

Position Description

Position Title: **Lead, Policy (Food Systems)**

Group / Office: Strategy, Policy & Impact

Tenure: Permanent

Full Time Equivalent: Full-time 1.0 FTE (open to part-time hours)

Classification: VicHealth Grade D (+ Superannuation)

Location: Level 2, 355 Spencer Street, West Melbourne

Reports to: Manager, Policy & Government Relations

Further information: Introducing VicHealth www.vichealth.vic.gov.au

VicHealth welcomes and values applications from candidates who are of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent, candidates with culturally diverse backgrounds, candidates with disability and those from the LGBTQIA+ community. We are committed to making reasonable adjustments to ensure a safe and healthy working environment.

About The Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth)

We are the world's first health promotion foundation, and the first organisation of its kind to utilise a hypothecated tax on tobacco to support independent, long-term, evidence-based health promotion practice, partnerships and leadership.

VicHealth works to reduce and eliminate the barriers Victorians face to good health. This purpose drives all that we do and who we are.

We continue to be a global leader in health promotion, as a Collaborating Centre in Health Promotion Leadership with the World Health Organization and a technical partner to UNICEF.

Through world-class research, our work with, through, and for communities, and our strategic partnerships at all levels of government in Australia, we aim to build and use VicHealth's influence, independence, relationships, voice and expertise to reshape the systems that improve health and wellbeing for all Victorians.

The three core systems are neighbourhood and built systems, commercial and economic systems and food systems.

Our work in these systems is aimed at combatting increasing health inequity, and VicHealth's approach reflects three dimensions: climate justice, community agency, and intergenerational wellbeing.

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Purpose of the role

The Lead, Policy (Food Systems) supports and contributes to the health promotion capacity of VicHealth by:

- Working closely with internal and external stakeholders to identify, develop and drive evidence-driven policy opportunities and advocacy to government, aligned with VicHealth's 10-year strategy
- Providing strategic, evidence-based policy advice to the Manager, Policy and Government Relations and the CEO
- Commissioning, overseeing and translating VicHealth research into tangible and relevant policy recommendations to government
- Developing and maintaining relationships with public health partners to develop, refine and progress VicHealth's policy priorities
- Leading the drafting and finalisation of relevant policy submissions, advocacy papers, position statements on key issues, briefing documents, and other government-related activities to a high standard

The Lead, Policy (Food Systems) has a close working relationship with the Manager, Policy & Government Relations. The role is supported by and works closely with the Coordinator, Policy & Government Relations to ensure effective and coordinated delivery of VicHealth's strategic policy agenda, especially but not limited to our work in Food Systems.

The Lead, Policy (Food Systems) is expected to develop and nurture strong working relationships across the organisation and with key external stakeholders, including government and partner organisations. The person in this role must be able to provide efficient and effective liaison; build effective working relationships; and represent VicHealth in a professional manner at stakeholder events and in public forums.

Scope of the role

Financial	As per VicHealth Delegation Policy
People	May supervise employees

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Cultural and Professional Standards

The VicHealth Employee Culture Charter guides behaviour by outlining those key principles that set the cultural and professional standards to which all VicHealth staff commit.

To support the ways of working, these behaviours include:

1. **Trust:** working competently with VicHealth's vision, strategy and goals in mind; open, supportive, consistent and respectful communication with internal and external audiences; and working in a way that gains the ongoing respect and continued trust of partners and stakeholders.
2. **Challenge:** being open to doing things differently, to new ideas and processes; embracing change and being comfortable with ambiguity; and resolving conflict constructively.
3. **Accountability:** doing what we say we are going to do; owning our performance and outcomes for the benefit of VicHealth and stakeholders; being a role model for the staff we lead or supervise and for other staff; and encouraging growth in others.
4. **Results:** helping others at all levels, even if outside the scope of our role; being efficient and effective with stewardship of VicHealth assets and funds; and striving to maximise our collective impact.

