



# Hello Sunday Morning

## Research and Evaluation Framework

October 2024

### **Policy Status and Review**

The Research and Evaluation Framework is current as of October 2024

The Research and Evaluation Framework should be reviewed on an annual basis, or as required.



A world where every individual has the right support  
at the right time to change their relationship with alcohol.

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**Research**

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## ABOUT HELLO SUNDAY MORNING

The idea for Hello Sunday Morning was born in 2009 when founder, Chris Raine undertook a year-long experiment to quit drinking. A nightclub promoter at the time, Chris blogged about the challenges and successes of this experiment when he woke up hangover-free every Sunday Morning signing off with “Hello, Sunday Morning!”

As the blog gathered more and more followers, by 2010 ‘Hello Sunday Morning’ became a growing community, today close to 140,000 likeminded people, supporting each other on their journey of change.

We have continued to build on our beginnings and Hello Sunday Morning is now Australia’s largest alcohol-focused online support community and has expanded its offerings to provide a range of supports for anybody who wants to change their relationship with alcohol.

For some taking a break, cutting back or quitting alcohol is the first step to a healthier happier life. For others it is a necessity. Everyone’s journey is unique. Wherever people are in the cycle of change, our challenge is to provide the right tools at the right time to enable them on their journey.

Our Consumer Advisors provide the voice of lived and living experience in the development and delivery of Hello Sunday Morning’s programs and services, and representatives are actively involved in the co-design of program development, evaluation and research we conduct.

### Our vision

A world where every individual has the right support at the right time to change their relationship with alcohol.

### Our mission

To harness technology to create effective, engaging and cutting edge programs that inspire and empower people to change their relationship with alcohol.

### Our values

#### Innovation

We innovate for impact

We continuously evolve to create truly transformative outcomes. We ask questions, adopt a flexible mindset, and are always open to fresh ideas and new ways of doing things. We believe in pushing boundaries, embracing creativity, and challenging traditional norms to find cutting-edge solutions to problems.

#### Excellence

We always bring our best

We believe in setting and upholding the highest standards, continuously challenging ourselves to deliver services that exceed expectations. We view excellence as a continuous journey and embrace the opportunity to do better and achieve more. Our commitment to excellence reflects our unwavering dedication to making a positive impact on the lives of those we serve and the broader community.

### Curiosity

We are curious to learn and evolve

We ask questions to challenge assumptions, explore new perspectives and solve problems in unique ways. We learn from diverse experiences and encourage a culture that asks questions, seeks first to understand and encourages open conversations. Our curiosity helps us fail forward, inspire innovative solutions and create transformation change.

### Caring

We foster connection and understanding through caring

We prioritise empathy, compassion, and genuine concern for the wellbeing of everyone we meet. We are at our strongest when we work together, listening and learning in a spirit of open collaboration. We approach everyone with humility and compassion and value their knowledge. Our commitment to caring empowers individuals to make positive choices, fosters resilience, and builds connection where everyone feels valued and supported.

### Evidence based

We prioritise informed decision making

We embrace the scientist practitioner approach and consider the evidence at every touchpoint in our work to ensure that we only provide effective options with the highest impact and best possible outcomes. Our solutions are grounded in a unique combination of data and practice expertise to build trust and enable people to make informed choices.

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE FRAMEWORK

Hello Sunday Morning's Research and Evaluation Framework guides all of our organisational research and evaluation activities.

Hello Sunday Morning is committed to ethical, high quality, meaningful, inclusive and quality driven research and evaluation. We use the findings from our research and evaluation activities to improve our programs and services, ensuring the best possible outcomes for our community members who want to rethink their relationship with alcohol.

At Hello Sunday Morning, we value the views and experiences of consumers, staff members, researchers and other organisations with similar values. The framework can assist these groups to better understand our culture of excellence in research and evaluation, and how we strive for continuous improvement in all areas.

We are committed to the principles of co-design, co-production and meaningful participatory research. Hello Sunday Morning's Consumer Advisors assists us to improve the quality, safety and relevance of our programs and services by bringing together consumer advocates of diverse backgrounds and experience.

This Framework describes Hello Sunday Morning's intentions for involvement in research and evaluation activities; outlines the principles, values and standards that form the basis of our enquiries; and affirms the processes Hello Sunday Morning uses to govern our research and evaluation agenda.

This is a living document and is updated annually.

## WHY WE CONDUCT RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Our community members are at the core of everything we do. The purpose of our program of research and evaluation is to understand the needs of our current and future members and provide the best solutions to meet those needs through innovation and refinement of our existing services.

Hello Sunday Morning prioritises research and evaluation activities with direct relevance and practical application to our programs and services and to the continuous enhancement of outcomes for our community members.

