

VICTORIAN  
RESPONSIBLE  
GAMBLING  
FOUNDATION

# ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN

2018  
—  
2019

*A Victoria free from  
gambling-related harm*



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# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation commences the 2018–19 financial year with a strong sense of purpose and clear strategic priorities for working towards our vision of a Victoria free from gambling-related harm.

Following extensive community and stakeholder engagement, the Foundation recently released *Our Strategic Priorities 2018–2021*, which will guide our work over the coming years.

*Our Annual Business Plan 2018–2019* is drawn from this document and seeks to respond to the most critical challenges to, and opportunities for, preventing and reducing gambling harm across the state.

It is also informed by two other key commitments we have made over the past 12 months, namely our commitment to work with communities in outer metropolitan, regional and rural Victoria to reduce harm from gambling and our *Research Agenda 2018–2022*.

While gambling is legal and regulated in Victoria and the majority of people who participate are not negatively affected, each year more than half-a-million Victorians experience some form of gambling harm. Further, for every individual who experiences severe gambling harm, up to six other

people are affected, most often close family members and friends.

The consequences for individuals, families and communities can be devastating, with the social cost of gambling harm to Victoria estimated to be \$7 billion a year. The highest costs are associated with family and relationship problems, followed by emotional and psychological issues, and financial losses, including bankruptcy.

We know that some communities are more at-risk of gambling harm than others – these include young and older populations; Aboriginal people; those who reside in outer metropolitan, regional and rural areas; and certain culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities. Among these groups, in particular, gambling can play a part in social connectedness and may offer a way of coping for people who have experienced grief or trauma.

Preventing harm from gambling and providing effective support for those affected presents a unique set of challenges. Those of specific concern to us include:

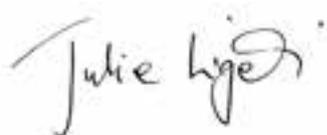
- the normalisation of gambling among young people, especially young men, through prolific promotion of sports betting

- the co-occurrence of gambling harm and other social issues such as drug and alcohol use, mental illness or family violence
- stigma, which can act as a barrier to seeking support
- technological advances and the convergence of gaming and gambling.

In responding to these challenges, the Foundation has adopted an integrated public health approach. We use the best available research and evidence, together with the knowledge we have gained from people who have lived experience of gambling harm, to inform our prevention, early intervention and support activities.

To deliver this plan, we will continue to work in close partnership with community and not-for-profit organisations, advocacy groups and governments, as well as members of industry who share our vision.

We look forward to reporting the progress of our ongoing contribution to the health and wellbeing of the Victorian community.



Julie Ligeti  
**Chair, Foundation Board**



Louise Glanville  
**Chief Executive Officer**

# VICTORIA'S GAMBLING ENVIRONMENT

Harm from gambling can happen much earlier than people realise. Many of those affected are not regular gamblers and do not consider they are at risk. In some cases, gambling harm can be severe.

## THE FACTS

- Research shows that more than half-a-million Victorians experience some form of harm every year from their gambling activities.
- Gambling is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week through venues, smartphones and gambling apps.
- There are more than 26,000 poker machines in Victoria.
- Thirteen per cent of Victorians gamble regularly.
- Eighty-five per cent of the total harm from gambling in Victoria arises from people in the low- and moderate-risk groups for problem gambling. The other 15 per cent comes from people in the high-risk group.
- The social cost of gambling harm to Victoria is estimated to be \$7 billion a year.
- Gambling advertising in Victoria rose by 37 per cent for the first six months of 2018 compared to 2017.
- For every dollar spent on raising awareness about gambling harm, a further \$30 is spent promoting gambling.
- The heavy promotion of betting, especially on sport, normalises gambling without addressing the risks of gambling harm.

Risk level for gambling harm	What is it?	% Victorians affected*
No-risk	Gambling where no negative consequences are experienced.	57.59%
Low-risk	People who gamble and experience a low level of problems or few negative consequences.	8.91%
Moderate-risk	Gambling is associated with some negative consequences, like spending more than one can afford, losing track of time or feeling guilty about gambling	2.79%
High-risk	Difficulties in limiting money and/or time on gambling, which leads to adverse consequences for the person gambling and often others in the community.	0.81%

\*Approximately 30 per cent of Victorians do not gamble each year; risk level is determined by the Problem Gambling Severity Index

The Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation was created by the Victorian Parliament under the *Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation Act 2011* specifically to address the challenge of gambling harm in the Victorian community. Administratively, the Foundation sits within the Justice and Regulation portfolio.