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Main Role Responsibilities

Functions	Activities
Policy Development & Advocacy	Leading and driving the delivery of VicHealth's policy agenda, especially but not limited to our work in food systems, in collaboration with key internal and external stakeholders by: • Translating VicHealth's policy recommendations to government and key decision makers in a relevant and impactful way • Reviewing and refining VicHealth's policy agenda based on research and emerging, evidence-based, policy opportunities • Developing high-level advocacy strategies for VicHealth's leading and backing policy priorities • Identifying opportunities to commission high impact research, oversee the delivery of this research and translate into relevant policy recommendations • Working with the Social Marketing & Communications team to respond to media inquiries and develop advocacy messaging • Managing contracted partners to deliver research and policy advocacy, aligned with VicHealth's policy agenda • Supervising and mentoring the Coordinator, Policy & Government Relations in the drafting and finalisation of policy documents, submissions, briefings and other government and advocacy related activities such as events and roundtables
Project Management	• Ensuring projects are delivered on time, to budget and with quality outputs • Managing project and sector stakeholder relationships, contracts, expectations and communications • Managing the development and implementation of specific projects and policy agendas • Monitoring and reporting on progress of projects and policy agendas and being able to recognise barriers and find effective solutions
Relationship Management	• Developing trusted relationships with sector partners to share intelligence and policy insights • Building and maintaining strong relationships with internal and external stakeholders, including government and partner organisations • Communicating expectations clearly with contracted partners and managing problems constructively
Teamwork	Contributes to the development of a highly effective team by: • Working collaboratively across the organisation • Sharing knowledge and experiences • Participating and contributing to team meetings, strategic and corporate planning meetings, teamwork plans and relevant cross unit working groups

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	• Applying work practices and approaches consistent with established VicHealth processes, and identifying opportunities for development • Identification of potential opportunities for innovation and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of VicHealth's operations
Equity & Diversity	• Contribute to maintaining an environment where differences are valued, encouraged and supported
Governance, Risk, Behaviour & Conduct	Act in accordance with: • The Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees as detailed in the <i>Public Administration Act 2004</i> (Vic) • VicHealth Policy, Procedure and Values as outlined on the VicHealth intranet
Occupational Health & Safety	• Takes reasonable care at all times for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their conduct • Is responsible at all times for maintaining a safe and healthy work environment for all

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Key Selection Criteria (Knowledge, experience and skills)

Qualifications & Experience	• Relevant tertiary qualification in Health Promotion, Public Policy or a related field • At least 3 years' experience working in policy development and practice at state and or federal levels, preferably in public health, community or government sectors • Well-developed and applied knowledge of the machinery of government including government decision making, policy, funding, and budget processes at state and/or federal levels is essential • An understanding of systems theory and change, with experience designing and delivering policy, based on a systems approach, is desirable • Expertise in food systems policy and practice is desirable
Policy & Advocacy	• Demonstrated track record developing compelling and practical policy recommendations aligned with the organisation's strategic objectives • Sophisticated analytical skills, including the ability to source, synthesise and critically evaluate and distil evidence and data from diverse sources and present in a compelling and succinct way • Experience in and aptitude for engaging and influencing diverse stakeholders, and building partnerships to progress advocacy into action and effect change • Well-developed, proactive and creative problem-solving skills, including the ability to identify innovative solutions and the necessary levers to implement
Written Skills	• Highly developed written skills with extensive experience writing and finalising submissions for government inquiries, policy briefs, executive briefs, speaking notes, media releases & inquiries, and PowerPoint slides • Demonstrated ability to synthesise and distil complex technical information into succinct and well-structured briefing materials for executive and government audiences • Uses audience feedback to refine communication and ensure communications are understood
Communicates with Influence	• Demonstrated ability to lead consultation and engagement with key government stakeholders in a variety of private and public forums • Communicates clearly and persuasively • Listens, understands and adapts to audiences
Project Management	• Designs, implements and manages all facets of a project including resources, personnel, activities, vendors, timelines, deadlines, and materials to agreed organisational policies and procedures

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	• Experience in completing day-to-day activities related to the project including completing documents, forms, reports, and other written correspondence • Communicates effectively and builds relationships with all stakeholders of the project • Plans and delivers the successful completion of projects
Builds and Utilises Stakeholder Relationships	• Facilitates cooperation and partnerships • Values individual differences and diversity • Develops and maintains strong, positive partner, stakeholder and supplier relationships both internally and externally • Builds trust through consistent actions, values and communication • Keeps stakeholders up to date with issues and developments • Works with stakeholders to advance and deliver policy priorities
Interpersonal Skills	• Embraces agile work methods and is comfortable with ambiguity • Can pivot quickly to respond to changing needs and priorities • Generates new ideas and embraces new ways of working to ensure VicHealth's activities are relevant and impactful • Responds to the practical consideration of plans and activities • Completes finished work to a high standard, focussing on accuracy and thoroughness • Works well in a team and is able to communicate effectively with colleagues and other stakeholders
Teamwork	• Commits to team objectives but can work independently to deliver on those objectives • Works collaboratively with others to find solutions to problems • Shares information and knowledge willingly

This position description was updated on 03/07/2026 and is a guide to the role and responsibilities that are required of this position as of this date. Other duties may be required to be undertaken from time to time. This position may involve limited work-related travel to visit other stakeholders or attending conferences, including working from locations other than the VicHealth office. Additionally, occasional work outside core business hours may be required.