Research and evaluation at Hello Sunday Morning aims to:

- investigate strategies that increase our reach to the greatest possible number of people in need of support
- continuously improve Hello Sunday Morning's programs and services, ensuring our offerings meet the needs of members with diverse goals for their future relationship with alcohol
- foster a culture of curiosity and raise awareness of the latest evidence in the alcohol field
- strengthen existing partnerships and develop new ones that broaden our research efforts in relation to alcohol-related support and treatment

## Research

Research and evaluation framework



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- contribute to evidence based practices, using our findings as appropriate to influence innovation and change within the broader alcohol and other drugs sector



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## WHAT IS RESEARCH AND EVALUATION AT HELLO SUNDAY MORNING

The terms ‘evaluation’ and ‘research’ both describe a process of study and are used to answer important questions about the community we serve at Hello Sunday Morning, and how best to help them achieve their goals. While there are differences between evaluation and research, the approaches sometimes overlap.

No matter what type of enquiry we choose to use, our community members are always at the centre of our thinking.

### Evaluation

Evaluation describes the process of collecting and analysing information to make judgements about the effectiveness or suitability of a program or service. In general, evaluation produces findings that are used to assess or improve a program.

Evaluation is usually conducted at the end of a program to determine if that program achieved its original goals. In other words, was the program delivered as planned; did the program help our members; and if so, which ones and how?

In other cases, evaluation can occur during the mid-term of the program, and the findings can be used to adjust how it is being delivered to improve outcomes for members in future. The program is then re-evaluated at the end of its term, if it is time limited. This is known as formative evaluation.

Evaluation activities tend to involve low risk to, or place a minimal burden on, participants who are usually already engaged in the program being evaluated. As well as looking at outcomes, the views of community member participants are extremely important to our assessment of the programs we offer.

### Research

Research describes the scientific approach used to collect, analyse, and interpret data to investigate an identified problem, or to answer a particular question or questions known as ‘hypotheses’.

In general, research can be thought of as the process for generating new knowledge or applying existing knowledge in a novel and innovative way to create new concepts and understandings. We are committed to building a culture of innovation at Hello Sunday Morning.

The method for conducting the research, referred to as the ‘research methodology’, is like a blueprint for carrying out the research and keeps investigators on track by limiting the scope of the study. There is a generally accepted hierarchy of which methods provide the most to the least convincing evidence.

Because research is generally testing new ideas, it tends to have a greater impact on participants and the ethical risks tend to be more significant. The National Health and Medical Research Council has established standards for the ethical conduct of human research, which we follow to guide our research and evaluation activities.

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## PRINCIPLES, VALUES AND STANDARDS OF OUR RESEARCH AND EVALUATION APPROACH

The Hello Sunday Morning Research and Evaluation Framework is guided by important key principles, values and standards.

### Maximising benefit to and impact for Hello Sunday Morning and its community

Research and evaluation at Hello Sunday Morning contributes to improving our services and the outcomes of our members. Demonstrating the effectiveness of our programs and better understanding our members' needs is key to strengthening and increasing the impact of our services and developing innovative approaches to service delivery.

### Empowering our members

Empowering our members is at the core of all our research and evaluation. We empower members by partnering with them in our research efforts through a process of co-design. This approach ensures that our work is relevant, meaningful and effective for the community we serve. Hello Sunday Morning provides members with access to research evidence that enables them to make informed choices about the type of support they obtain, the programs they access and the self-management strategies they use.

### Transparent and inclusive

Hello Sunday Morning is committed to transparent and inclusive processes when engaging with our research partners, stakeholders and research participants. Everyone involved is made aware, in plain language, of our processes for consent, data collection, data storage, data analysis and reporting of results. Stakeholders at all levels have frequent and open input into research and evaluation activities. Hello Sunday Morning members are involved in the development, implementation and evaluation of research activities through co-design.

### Fostering partnerships

Hello Sunday Morning fosters alliances and partnerships with the broader research community and experts in the alcohol field to build our own research capacity. Partnerships help with creating linkages and bridging the gap between research and practice.

### Ethical and quality standards

Research and evaluation activities at Hello Sunday Morning are conducted in accordance with the standards set by the NHMRC:

- National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research, 2023<sup>1</sup>
- Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018<sup>2</sup>
- Ethical Considerations in Quality Assurance and Evaluation Activities, 2014<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/national-statement-ethical-conduct-human-research-2023](https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/national-statement-ethical-conduct-human-research-2023)

<sup>2</sup> [nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/australian-code-responsible-conduct-research-2018](https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/australian-code-responsible-conduct-research-2018)

<sup>3</sup> [nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/resources/ethical-considerations-quality-assurance-and-evaluation-activities](https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/resources/ethical-considerations-quality-assurance-and-evaluation-activities)

**Effective dissemination and knowledge transfer**

Research and evaluation outcomes are effectively disseminated throughout the organisation, to our funders and the alcohol and other drugs sector more broadly. Information is actively circulated internally, including to our community members. Best practice outcomes are shared with the wider sector and outcomes are disseminated through journal publications and other avenues, such as monographs and conference presentations).

