



Funding and Partnerships Policy 2018

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Introduction

Consumer Policy Research Centre (CPRC) is an independent, non-profit, consumer think-tank established with seed funding by the Victorian Government in 2016. CPRC undertakes consumer research independently and in partnership with others to inform evidence-based policy and business practice change. We work closely with policymakers, regulators, academia, industry and the community sector to develop, translate and promote evidence-based research to inform practice and policy change.

CPRC's mission is to protect and improve the experiences, welfare and lives of consumers.

We achieve this by undertaking evidence-based research to drive changes in government policy and regulation and business practice.

CPRC is guided by our values in how we conduct ourselves and go about our work:

Curious – we are rigorous and inquisitive.

Collaborative – we work together, as a team and with others.

Effective – we get things done.

Respectful – we build trust.

Retaining our independence and operating with integrity is central to the organisation achieving our mission. We have developed [14 principles](#) (p4) to guide our approach in partnering and collaborating external parties.

Purpose

The purpose of this Funding and Partnerships Policy is to provide the ethical framework and guidelines for the way CPRC partners and accepts external funding and resources.

This policy is reviewed by the CPRC Board each year to ensure the document is up-to-date and reflects the needs of the organisation.

This policy applies to all activities undertaken by the Board, permanent and contract staff, and volunteers.

CPRC Funding and Partnerships Principles

Principle 1 – We will not accept funding for fee-for-service research which may present a real or perceived conflict in the production of research, policy analysis or recommendations for government policy or business practice change.

Principle 2 – We will not accept funding for fee-for-service education, awareness, engagement and evaluation activities from organisations who do not demonstrate through their actions genuine intent to improve the lives of consumers.

Principle 3 – We will only collaborate with others in education, awareness, engagement and evaluation activities where there is a material benefit for consumers in doing so.

Principle 4 – CPRC will only enter research project partnerships where the goals of the project are clearly in line with CPRC’s mission to improve the lives, welfare and experiences of consumers.

Principle 5 – CPRC will not enter into research project partnerships with commercial entities making financial or material non-financial contributions, where there may be a perceived or actual conflict of interest in policy recommendations or research findings.

Principle 6 – In project partnerships, policy analysis and policy recommendations will be independently conducted and determined by CPRC.

Principle 7 – CPRC’s mission of improving the lives, welfare and experiences of consumers is strengthened by greater investment in high-quality, consumer-focussed research. We welcome financial contributions from organisations and individuals to the Public Consumer Research Fund who share the commitment to this cause.

Principle 8 – Research, activities and projects initiated by the Public Consumer Research Fund must retain independence and rigour, thus contributors to the Public Consumer Research Fund will not have direct input, review capability or oversight of research project design and delivery.

Principle 9 – CPRC will host events and forums where we build shared-understanding across the sectors of challenges, experiences and outcomes for consumers and provide insights into opportunities for regulatory, policy and business practice change.

Principle 10 – CPRC will not accept event sponsorship from commercial entities where this may pose a conflict between the objectives, behaviour and values of CPRC and an event sponsor.

Principle 11 – CPRC will accept skills and training from external organisations where the knowledge, insights, techniques or materials will improve our ability to better understand, analyse and communicate consumer experience, systems, attitudes or behaviours through conducting our work.

Principle 12 – CPRC will transparently acknowledge and publish any in-kind support received from other organisations in accordance with our Recognitions Policy.

Principle 13 – CPRC will not enter into partnerships or accept funding or sponsorships from any organisation that may bring CPRC into disrepute.

Principle 14 – CPRC will not enter into partnerships, accept funding or sponsorships from organisations who repeatedly and materially breach Australian competition and consumer law.

Fee-For-Service Policy

Purpose

Central to CPRC's mission is the delivery of research, education, evaluation and engagement activities to improve the experiences, value and lives of consumers by informing:

- Government policy and regulatory change; and,
- Business and organisational practice change.

CPRC often receives requests to undertake research or activities on a fee-for-service basis.

The purpose of this policy is to establish CPRC's framework and guidelines to undertaking research, education, engagement and evaluation activities on a fee-for-service basis.

Approach

Research and policy reports

In working to achieve our mission and driving government policy and regulatory change, CPRC produces high-quality, independent research and policy reports and submissions. It is critical to CPRC that our work is trusted, and the integrity of our research is retained.

Applying our organisational values (Collaboration, Curiosity, Effective and Respect) when considering fee-for-service research, CPRC will adopt the following principles:

Principle 1 – We will not accept funding for fee-for-service research which may present a real or perceived conflict in the production of research, policy analysis or recommendations for government policy or business practice change.

