

# VICSRC LGBTIQA+ STUDENT EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

*Apply to co-research queer students' experiences in Victorian schools in 2024!*

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## BACKGROUND

### What is the project?

The 'LGBTIQA+ Student Empowerment Project' will provide a platform for LGBTIQA+ secondary students to share their education experiences and brainstorm solutions to support positive outcomes, including mental health and wellbeing and social inclusion. This project will be led by an LGBTIQA+ Student Researcher, collaborating with other Victorian secondary students to advocate for their needs and improve the quality of the experience of school for LGBTIQA+ students.




The project is supported by YACVic's [Healthy Equal Youth \(HEY\)](#) initiative, an annual grant round that is available for projects and initiatives aimed at improving the overall mental health and wellbeing of LGBTIQA+ young Victorians.

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## OVERVIEW

### What is the Student Researcher?

- The Student Researcher will lead the Student Empowerment Project, with ongoing support and training from VicSRC. They will design their own research question around LGBTIQA+ students' experiences of discrimination and inclusion in schools, and how this impacts their learning and wellbeing.
  - They will then plan and deliver a half-day consultation with up to 25 LGBTIQA+ students to gather data and learn from their experiences, with VicSRC's support along the way.
  - The Student Researcher will turn the consultation findings into a report, with the support of VicSRC staff. It will be presented to the Victorian Department of Education and distributed to other key stakeholders in education policy including VicSRC's partner school network. Findings will highlight key recommendations and priority areas to improve the experiences of LGBTIQA+ students in schools.
  - Working with VicSRC, the Student Researcher will provide advice on next advocacy steps for improved school-based mental health and wellbeing support for LGBTIQA+ students in Victoria. This may
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include providing feedback on our work and representing the organisation in the media and at meetings.

- Support and professional development will be offered to the Student Researcher throughout the project to build confidence and skills.

## What will I be required to do?

### Time commitments

Students should expect to spend up to 70 hours participating as the Student Researcher throughout the project, between May and December 2024. A breakdown of some of the key activities can be found in the project schedule.

### Project location

You will be able to undertake this project online and in-person at VicSRC's office in North Melbourne. VicSRC will be able to support regional students by covering the cost of travelling to Melbourne for the consultation and other meetings as needed.

### Professional expectations

The Student Researcher is a great opportunity for students to build knowledge and confidence in a professional setting. VicSRC doesn't expect students to have any prior work or professional experience, but the Student Researcher should come ready to learn more about working in a professional environment and to dedicate the time needed to contribute to the project in a meaningful way.

### Expertise

Don't worry – the Student Researcher is not expected to be experts in research or facilitation, or to have a deep understanding of the education system.

Instead, we are looking for someone who is passionate about LGBTIQ+ student mental health and wellbeing and eager to learn the skills involved.

### Desirable skills and qualities

VicSRC is looking for a Victorian secondary student who has a passion for advocacy and engaging with their fellow students to build our understanding of the experiences and challenges faced by LGBTIQ+ students.

We will be looking for students who are ready to act as a co-researcher and participate in the activities associated with that. This includes talking with other students in consultations, writing up a report, and conducting some additional research to help support our findings.

## How much will I be reimbursed?

The Student Researcher will be reimbursed for their time and expertise. The reimbursement is called an honorarium, which is a payment made in recognition of voluntary services provided to VicSRC.

The Student Researcher will be reimbursed \$25 for each hour they spend working on this project. Additional reimbursement will be provided to cover travel costs for those students who need it. It is estimated that the project will require 70 hours of work in total.

### Project schedule

Engagement	Prospective date range and hours worked*
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Onboarding of researcher	<p>23 May – 31 May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings and introductions with the Research, Policy and Advocacy team</li> <li>• Initial conversations about workload, support and expectations</li> <li>• Introductory training and modules</li> <li>• Creating a timeline for the research work</li> </ul>
Building Research Question	<p>31 May - 21 June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with the VicSRC Policy and Research Officer to discuss your interests and potential area of research</li> <li>• Narrowing this down into a research question</li> <li>• Planning out research methodology and analysis (what the consultation will look like and we will make use of what we learn)</li> </ul>
Consultation with LGBTIQA+ Students	<p>By 14 July (Term 2 School Holidays)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with the VicSRC Policy and Research Officer to plan and deliver a consultation with LGBTIQA+ students to gather their perspectives for your research</li> </ul>
Draft and Finalise Research Report	<p>August – September</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with the Policy and Research Officer to analyse the consultation data and draft a report on your findings</li> <li>• Edit and finalise the report</li> </ul>
Distribute Research Findings and Contribute to Advocacy Work	<p>October – November</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with VicSRC to distribute the findings via our networks and student community, including through social media and our website</li> <li>• Working with the Policy and Research Officer to plan and deliver a presentation on the research to the Department of Education</li> <li>• Providing advice on next advocacy steps for improved school-based mental health and wellbeing support for LGBTIQA+ students in Victoria</li> </ul>
<p><i>* Timing and hours worked are approximate and subject to change.</i></p>	

## Eligibility

VicSRC welcomes expressions of interest from any current Victorian secondary student, though preference will be given to students with relevant lived experience. Please let us know if we can support your accessibility needs throughout this application process.

## Child Safety

VicSRC is a Child Safe organisation. We work to create programs, activities and environments that are safe, inclusive and welcoming for children and young people from all backgrounds, cultures and abilities. We will not tolerate any abuse of children and young people.

This role might involve hearing potentially triggering stories and discussions from other students around mental health and wellbeing and queer identities. VicSRC will support your safety and wellbeing, and it is important to consider whether you would feel comfortable working around these discussions and topics. If you would like to talk more about what this could look like and how you would be supported, please contact Riya Rajesh, Policy & Research Officer, VicSRC ([riya@vicsrc.org.au](mailto:riya@vicsrc.org.au)).

Sharing your own lived experience with other students as a facilitator requires in-depth training and skills to be done in a way that is effective and safe for everyone involved. As such, there is no expectation to share your personal lived experiences in this role.

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## HOW TO PUT IN AN EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Once you double-check to make sure that you're eligible, you can go ahead and submit an expression of interest by filling out [this online form](#) (or head to <https://forms.office.com/r/4DwfnauE4v>). Please note that submissions of expressions of interest will close on **5 May 2024**.

### What happens after I put in an Expression of Interest (EOI)?

Once you submit an expression of interest, you'll be contacted by VicSRC to set up a brief and informal online meeting to learn more about you, your experiences at school, and your interest in participating in this project.

After that, VicSRC will consider all of the EOIs, and we will inform everyone of the outcome of their EOI by late May 2024.

### What if I have more questions?

If you have any questions, or if you'd like to talk more about this opportunity, please reach out to VicSRC on the contact details below.

#### Riya Rajesh

Policy & Research Officer, VicSRC

[riya@vicsrc.org.au](mailto:riya@vicsrc.org.au) | 0436 476 612