The Foundation is a statutory body that is funded by the Victorian Government and governed by an independent board.

The board is responsible for providing strategic direction and ensuring the Foundation achieves its objectives and carries out its functions. The board is accountable to the Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation.

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## OUR VISION

A Victoria free from gambling-related harm.

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## OUR MISSION

To improve the health and wellbeing of Victorians by working with our communities and government to deliver effective, evidence-based initiatives and innovative approaches to prevent gambling harm and provide support for those seeking help.

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## OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

*Our Strategic Priorities 2018–2021* describes the Foundation's key focus areas, actions and major initiatives as we seek to achieve our vision. These priorities were developed in consultation with our community, key stakeholders and staff throughout 2018. These are:

- 1. Prevent gambling harm through a public health approach**
- 2. Work in partnership with those who share our vision to improve community health and wellbeing**
- 3. Build a collaborative and respected centre of expertise to deliver our mission for all Victorians**

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## OUR VALUES

The Foundation's values guide our actions, behaviours and the way we engage with each other and our stakeholders.

At all times, we aim to be:

**RESPECTFUL:** We are respectful, professional and constructive in the way we work together. We value people's time, perspectives, experiences and contributions.

**ACCOUNTABLE:** We are open, impartial and objective in our approach. We follow through on our commitments and are accountable for our actions and outcomes.

**COLLABORATIVE:** We seek out and support a broad range of contributors, collaborators and partners to inform our work and enhance our impact. We listen, are responsive and engage continuously – keeping stakeholders informed and involved as we progress.

**INNOVATIVE:** We work with our stakeholders, the community and our staff to lead the way on innovative strategies and programs to reduce gambling harm.

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## DEMONSTRATING IMPACT

The Foundation continues to undertake work to develop a comprehensive framework to measure the impact and outcomes of our work with partners and key stakeholders across the community.

We will evaluate the effectiveness of our strategy using the following high-level measures:

- engagement with the Foundation's face-to-face counselling and digital support channels and resources
- participant satisfaction and outcomes achieved with support from our Gambler's Help services, including reporting on a newly developed outcome measure that indicates whether engagement with Gambler's Help assisted clients to achieve their personal goals
- improved community awareness and understanding among at-risk communities of harms associated with gambling.

Together, we are working towards a reduction in the:

- number of Victorians experiencing harm from gambling
- social, health and economic cost of gambling harm across Victoria.

We report progress against these and other measures each year in our annual report.

# KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR COMMUNITY

In 2017–18, the Foundation engaged extensively with our key stakeholders to better understand the challenges and opportunities they considered it most important for us to address.

Through this process, we identified a need to develop tailored approaches to gambling harm for different communities, address the links between gambling harm and other social issues, and consider responses to harm across a range of environments in which gambling is present.

Stakeholder feedback is guiding how the Foundation invests in research, prevention and early intervention projects; supports people affected by gambling harm; and builds capability across the state to prevent and reduce gambling harm.

Further details about how the Foundation works with stakeholders can be found in our *Stakeholder Engagement Framework: 2018–2021* and the actions outlined in *Our Strategic Priorities 2018–2021*.

## ACTIONS FOR 2018–19

*Our Strategic Priorities 2018–2021* sets out in detail the Foundation's focus areas and the actions we will take to prevent and reduce gambling-related harm in Victoria. Our priorities for the 2018–19 year are detailed on the following pages.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

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## PREVENT GAMBLING HARM THROUGH A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH

### Research:

*Our Research Agenda 2018–2022* guides an annual investment of about \$1 million in research grants and strategic projects to better understand and address gambling harm in Victoria. A major initiative for the coming year is to update the Foundation's gambling harm population study by collecting new data for analysis and release in the following year.

### Community engagement:

We will engage with our stakeholders on key policy and regulatory actions that could assist in preventing or reducing the risk of harm presented by poker machines.

### Communication and behaviour change campaigns:

We will develop and implement marketing campaigns such as 'Love the Game' and the '100 Day Challenge' to positively inform and influence consumer behaviour, for example, in relation to the effects of gambling harm, the normalisation of gambling

in sport and alternative recreation activities to gambling.

### Working with Aboriginal communities:

We will implement our Reconciliation Action Plan and Aboriginal community engagement strategy, which includes piloting an innovative and inclusive approach to research in Aboriginal communities, led by those communities.