CPRC will accept funding for research and policy activities where projects meet this principle and the Exclusions Policy from:

- Government / regulatory bodies
- Community sector agencies and charities
- Academic organisations

CPRC will not accept funding from corporate entities on a fee-for-service basis for the production of research or policy reports which include recommendations for government policy or regulation change.

Education, outreach, engagement and awareness-raising activities

In working to achieve our mission of driving business practice change (and government policy change) CPRC undertakes work to change the culture, awareness and knowledge of all organisations working with or for consumers.

These activities may include: workshops, training and education, briefings on CPRC's research and application to organisational practice change, outreach and engagement with consumers or the community or program evaluation.

Applying our organisational values (Collaboration, Curiosity, Effective and Respect) when considering fee-for-service education, outreach, evaluation and engagement activities, CPRC will adopt the following principles:

Principle 2 – We will not accept funding for fee-for-service education, awareness, engagement and evaluation activities from organisations who do not demonstrate through their actions genuine intent to improve the lives of consumers.

Principle 3 – We will only collaborate with others in education, awareness, engagement and evaluation activities where there is a material benefit for consumers in doing so.

CPRC will accept funding for fee-for-service education, outreach, engagement and awareness-raising projects, where they meet the above principles and the Exclusions Policy from:

- Corporate entities
- Government / regulatory bodies
- Community sector agencies and charities
- Academia organisations

Requirements

CPRC will only enter fee-for-service work in line with this Policy and where organisations meet CPRC's [Exclusions Policy](#) (p14).

Organisations engaging CPRC on a fee-for-service basis are only able to refer to CPRC's work or branding with agreement by CPRC.

Partnerships Policy

Purpose

CPRC collaborates and partners with other organisations in undertaking research, generating policy ideas and discussion and changing policy, regulation and practice.

We believe diverse thinking, skills and expertise is required to understand, navigate and design solutions for complex policy challenges and emerging issues.

The purpose of this policy is to provide CPRC's guideline and approach to partnering with other organisations.

Approach

CPRC's primary pathway to partnering with other organisations is through the Research Pathways Program, where there is a \$100,000 allocation made to partnerships to pursue research within identified research priority areas.

The objectives of the Research Pathways Program are to:

- Facilitate collaborative consumer-focussed research across government, industry, community and academia; and,
- Foster high-quality research which develops a robust evidence base for policy or practice changes within identified CPRC research priority areas.

Partnership projects have been developed for research areas where the CPRC is undertaking significant internal research in a focus area and is seeking community, academic, industry and government partners to strengthen the project and create a collaboration platform.

Partnership projects are often most successful where there may be a shared-responsibility across the sectors to address the challenge, or where no single sector can introduce reforms or develop evidence to improve consumer outcomes in isolation.

Applying CPRC's values (Collaboration, Curiosity, Respect and Effective) when considering formal partnerships with external organisations, CPRC will adopt the following principles:

Principle 4 – CPRC will only enter research project partnerships where the goals of the project are clearly in line with CPRC's mission to improve the lives, welfare and experiences of consumers.

Principle 5 – CPRC will not enter into research project partnerships with commercial entities making financial or material non-financial contributions, where there may be a perceived or actual conflict of interest in policy recommendations or research findings.

Principle 6 – In partnership projects, policy analysis and policy recommendations will be independently determined by CPRC.

Requirements

All partner organisations must meet the [Exclusions Policy](#) (p14).

Public Consumer Research Fund

Purpose

CPRC engages a range of individuals and organisations who are passionate about improving outcomes for consumers.

CPRC has established the Public Consumer Research Fund as a vehicle for individuals, organisations to make financial contributions to a general research fund to support consumer research while retaining independence over the policy, research and engagement activities of the Centre.

Approach

The Public Consumer Research Fund has been established to support the research and operations of the CPRC, without contributions being tied to particular projects or research activities. CPRC is currently seeking DGR status for contributions to become tax deductible, at this stage contributions do not receive tax deductibility status.

Objectives of the Public Consumer Research Fund

High-quality public research to advance the interests of consumers is critical to the development and implementation of sustainable policies and business practices.

The objectives of the Public Consumer Research Fund are to:

- Provide a channel for organisations or individuals who are supportive of evidence-based research to advance the consumer interest to contribute funding untied to any particular project; and,
- Produce new leading research in the subject areas identified as priorities by Fund contributors and the Public Research Fund Panel.

