

Recruitment pack

Research Director

Full time or Part time (0.8)



Victoria **Law**
Foundation

Supporting better justice through
research, education and grants

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Diversity and inclusion

We encourage people from all backgrounds, abilities, and identities to apply for our vacancies.

The VLF is committed to a workforce that represents many different cultures, backgrounds and viewpoints. The more diversity we have in our team, the more perspectives we have, and the more bright ideas we can share and develop. We strive to foster a professional and inclusive environment where everyone is respected, valued and feels safe.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are encouraged to apply.

The VLF will employ appropriate, effective and flexible strategies to improve opportunities, and will make reasonable adjustments to policies, practices and requirements where necessary to provide equal opportunity.

We understand that balance between work and other parts of our lives is important, and we support flexible work across all our roles.

If you require support in applying for this role, please contact the Victoria Law Foundation on 9604 8103 or email hr@victorialawfoundation.org.au

Contents

| | | |
|----------|--|-----------|
| 1 | The Victoria Law Foundation | 4 |
| | Funding | 4 |
| 2 | About our Research function | 4 |
| 3 | About the role..... | 6 |
| | Organisational Structure..... | 7 |
| | Responsibilities | 8 |
| | The role will suit a person with: | 9 |
| | Criteria for success | 9 |
| | Benefits..... | 9 |
| 4 | Selection criteria | 10 |
| 5 | Recruitment process..... | 11 |
| 6 | Our work | 12 |

1 The Victoria Law Foundation

The Victoria Law Foundation (VLF) was established in 1967 and is a statutory entity under the [Victoria Law Foundation Act 2009](#) (VLF Act).

We are a [small inclusive and high functioning team](#), and we pride ourselves on our expertise, collaboration and meaningful work in research, education and grants to support better justice, for all Victorians.

VLF is led by the Executive Director, [Lynne Haultain](#), and a Board representing the diversity of the justice sector led by [The Honourable Justice Greg Garde AO RFD](#).

We are experts in our fields. The VLF has a [staff](#) of 21 (approximately 16 FTE) with expertise across research, education, grant making, business services and communications.

Our functions are focused on capability – supporting the justice sector to engage effectively with the community they serve, and to build understanding and confidence in our legal system. All aspects of our work are informed by evidence and mutually supportive. Staff are encouraged to share ideas and work closely together to achieve the greatest impact.

Our staff love working with us! We have a great culture, low staff turnover and for the past five years our annual staff surveys have shown high to very high satisfaction rates in all key areas.

Funding

We receive annual funding from the [Victorian Legal Services Board Public Purpose Fund](#) with a small amount of additional income from investments and sponsorship.

With an operating budget of just over \$3 million, it is essential that VLF makes the most of our resources to deliver effective and targeted programs.

2 About our Research function

The [Research function](#) supports the VLF's vision:

A fair, equitable and accessible justice for all Victorians

Our research focus is described in the VLF Act as investigating the *legal and related needs of Victorians ... through research on the justice system, especially in matters relating to access to justice, legal services and civil justice*. We recognise access to justice as a core element of a functional democracy.

Through data analysis and independent research, we look closely at how people experience and understand the justice system; which policies and services are working to support Victorians access justice and which are not; and how the component parts of the system interact. The strong evidence base we build and present is a critical contribution to effective justice services and policy.

For more information on the
research function [click here](#).



To access published **research reports** [click here](#).



Under the [Strategic Plan 2021-2024](#), the priority for the Research function is to build the evidence base in Victoria through:

- identifying, analysing and building data sources
- investigating what works and what doesn't in the delivery of justice services
- developing options for improvement.

The research program comprised of **four streams** covering both 'top-down' (institutional) and 'bottom-up' (general public) perspectives.

| | | |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| <p>Mapping justice</p> | <p><i>Examining administrative data in the Victorian civil justice system</i></p> <p>Mapping the use and utility of administrative data across a broad range of civil justice bodies, including courts and tribunals, legal assistance organisations and dispute resolution bodies</p> <p>This work identified opportunities and challenges in using existing data to improve access to justice through the operations of large players in the sector, and set out some possible new directions to advance.</p> <p>Project completed in 2023/24 FY.</p> | <p>Click here</p> |
| <p>Surveying legal need and capability</p> | <p><i>Discovering how people understand and engage with the law</i></p> <p>Victoria-wide <i>Public Understanding of Law Survey</i> (PULS)</p> <p>Groundbreaking work to discover what Victorians know about their law, their experiences of the justice system, and capability in navigating processes and institutions.</p> <p>Two reports released 2023/2024; a third to be completed 2024/25.</p> | <p>Click here</p> |
| <p>Researching programs and activities</p> | <p>Looking closely at what works in providing effective legal services to Victorians.</p> <p><i>Measure for Measure: Tailoring Everyday Justice</i> explores effective and tailored justice solutions in Victoria. The project showcases examples of initiatives that address legal needs, emphasising solutions tailored to individuals and specific issues.</p> <p>This work will investigate responses to some of the gaps revealed in the PULS and identify the attributes of their success and the challenges they deal with.</p> | <p>n/a</p> |
| <p>Coordinating and sharing research</p> | <p>Build a network connecting the justice, community and academic sectors to enable knowledge sharing, encourage collaboration, extend the reach of our work and help us to learn from the experience of local and international experts.</p> | <p>Click here</p> |

