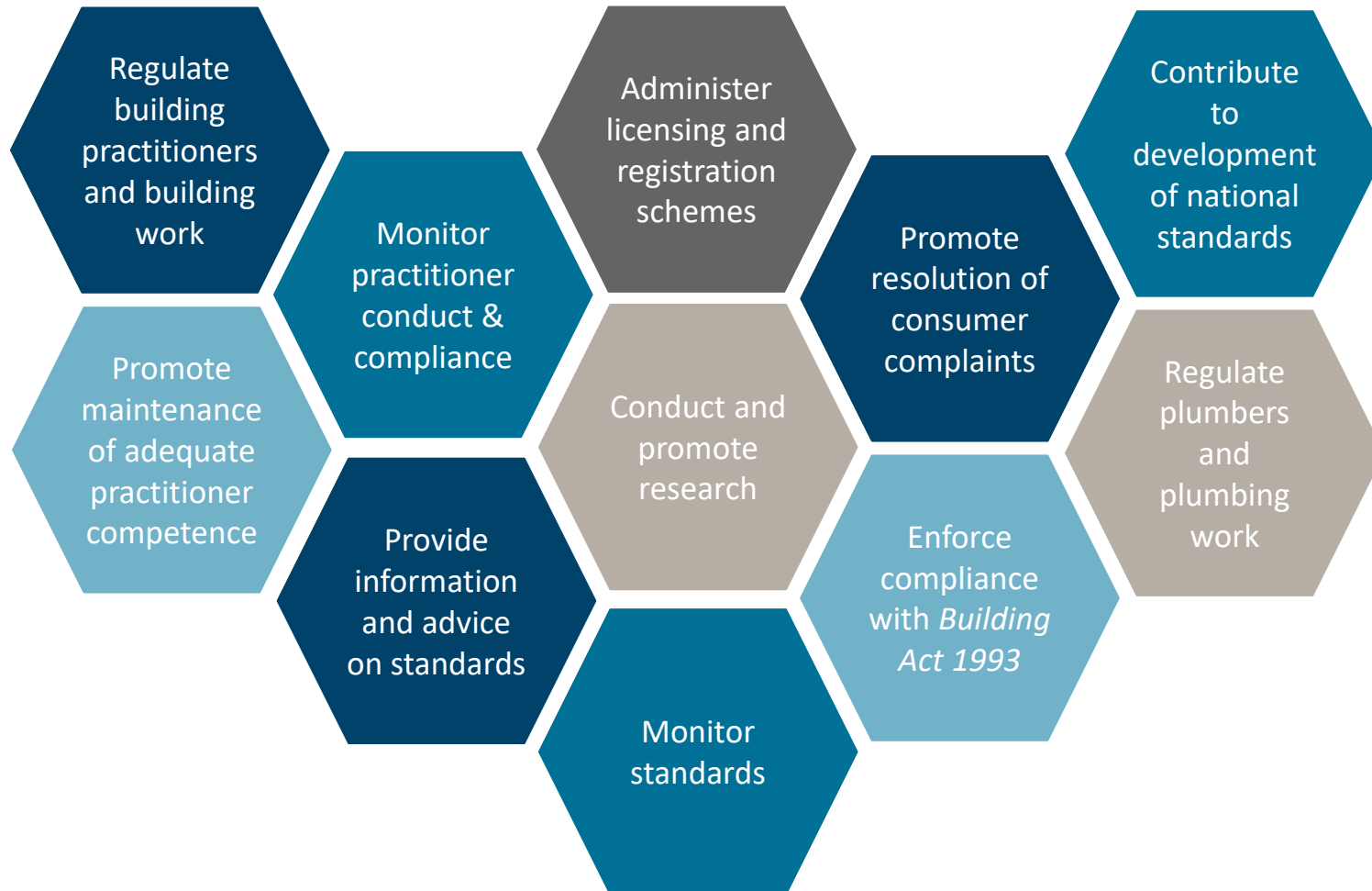


# VBA Research Grants 2022

Information briefing

10 February 2022

# VBA's regulatory functions



See s197 of the *Building Act 1993* for full list of functions



# VBA's Research Program

- Overseen by Board's Research Committee
- Comprises VBA managed research and sponsored research
- Helps us better understand problems, consumer needs and how interventions can be shaped to contribute to a quality built environment
- Gives us evidence to inform regulatory decisions and influence improvements
- Research that makes a difference

