

## Backing universities & TAFEs to improve the building industry

Australia's brightest minds are encouraged to apply for research grants being offered by Victoria's building and plumbing regulator.

The Victorian Building Authority (VBA) is looking to support researchers who are keen to carry out research that will help make buildings safer, improve the competency of building and plumbing practitioners, and support a technologically advanced and innovative industry.

The new program offers financial and in-kind support to successful applicants, who must be a researcher from an Australian university or TAFE.

The VBA's Chief Analyst Shobini Mahendra said the new grants program recognised the unique abilities of education institutions to provide academic expertise and rigorous research.

"This is a great opportunity for education institutions to partner with the VBA to help provide the evidence base to inform regulatory decisions and influence improvements to the building regulatory system," she said.

"Through the research we undertake ourselves and through our research partnerships, we deliver research that make a difference for the community."

The VBA's research program helps the VBA better understand major regulatory issues, consumer needs, and how regulatory interventions can be shaped to improve public safety.

The VBA sponsored research include the Professionalising Fire Safety Engineering research project by The Warren Centre for Advanced Engineering at the University of Sydney.

The Warren Centre published its eighth and final research report in September, presenting recommendations to boost the professional competencies, accreditation and education of fire safety engineers.

Successful grant applications must be aligned with the VBA's research priorities.

Funding can be used to support researchers or research assistants, small equipment costs, travel and other costs associated with the conducting research and/or collecting data and hiring professional services.

Researchers at Australian education institutions interested in [applying for a research grant](#) must apply by 28 February 2021. Successful applicants will be announced in mid-2021.