3 About the role

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Job title | Research Director |
| Location | Melbourne, Australia |
| Reports to | Executive Director |
| Direct reports | Principal Researcher Senior Researcher Research Coordinator Research Communications Data Analyst |
| Key relationships | Management team Communications team External stakeholders |
| Contract type | Full-time or 0.8 FTE |
| Salary range | \$200,000 pro rata + superannuation |

The Research Director is a key member of the VLF's leadership team. This is a unique opportunity to develop and guide a highly skilled research team, to make a valuable contribution to improving civil justice in Victoria and contributing to national and international thinking on access to justice.

The VLF has had a research function for the last five of its 56 years. Although we are new we are already highly regarded and well connected in Victoria, Australia and around the world. We actively engage with policy makers, fellow researchers, the public and private profession and major justice institutions to advance the development of research and evidence which is directly applicable in the pursuit of fair, equitable and accessible justice.

We have delivered significant pieces of work, including a world first survey measuring legal need and legal capability across the Victorian community, the [Public Understanding of Law Survey \(PULS\)](#). We have also surveyed the use and utility of data across the justice sector (Data Mapping), work which has generated significant interest. We have been closely involved with policy makers in discussions on the national approach to legal assistance, as well as an established commitment to international exchange on research and outcomes.

The Research Director will have exceptional experience in research and particularly in civil justice, or a closely related field.

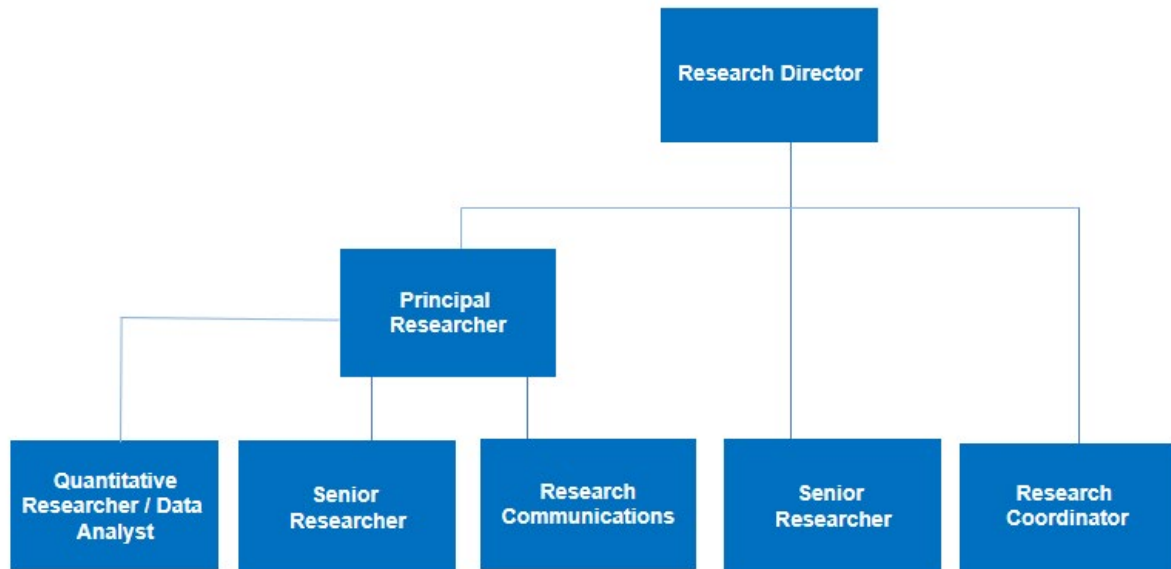
The role is responsible for leadership, guidance and direction of the Research function.

Organisational Structure

Leadership Team



Research Team



Responsibilities

Strategic

- research leadership – inside and outside the VLF
- development, design and implementation of research consistent with aims of the VLF and in close collaboration with the Executive Director
- engagement with the leadership team to ensure integration of the research work with other activities of the VLF
- developing governance and policies in relation to your work.

Operational

- manage VLF research projects, including planning, conducting and reporting projects to agreed timeframes
- set, support and maintain a high methodological standard
- keep up-to-date with research techniques and issues related to access to justice
- develop strong relationships with internal and external stakeholders including other research organisations
- prepare reports and presentations for a range of audiences
- be the point of contact and advice for community organisations and the justice sector in relation to research, consolidating the VLF as a recognised centre of excellence
- contribute to other VLF programs in Education, Events and Grants, with advice and information
- effectively manage the Research budget and staff to deliver the VLF's strategic plan and annual Business Plans.

Staff management

- manage the Research team, building their knowledge, skills and confidence in new aspects of the work
- encourage collaboration within the team and across the VLF.