Applying our organisational values (Collaboration, Curiosity, Effective and Respect) when considering contributions to the Public Consumer Research Fund, CPRC will adopt the following principles:

Principle 7 – CPRC’s mission of improving the lives, welfare and experiences of consumers is strengthened by greater investment in high-quality, consumer-focussed research. We welcome financial contributions from organisations and individuals across all sectors to the Public Consumer Research Fund who share the commitment to this cause.

Principle 8 – Research, activities and projects initiated by the Public Consumer Research Fund must retain independence and rigour, thus contributors to the Public Consumer Research Fund will not have direct input, review capability or oversight of research project design and delivery.

Governance

The Public Research Fund is governed by the Research Subcommittee of the CPRC Board. The Research Subcommittee includes 3 CPRC Board Members, the CPRC CEO and 2 appointed External Members. External Members must:

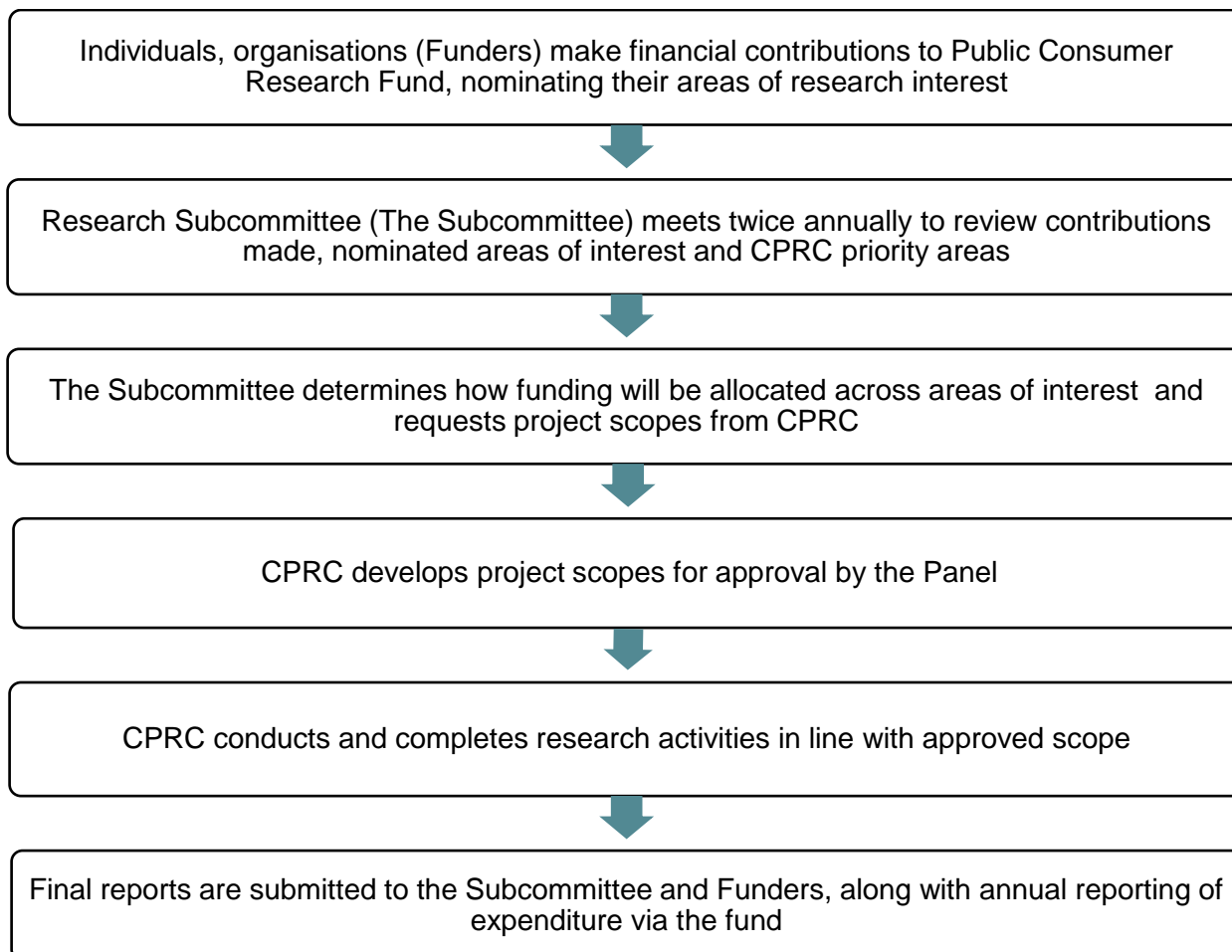
- Have no commercial interests or conflicts of interest; and,
- Have significant experience in public policy, regulation and program delivery.

CPRC reports annually to the Research Subcommittee on expenditure and activities against funding received by the Fund. The Research Subcommittee in turn, presents an annual report for funders.