## Our research focus

Safe (or safer)  
building and  
plumbing work with  
fewer major defects

Skilled and  
competent  
practitioners

A technologically  
advanced and  
innovative industry

# Research Grant Program

- Support academic research that will help us:
  - provide an evidence base
  - better understand regulatory issues and consumer/user needs
  - inform how regulatory interventions can be shaped to improve public safety
- Provides structure for educational institutions in requesting VBA support
- Increases access to VBA for research support
- Helps VBA expand its research network



# Research grants 2021

- Enthusiastic response to inaugural round
- Applications reflected broad themes relevant to the built environment
- Successful applications:
  - Risk of mould growth in new energy efficient buildings (University of Tasmania)
  - Fire safety risks associated with the installation of solar panels on the facades of multi-storey buildings (RMIT University)
  - Extent of defects in passive fire safety systems in apartment buildings (Deakin University)



# Successful applications 2021

- Clear and concise problem statement, objectives, methodology and deliverables
- Strong alignment with VBA's regulatory remit and research focus
- Confirmed industry partners – financial and/or in-kind contributions
- University contribution to cost of research
- Demonstrated robust governance and project management arrangements
- Reasonable timeframe for delivery
- Deliverables that VBA can do something with in the short to medium term

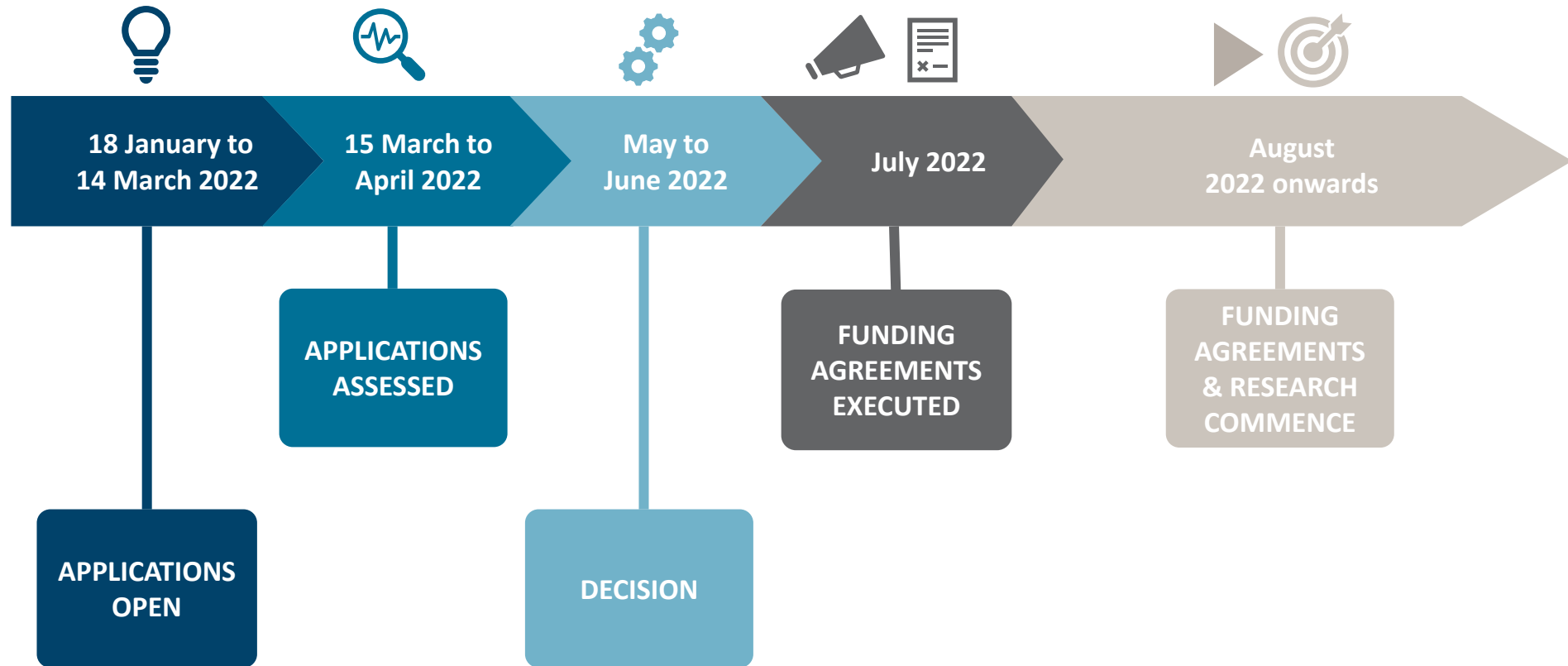


# Research grants 2022

- Proposals focused on reducing moisture ingress and water damage in buildings
- Supporting research that will find/contribute to innovative solutions to minimise moisture ingress and water damage:
  - improved building and plumbing practices
  - improved skills and competencies for all involved in building lifecycle
  - opportunities to reform codes, standards and the regulatory framework



# Schedule





# Assessment and decision



# Selection criteria

## Impact

- Addresses a problem/issue contributing to moisture ingress/water damage in buildings
- Will provide evidence-based insights with potential to lead to a reduction in moisture ingress/water damage in buildings
- Aligned with the VBA's functions and strategic research objectives

## Methodology

Is clear, transparent, achievable and appropriate

## Viability

Appropriate resources are available to meet objectives and deliverables