### Address stigma:

The Foundation is working with people who have lived experience of gambling harm to develop a strategy to overcome stigma, which can be a considerable barrier to seeking support. A key goal is to normalise talking about gambling harm and empower those affected to seek support.

### Support people experiencing harm:

We will invest \$18 million in professional support services for people experiencing gambling harm, their family members

and friends through our local community partnerships and [gamblershelp.com.au](http://gamblershelp.com.au).

FOCUS	2018–2019 ACTIONS
Create broad awareness and understanding that gambling harm is a public health issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Engage with government to support the inclusion of gambling harm in the new Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan</li> <li>■ Provide advice to all levels of government to assist in identifying and acting on sources of gambling harm</li> </ul>
Build knowledge, expertise and the evidence base to constructively inform and influence gambling harm-related policies, practices and decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Implement the Foundation’s five-year research agenda</li> <li>■ Complete data collection to update our gambling harm population study</li> <li>■ Assist the regulator and relevant stakeholders to use research and knowledge about gambling harm in an optimal manner when developing policy or making assessments and decisions</li> <li>■ Engage stakeholders on policy and regulatory actions that could assist in preventing or reducing the risk of harm presented by poker machines</li> <li>■ Provide guidance regarding possible uses and actions that could be taken on the basis of the Foundation’s research and policy program</li> </ul>
Lead influential communication and behavioural change strategies that engage the Victorian community in preventing and reducing gambling harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Develop and implement marketing campaigns such as “Love the Game”, “Have the talk” and the “100 Day Challenge” to positively influence behaviour</li> <li>■ Implement our first Gambling Harm Awareness Week</li> <li>■ Provide guidance regarding possible uses and actions that could be taken on the basis of the Foundation’s research and policy program</li> </ul>
Develop and implement gambling harm prevention strategies and initiatives focused on Aboriginal, CALD and LGBTQI populations; outer metropolitan, regional and rural communities; and in settings such as schools and at-risk workplaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Implement our gambling harm prevention framework</li> <li>■ Undertake engagement and prevention activities in outer metropolitan communities</li> <li>■ Develop a youth strategy</li> <li>■ Implement our Reconciliation Action Plan and Aboriginal community engagement strategy</li> <li>■ Pilot an innovative and inclusive approach to research in Aboriginal communities, led by those communities</li> <li>■ Evaluate progress against our statement of commitment to outer metropolitan, regional and rural Victorians</li> </ul>
Identify, intervene early and support specific populations, communities and settings across Victoria that may be at risk of gambling harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Review and identify opportunities to extend or replicate the Alfred Hospital’s Gambler’s Help support program</li> <li>■ Work with Corrections Victoria and the Magistrates’ Court to support people in the justice system affected by gambling harm</li> <li>■ Provide prevention and early intervention initiatives for gambling venue staff and those in the building and construction sector</li> </ul>
Reduce the stigma associated with gambling harm to enhance inclusion of those affected within the community and encourage help seeking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Develop a gambling stigma prevention/reduction strategy to support people with lived experience of gambling harm and strengthen community responsiveness</li> </ul>
Deliver effective treatment and support for people and communities affected by gambling harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Continue to support Gambler’s Help services and build capacity among health and human services providers involved in identifying, and responding to, gambling harm, including providing culturally appropriate treatment and support to CALD and Aboriginal communities</li> <li>■ Increase the effectiveness of treatment and support through more flexible funding allocations to community organisations</li> </ul>

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

# WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THOSE WHO SHARE OUR VISION TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING

### Establish a lived experience advisory committee:

The committee will be drawn from people in our community who have experienced gambling harm. We want to elevate their voices to inform the work of the Foundation and our partners. The committee will focus initially on reducing stigma and improving the accessibility of Gambler's Help services.

### Innovative prevention partnerships:

We will invest \$2 million in prevention partnerships, supporting 29 community-based, not-for-profit, local government and public health organisations to test new approaches to preventing and reducing gambling harm. The program delivers funding across regional, rural and at-risk CALD communities.

### Explore links between gambling harm and other social issues:

The Foundation is working with our partners to explore the co-existence of gambling harm and other social issues – such as mental illness, drug and alcohol misuse, relationship breakdown and family violence – and any relationship between them. The presence of these social issues may trigger an individual to engage in risky gambling behaviour or risky gambling may be compounded by one or more of these issues.