The role will suit a person with:

- a strong research background and extensive networks
- a highly collaborative style with partners of all kinds
- a demonstrated ability to lead numerous projects at different stages of development at once, and manage time effectively
- exceptional problem solving and critical analysis skills
- awareness of the need for diplomacy and confidentiality
- excellent administration and project management skills
- strong interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence
- exceptional written and verbal communication skills, and the ability to present effectively to diverse audiences
- clear commitment to the VLF and its aims.

Criteria for success

After 12 months in the role the successful applicant will have:

- Implemented the strategic priorities of the Research function as set out in the Business Plan
- Developed an indicative 3 year work plan moving the VLF into its next phase of research and thought leadership
- Determined staffing requirements to deliver on the workplan
- Developed strong relationships with stakeholders – internal and external, Victorian, Australian and international
- Built a strong and respectful working relationships with the Executive Director and the Research team, the Board and all VLF staff
- Demonstrated commitment to the broader remit of the VLF.

Benefits

As a member of the team, you'll have access to –

- hybrid work – mix of office-based and work from home
- flexible working hours
- Gratis days over the Christmas period
- annual reading week for professional development
- free and confidential Employee Assistance Program and a strong program of organisational development
- personal professional development opportunities
- paid Parental Leave of 14 weeks after 12 months service.
- salary packaging options.

4 Selection criteria

Core skills

Qualifications and experience

- post graduate qualifications and extensive background in research on systems and citizen experience, preferably in civil justice
- proven record in conducting and publishing high quality research
- extensive expertise in rigorous research – quantitative and qualitative
- demonstrated capacity to design and implement a research program
- demonstrated experience using statistical software
- experience in applying for and securing funding
- understanding of the legal sector in Australia and issues related to access to justice highly desirable.

Project management and communication

- demonstrated experience working collaboratively with stakeholders, including liaising, consulting and negotiating at a high level
- experience managing a number of projects simultaneously, including budgets
- high level skills in presenting effectively to a range of audiences
- awareness of and commitment to the values, people and work of the VLF.

Team management

- experience leading and developing staff, including building knowledge, skills and confidence
- experience as a member of a leadership group
- exceptional interpersonal and organisational skills

5 Recruitment process

The information below will help you to complete your application and understand the recruitment process.

The recruitment process is being managed by our recruitment partner [Evans Faull](#).

How do I apply?

Applications can be submitted via [SEEK](#) or via email to recruitment@evansfaull.com.au

Please note that applications will also be accepted via the [Victorian Government Careers website](#). For these applications you will need to be registered for this service. When completing your registration, we only require you to complete the compulsory fields.

Applications **must** include the following documents:

1. **Curriculum vitae** – detail of relevant roles, achievements and professional qualifications. Please provide dates.
2. **Covering letter** – summarises your interest in this position **and**
3. **Response to the selection criteria** - please address the Core Skills on page 10 of this recruitment pack.

Applications close midnight Australian Eastern Standard time, Friday 31 May 2024

About the selection process

After the closing date, applicants will be shortlisted for interview. We plan to interview within two weeks of the closing date.

Shortlisted applicants will be contacted by our recruitment partner, Evans Faull, to arrange an interview.

The interview process will be a two-stage panel interview process.

Applicants who are not shortlisted will be notified by email of their application status.

Who do I contact for more information?

For information about the role or selection process, please email recruitment@evansfaull.com.au

6 Our work

The VLF supports better justice for all Victorians through 3 functions: research, education and grants. Below is further information on our work in Grants and Education.

Grants

VLF is a relatively small, well targeted grant-maker, supporting in large part the community legal and broader community sectors. We offer three kinds of grants:

- Knowledge Grants support organisations to develop their capacity to collect and analyse data, and share information about civil legal need.
- Community Legal Grants support projects that improve understanding of civil legal issues and the Victorian justice system, where there is evidence of community need.
- Everyday Legal Grants provide small, timely funds for projects that improve community understanding of the law and justice system, including Victorian Law Week events.

For more information on our **grants** [click here](#).



Education

The Education function falls into two core areas:

- Events and Education programs for the public and the legal sector, and
- the [schools program](#).

Events

The main focus is the delivery of community and legal sector-focussed events throughout the year including:

- [Legal Laneway Breakfast](#) (Early February)
- [Victorian Law Week](#) (May)
- [In Conversation](#) (August or date to suit speaker)
- 'Law and You' Community Forum (October)
- [Better Information Webinars](#) (three times a year)
- [Plain language Workshops](#) (twice a year)

For more information on **events** see our [website](#) and www.lawweek.net.au, and [annual reports](#).



Schools program

This delivers education programs for Victorian secondary school students to improve their understanding of the law and the legal system. Our program is directed to schools in low socio-economic parts of Melbourne and regional Victoria and is curated in consultation with legal and education experts to enliven students' studies within the curriculum, and improve their understanding of the legal issues that may affect them.

For more information on our **schools program** [click here](#)



Our programs and staff are supported by

Communications

The Communications team supports the promotion of the organisation's activities using VLF's own channels and strategic stakeholder engagement.

Business Services

Business Services provide critical support to staff and facilitate the delivery of our core activities. Business Services comprises:

- finance
- risk and compliance management
- human resources support
- information technology management
- records management
- facilities and general administrative support.

For further information about all our programs see our
[Annual reports.](#)