## Value for money

Represents value for money for the VBA

# Grant amount

How much funding is available?  
Is there a cap per grant?

- No cap set for individual grants
- VBA may offer to partially fund research
- Will look favourably on university contribution
- Open to supporting projects with contributions from other partners
- Represents value for money for the VBA



# Research duration

Is there a time limit for completing funded research?

- Timeframe should be commensurate with scale and complexity
- Want to see return on investment within a reasonable time
- Consider staged approach and deliverables
- Will require regular progress reports
- Release of funding dependent on milestones being met



# Permitted use of funding

Are there restrictions on how grant funds can be used?

- Intended for contribution to salary of researchers, data collection costs etc
- Not intended for:
  - previously completed research activities
  - research funded through other sources
  - already purchased resources, or purchase of resources the institution should provide
  - core organisational operating costs
  - procuring private sector to conduct the research



# In-kind support

What type of in-kind support can the VBA provide?

- Open to proposals on a case-by-case basis
- May include:
  - access to regulatory experts and technical specialists
  - access to case studies or data (subject to confidentiality requirements)
- Will include VBA review and feedback on draft papers/reports



# Eligibility

## Why is the grant limited to educational institutions?

- VBA recognises the unique position and abilities of educational institutions to provide academic expertise and rigorous research
- Approached regularly by educational institutions for research support
- Program provides a structured approach for universities to seek VBA support for research
- Not limited to Victorian educational institutions



# VBA feedback

Can I discuss my research proposal with someone at the VBA?

- General questions can be submitted by email to [research@vba.vic.gov.au](mailto:research@vba.vic.gov.au)
- Not providing feedback on research ideas or proposals before final decisions
- Will provide feedback to successful and unsuccessful applicants if requested





# Next steps

- Webinar and slides will be published online:  
<https://www.vba.vic.gov.au/about/research/research-grant-program>
- Update FAQs on website
- Submit applications by **14 March 2022** by email: [research@vba.vic.gov.au](mailto:research@vba.vic.gov.au)

