetric reagent tests and immunoassay test strips. The position includes interacting with service users and guiding them in providing samples of substances for analysis, logging samples, conducting analysis in line with the organisation's standard operating procedures and recording and communicating the results. The role involves providing the results of the chemical analysis to a Health and Harm Reduction Worker, who will in turn provide the results of the analysis to the service user. This position will join a small pool of casual scientists who will operate on a rotating roster. This casual pool staffs both mobile event based operations and shifts at the fixed site during Thursday to Saturday operations.



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Duties and Responsibilities of the Scientist

- Operating the fixed site and mobile laboratory in line with the standard operating procedures, and the Poison Control Plan
- Instructing service users in providing samples of substances for analysis
- Logging each sample in the data collection system to ensure accurate records are maintained at all times
- Performing chemical analysis and providing results to Health and Harm Reduction Workers or to service users
- To work alongside a multidisciplinary team including people with lived and living experience of drug use, health workers and other support staff

Hours

- Casual shifts can range from 7.5 - 22.5 hours per week
- Shifts often extend to early evenings or weekends
- Some service delivery will occur at remote festival locations
- Availability to work Thursday (9am-5pm) and Friday (12-8pm) shifts at the fixed site location is required

Mandatory Qualifications

- This role requires a tertiary qualification in a science with a major in an approved area (as per the regulations*)
- This role requires candidates to undergo a police check and a Working with Children Check as part of the recruitment process

Key Selection Criteria

- Experience in analytical chemistry, including knowledge and/or use of FTIR, mass spectrometry and wet laboratory techniques
- Ability to work independently and quickly troubleshoot issues
- Ability to communicate technical information and results to people from diverse backgrounds
- Experience working in multidisciplinary teams
- Experience following standard operating procedures
- Experience applying strong data management practices

Desirable

- Knowledge of current and emerging drug trends
- Experience working with scheduled poisons and under a Poison Control Plan
- Experience with ambient ionisation techniques or Thermo Fisher mass spectrometry software



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Values

The Loop requires all staff and volunteers to commit to the following values:

- Integrity: We stay true to our values
- Excellence: We learn, adapt and improve
- Empowerment: We support self determination and informed decision making
- Inclusivity & Equity: We are committed to ensuring our service meets the needs of our diverse community
- Our team: We value and support each other

Diversity

We encourage applications from people who have lived and living experience of drug use. We also encourage First Nations people, people with a disability, LGBTIQ+ and other sexuality, gender and bodily diverse people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to apply. We are committed to removing barriers for people from these communities, so please let us know if there's something we can do to make it more possible for you to apply by confidentially contacting April at april@theloop.org.au.

To apply for this role, please apply through Ethical Jobs and include:

- An overview of your qualifications* and experience
- A one to two page statement that addresses the key selection criteria
- A copy of your current CV
- Your preference and availability to work casual shifts on Thursday, Fridays and Saturdays

You can contact Jacob on Jacob@theloop.org.au with questions about the role.

Applications close COB Monday 13th July, 2026

*The regulations require a bachelor's degree, master's degree or doctoral degree in, or with a major in, any of the following areas, however described – Chemistry, Pharmacology, Forensic science, Forensic toxicology, Applied chemistry, Medicinal chemistry, Industrial chemistry, Psychopharmacology, Biochemistry, Physiology, Biotechnology, Medical science, Molecular biology, Pharmaceutical science, Bio-nanotechnology, Nanotechnology, Biomolecular science, Analytical science, or Chemical engineering.