

# Participatory Action Research Grants

## Frequently Asked Questions

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## Eligibility

### 1. Who are these grants for?

Participatory Action Research (PAR) Grants support research that is co-designed and co-led by community members and researchers to learn more about the root causes of pressing issues that are negatively impacting the health of communities.

The research projects we consider for funding:

- must investigate the root causes of a complex health issue
- must be a collaboration between community organizations and research institutions with access to an ethics board, such as universities, health authorities or other research-based organizations.
- must be led by a [registered charity or other qualified donee](#) listed by the Canada Revenue Agency.

### 2. What is a qualified donee?

Under the Income Tax Act, a [qualified donee](#) is an organization that can issue official donation receipts for gifts they receive from individuals and corporations such as a registered charity. Registered charities can also make gifts to them. Vancouver Foundation can only grant to a qualified donee, meaning a registered charity or a other qualified donee listed by Canada Revenue Agency.

### 3. What do you mean by a participatory action research methodology?

At the core of the PAR methodology is the belief that research must be done with people, and not for them or on them.<sup>1</sup> The 'action' part of PAR refers to how evidence is gathered, and how issues are researched. The action becomes part of the subject matter being researched. Action happens throughout the project by the team to develop the research and inform its future direction. Action also means that research moves beyond just observing or studying an issue and focuses upon using the research findings to transform it.

### 4. What do you mean by community organization?

A community organization is typically a charity or non-profit with a strong connection to the community experiencing the health issue that is being researched. This organization likely represents and is made up of people with lived experience of the issue being studied.

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<sup>1</sup>Chevalier, JM and Buckles, DJ. Participatory Action Research: Theory and Methods for Engaged Inquiry. UK: Routledge; 2013.

**5. My organization is national, but we do some work in BC. Are we eligible?**

Yes, we will fund organizations based elsewhere in Canada but for projects and work that take place primarily in BC. Vancouver Foundation will only fund expenses related to the project's BC-related activities.

**6. I've previously received a Vancouver Foundation grant. Can I still apply for this grant?**

Yes, you can still apply for a PAR grant if you've received another grant from Vancouver Foundation. Our practice is to award only one Participatory Action Research grant to the same project team at a time; however, under certain circumstances, we may consider additional applications for different projects submitted by similar project teams, if different people are co-leading the project.

**7. Can I submit multiple applications for my organization?**

Our practice is to consider only one application that has the same person listed from a project co-lead at a time; however, we will review every application received. Submitting more than one research project application at the same time will not increase the likelihood that your project team will receive funding.

**8. My organization is not a qualified donee. Can Vancouver Foundation help me find a registered charity or other qualified donee who I can partner with for my application?**

Vancouver Foundation is unable to broker these types of relationships as they need to be formalized by both organizations ahead of the grant application submission.

**9. Can I apply for funding for a project that has already started?**

We will consider applications for research projects that have already begun, provided that the request does not include expenses that have been, will be, or that we feel should be covered by other funding sources. Vancouver Foundation does not provide retroactive funding, nor bridge funding to sustain research projects between grants. Applying for a project that is already running will not increase the likelihood that it will be funded.

For research projects starting within 6-12 months, we ask that you consider waiting for another opportunity. That way, you'll have a clearer project plan and more partners/funders to tell us about.

**10. What can the funds be used for?**

Our PAR Grants Program funds research projects that enable communities to create lasting changes within and across systems. We view the participatory action research approach to be a social innovation, because it includes affected populations as partners at all stages of the research

process, instead of seeing them only as research subjects. We are accepting applications for a diversity of projects, which can include, but are not limited to:

- Salaries and benefits for each of the research team members to be hired to work on the project (e.g. research assistants, graduate students, postdoctoral fellows). Graduate students listed as co-lead researchers are not eligible for salary from the Vancouver Foundation funding.
- Services and professional fees outside of the contributions provided by the research team (e.g. statistical consultation, video editing, training, or translation services).
- Supplies and materials (e.g. audiotapes, survey forms, and postage, refreshments for meetings or interviews, and office supplies).
- Telephone
- Travel necessary to participate in research or knowledge exchange activities at multiple or community sites. This may include travel for the project leads, research team members and/or participants (if not covered in honorarium).
- Participant honorariums for their time contributed to the project which can include child care.
- Knowledge exchange activities to share and discuss the results locally and beyond.
- Costs to access data from any source (e.g. Pharamanet, Ministry of Housing and Social Development).
- University overhead and indirect research costs. Vancouver Foundation is a charitable foundation, and as such, requests that our grants be exempt from Universities' standard practice to deduct a percentage of grant dollars for overhead/indirect research costs.