FOCUS	2018–19 ACTIONS
Elevate the voices of people with lived experience of gambling harm to inform the work of the Foundation and our partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a lived experience advisory committee, which will focus initially on reducing stigma and improving accessibility of services</li> </ul>
Extend our reach and impact through innovative, collaborative and effective partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to lead and support key partnerships, including the School Education and Sporting Club programs, the Gambler's Help Venue Support Program, and our work with Aboriginal and CALD communities</li> </ul>
Engage with governments and communities to better understand and address gambling harm as a contextual factor linked to other social issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance our industry engagement and collaboration through proactive partnerships where there is mutual interest</li> <li>Implement our stakeholder engagement strategy</li> <li>Work with government departments and agencies on key social issues where gambling is a factor, including family violence, criminal justice, mental illness, and alcohol and drug misuse</li> </ul>
Contribute to local, national and international efforts to prevent and reduce gambling harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Translate our research into knowledge and information to support the development of evidence-based strategies for preventing and reducing gambling harm</li> <li>Lead public presentations and discussions at key forums on strategic issues related to the Foundation's work</li> </ul>

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

# BUILD A COLLABORATIVE AND RESPECTED CENTRE OF EXPERTISE TO DELIVER OUR MISSION FOR ALL VICTORIANS

### Conduct our biennial Gambling Harm Conference:

The conference is a flagship initiative in our work to strengthen the skills and capacity of people and organisations focused on addressing gambling harm at individual, community and state level. It aims to share leading practice and enhance overall sector capacity.

### Build research capability:

The Foundation will invest up to \$250,000 to support the development of five early career researchers in the field of gambling harm. This is to ensure our community has access to contemporary and innovative research to inform gambling harm prevention strategies. We will also develop a PhD scholarship program to support gambling research.

### Finalise and implement the Foundation's reporting framework:

The Foundation is working with key partners to develop a comprehensive framework to assess the short-, medium- and long-term outcomes of our work. This framework will be shared and applied in our 2018–2019 annual report.

FOCUS	2018–19 ACTIONS
Develop a strong, collaborative and values-led organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further develop the Foundation's values and culture</li> </ul>
Foster an environment of learning, knowledge sharing and innovation for our staff and stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a successful biennial Gambling Harm Conference</li> <li>Provide ongoing professional development to build the capability of all those involved in preventing and reducing gambling harm</li> </ul>
Build the leadership, engagement and research capability required to achieve our mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide early career researcher grants that focus on gambling in at-risk populations</li> <li>Develop a PhD scholarship program to support gambling research</li> </ul>
Enhance our governance, reporting and evaluative capability to more effectively demonstrate the impact and outcomes of our work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalise and implement the Foundation's outcomes-focused reporting framework</li> <li>Complete and submit the Foundation's funding bid, including our agency evaluation, to the Expenditure Review Sub-Committee (ERSC) of the Victorian Parliament</li> </ul>
Enable the Foundation's work through best practice corporate support functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a new digital strategy, including digital support tools and website features, to support individuals and communities affected by gambling harm</li> <li>Support staff through a refreshed intranet</li> </ul>
Develop authentic, relevant and trusted relationships to represent and promote the work of the Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reposition the Foundation to strengthen and support our strategic priorities</li> <li>Build a better understanding among our stakeholders of areas of mutual interest and the role the Foundation plays in minimising harm from gambling for all Victorians</li> <li>Implement our <i>Stakeholder Engagement Framework: 2018–2021</i> and identify opportunities for improvement</li> </ul>

# SUMMARY BUDGET 2018–19

A summary of the budget allocated to our three strategic priorities for 2018–19 is below. We have provided the budget projection for 2018–19 only, as we await the outcome of the Expenditure Review Sub-Committee process for our next four years of funding. 2018–19 is the final year of the existing four-year funding allocation of \$148 million approved in 2015.

	Budget 2018–2019 \$ million
<b>STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1</b>	
<b>PREVENT GAMBLING HARM THROUGH A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH</b>	<b>\$24.2</b>
<b>STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2</b>	
<b>WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THOSE WHO SHARE OUR VISION TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING</b>	<b>\$7.4</b>
<b>STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3</b>	
<b>BUILD A COLLABORATIVE AND RESPECTED CENTRE OF EXPERTISE TO DELIVER OUR MISSION FOR ALL VICTORIANS</b>	<b>\$6.2</b>
Total	<b>\$37.8</b>

\*Please note that the budget does not include forecast funding carryover from the previous financial year.



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