Role of the Public Research Fund Panel

The Public Research Fund Panel has been established to provide additional independence and accountability, ensuring that funding received from external sources via the Public Consumer Research Fund in no way influences the activities, research or recommendations of the Centre. Projects produced from resources generated by the Fund sit separately from those conducted through CPRC core research priorities and projects.

How it works



Who can donate to the fund

Anyone can donate to the fund if they meet the [Exclusions Policy](#) (p14).

Requirements

Promotion / attribution

Any IP generated by the Fund remains the property of CPRC. CPRC will publish all individuals and organisations who have made a contribution to the Public Consumer Research Fund each year. All reports published drawing on resources generated by the Fund will formally recognise contributors to the Fund. Funders must meet the Exclusions Policy (p14).

Event Sponsorships

Purpose

From time to time, CPRC hosts events and consultation forums to showcase research, collaborate and build a stronger community of policy, academic and community sector experts. These activities help to broaden the reach and awareness of CPRC's research.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the conditions under which CPRC will accept sponsorship support for events.

Approach

Sponsorship of CPRC events may include:

- Financial contributions;
- Catering; and,
- Resources – such as rooms, equipment, supplies.

On a case-by-case basis, CPRC will enable promotional materials from the sponsor to be made available at the event.

Applying our organisational values (Collaboration, Curiosity, Effective and Respect) when considering event sponsorships, CPRC will adopt the following principles:

Principle 9 – CPRC will host events and forums where we build shared-understanding across the sectors of challenges, experiences and outcomes for consumers and provide insights into opportunities for regulatory, policy and business practice change.

Principle 10 – CPRC will not accept event sponsorship from commercial entities where this may pose a conflict between the objectives, behaviour and values of CPRC and an event sponsor.

CPRC will accept funding for sponsorship activities (in line with [Exclusions Policy](#)) from:

- Government / regulatory bodies
- Community sector agencies and charities
- Academic organisations
- Corporate entities

CPRC will not accept sponsorship from corporate entities that:

- Require or imply CPRC's endorsement of products, practices, services, political parties or individuals;
- Limit CPRC's ability to carry out our functions independently; or,
- Pose a conflict between the objectives or values of the CPRC and the sponsor.

Requirements

CPRC will transparently acknowledge any sponsorship received for events at the time of the event in accordance with our Recognitions Policy. A register of event sponsorships will be retained.

Sponsors must meet the [Exclusions Policy](#) (p14).

In-Kind Contributions

Purpose

CPRC from time to time accepts in-kind contributions from organisations who support the work conducted by the Centre. These in-kind contributions can come in a wide variety of forms including: donations of skills, time or resources such as venues or use of technology. This includes corporate volunteering or secondments.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the conditions under which CPRC will accept in-kind contributions in the course of our work.

Approach

CPRC embraces diversity of skills and experience in approaching complex policy problems, this means we believe our staff members and our work benefits from building skills in different disciplines and sectors.

Applying our organisational values (Collaboration, Curiosity, Effective and Respect) when considering in-kind contributions, CPRC will adopt the following principles:

Principle 11 – CPRC will accept skills and training from external organisations where the knowledge, insights, techniques or materials will improve our ability to better understand, analyse and communicate consumer experience, systems, attitudes or behaviours through conducting our work.

Principle 12 – CPRC will transparently acknowledge and publish any in-kind support received from other organisations in accordance with our Recognitions Policy.

Requirements

In-kind contributors must meet the [Exclusions Policy](#) (p14).

Exclusions Policy

Purpose

CPRC will only be successful in driving policy and practice change where the organisation can be trusted to deliver independent, evidence-based advice unashamedly putting consumer interest at the heart of everything we do.

For this reason, there are some entities which CPRC will not enter into partnerships or accept financial or non-financial contributions from certain entities.

This Exclusions Policy outlines our approach to the organisations which CPRC will not enter into agreements or projects with.

Approach

Applying our organisational values (Collaboration, Curiosity, Effective and Respect) when considering exclusions, CPRC will adopt the following principles:

Principle 13 – CPRC will not enter into partnerships or accept funding or sponsorships from any organisation that may bring CPRC into disrepute.

Principle 14 – CPRC will not enter into partnership, accept funding or sponsorships from organisations who repeatedly and materially breach Australian competition or consumer laws.

Requirements

All organisations making contributions to or partnering with CPRC must meet the Exclusions Policy.

Any organisation that is formally engaged with CPRC through a project, partnership or activity must notify CPRC of any major breach of Australian competition and consumer law for the period of the contract or sponsorship.