#### **11. Are there activities that you will not be fund?**

Participatory Action Research Grants do not fund the following:

- Program development and evaluation
- Direct service (unless part of a broader project proposal that focuses primarily on influencing the systemic behaviors that are creating the pressing issue for your constituents, or that are holding the issue in place)
- Salary costs of researchers who are salaried researchers at their institution (i.e., individuals with a portion of their salary protected for research time).
- Graduate students listed as co-lead researchers are not eligible for salary from the Vancouver Foundation funding
- Projects that take place primarily outside of BC
- An organization's ongoing operational or core expenses, including its cost to fundraise
- Project expenses that have been incurred prior to the application date or that we feel should be covered by other funding sources
- Event sponsorships (unless part of a broader project proposal)
- Bridge funding, debt retirement, reserves, or mortgage pay-downs
- Endowment matching grants
- Capital and public infrastructure projects (libraries, schools, health care facilities)
- Travel to and/or attendance at conferences, competitions, symposia or annual events (unless part of a broader project proposal)

- Bursaries, scholarships, and awards (unless part of a broader project proposal)

## Grant Program Details

### 12. What grants are available for research projects?

Depending on the stage of your research, we have two grants available for your project.

**Convene grants** are short-term grants to help teams to unpack a complex health issue and to question the systemic behaviours that have created that issue, or that are holding the issue in place. Convene grants help teams to articulate a research question and to develop a participatory research project plan that can then be submitted to funding organizations in the future. The funding requested should be distributed equitably between the convening process and the community's participation in that process. Convene grants are a one-stage application.

**Investigate grants** are multi-year grants to help teams answer a research question, analyze their findings, and share knowledge in a way that supports the community to take action in the future. Investigate grants are a two-stage application. Applicants begin their application by completing the first stage of questions, and if successful, are then invited to complete the remaining questions.

### 13. What is the maximum/minimum amount I can request?

It depends on the stage of your research, grant type, and the scope of your initiative.

For Convene grants, you can request up to \$20,000 (for up to one year) for your research based on your project's scope.

For Investigate grants, you can request up to \$100,000 per year (for up to three years) for your research based on your project's scope.

### 14. Do you require matching funds from other sources?

For both Convene grants and Investigate grants, we **do not** require organizations to match funds from other sources. As part of our commitment to trust-based philanthropy and equitable grant-making, we hope to address and remove barriers to accessing grants.

### 15. What are in-kind contributions?

In-kind contributions relate directly to real, anticipated and essential expenses in the project budget (that is, they should be project expenses as well). In-kind contributions can be in the form of cash-equivalent good or services, which, if not donated, would have to be purchased with project funds. In-kind contributions can also include the time of paid staff within partnering organizations (e.g. experts in a specific area) spent giving direction or participating in the project, if their involvement is not considered volunteer time. In some cases, the partners may provide specialized skills and advice or access to special equipment, space, data sets, etc.

## Application Process

### 16. What is the application process?

All applications must be submitted through Vancouver Foundation's [online grant management system](#). More information on how to apply using our online system, including instructions and how-to videos, can be found on our [PAR Grants Program webpage](#). Click below for the following resources:

- [Investigate Grant Application Process](#)
- [Convene Grant Application Process](#)

### 17. What kind of questions will be asked?

You can view the online application questions beforehand by clicking on the following resources according to grant type:

- [Investigate Grant Application Process](#)
- [Convene Grant Application Process](#)

### 18. What is the assessment criteria for these grants? How are you deciding who you will fund?

You can refer to our PAR Decision Making Matrix for both grant types to learn more about our adjudicating process.

### 19. When can we expect to hear decisions by?

Typically, the Convene grant application process takes approximately three months from application intake to a funding decision. The Investigate grant two-stage application process takes about 6 months from application intake to a final funding decision. Decision dates are listed on our [PAR Grants Program webpage](#) under the Key Dates section.

### 20. Who is making the funding decisions?

Vancouver Foundation has a network of existing and alumni community advisors with a broad range of expertise. We will engage additional community reviewers from the populations that brought research projects forward to bring unique perspectives to the decision-making process.

## 21. Can I appeal a grant decision?

You cannot appeal a granting decision. If your application is not successful, we will share why it did not meet our criteria.

We recognize that sometimes you may disagree with the granting decision or process. In these cases, we encourage you to speak with the listed staff member on the decision email so we can learn about your concerns and continue to strengthen our relationships.

## Support

### 22. I have some technical questions about the application process. How can I get help?

Please refer to the online system guide for common troubleshooting questions. We also have various how-to videos to guide you which can be found on our [PAR Grants Program webpage](#).

If you have additional questions about the PAR Grants Program, please contact us at [grants.admin@vancouverfoundation.ca](mailto:grants.admin@vancouverfoundation.ca).