## PRIORITY AREAS AND KEY RESEARCH THEMES

### Hello Sunday Morning priority areas

Our Research and Evaluation Framework is guided by three priority areas:

- **Improvement and impact:** Research and evaluation activities should support the delivery of high quality evidence based services provided by Hello Sunday Morning.
- **Outcomes:** Research and evaluation activities should contribute to improving health and social outcomes of Hello Sunday Morning members.
- **Development:** Research and evaluation activities should generate new knowledge and guide best practice in alcohol support and treatment.
- Any research and evaluation activities will support at least one of the priority areas.

### Key research themes for 2024-2025

#### Program evaluation

We continue to evaluate the feasibility, acceptability and effectiveness of our existing programs and are committed to evaluation of new programs to ensure they meet the needs of our members and to strengthen our services.

#### Women and alcohol

Women are not well represented in the mainstream support services but are over represented at Hello Sunday Morning. We are interested in improving our understanding of how our services can enhance access to support is essential to reduce barriers for women seeking help for their alcohol use issues.

#### Sense of virtual community

A sense of virtual community is essential for motivating community members to actively engage in the online community and improve health and wellbeing outcomes. Hello Sunday Morning is interested in understanding the sense of community of our members and how it may contribute to reaching their goals.

#### Alcohol use in regional and rural communities

People living in regional and rural communities are more likely to drink alcohol daily and at levels that put them at long term risk of harm. They also face greater barriers to accessing healthcare. Digital health technologies like Daybreak can improve access to alcohol support for people located in regional and rural communities. We are interested in better understanding the support needs of this group to address rural healthcare access issues.

#### Improving accessibility to support

Hello Sunday Morning is committed to improving access to support services for people who use alcohol to reduce risk and improve health outcomes. We are interested in research and evaluation projects that reduce barriers to access, particularly in relation to digital technologies and vulnerable populations.

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN RESEARCH AND EVALUATION AT HELLO SUNDAY MORNING

The spirit of self-help and community support that started with Daybreak is at the core of everything we do. Our members are our purpose.

We support inclusive and consumer centred research efforts, and recognise the importance of involvement in research and evaluation by those with lived or living experience as stated by the NHMRC:

*As beneficiaries of advances in health care, consumers and community members have an interest in promoting the translation of research into improved policy and practice. It naturally follows that health and medical research should develop processes and systems to incorporate and support sustainable consumer and community involvement<sup>5</sup>.*

Our Consumer Advisors provides the voice of lived and living experience in the development and delivery of Hello Sunday Morning's programs and services. The Consumer Advisors aims to improve the quality, safety and relevance of our programs and services by bringing together consumer advocates of diverse backgrounds and experience.

These voices and others generously offer their meaningful and valuable insights to our evaluation and research efforts. People with lived or living experience that sit on our Research Reference Group are actively involved in the process from helping to decide what projects are conducted, the design and delivery of the projects, through to the reporting and dissemination of findings. In this way, we co-design evaluation and research activities with our members.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### The role of the Senior Leadership Group

The Hello Sunday Morning Senior Leadership Group works across the organisation to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of organisational outcomes and positions the organisation for strategic growth. The Senior Leadership Group is accountable to the CEO and has the vital function of ensuring research is aligned with our current organisational directions and ensuring our research and evaluation activities are of the highest possible quality. The Research Manager is a member of the Senior Leadership Group. The role of the Senior Leadership Group is to:

- identify and consider potential research and evaluation projects and assist in determining priority areas for research and evaluation
- develop and agree on the annual work plans for research and evaluation
- review and monitor research and evaluation projects, initiatives and priorities
- oversee the conduct of all research and evaluation projects

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<sup>5</sup> Statement on Consumer and Community involvement in Health and Medical Research, National Health and Medical Research Council (2016), Consumers Health Forum of Australia.

- ensure research undertaken is likely to have direct and measurable impacts on service delivery activities
- ensure that research and evaluation projects can be effectively implemented and that sufficient resources are available to complete each project

### The role of the Research Reference Group

The Research Reference Group is comprised of stakeholders who possess relevant knowledge and experience in research and/or alcohol-related support and treatment.

The Research Reference Group provides systematic input into the research and evaluation activities conducted at Hello Sunday Morning. The Group:

- oversees the implementation of the Hello Sunday Morning Research and Evaluation Framework
- establishes policies and procedures for conducting research and evaluation at Hello Sunday Morning
- provides expert advice on research and evaluation projects including around the methodology
- ensures the safe and ethical treatment of participants involved in research conducted by Hello Sunday Morning
- provides expert advice on the value of a particular research or evaluation project
- considers emerging opportunities for shared research projects of broad benefit
- provides support and guidance to ensure the successful completion of approved projects
- supports dissemination of research findings

### Hello Sunday Morning Research Reference Group membership

The Research Reference Group is led by the Hello Sunday Morning Research Manager, and at a minimum comprises six members including:

- Hello Sunday Morning Research Manager
- Hello Sunday Morning Digital Health Services Manager
- Hello Sunday Morning Program Development Manager
- Consumer Advisor(s)
- External researcher(s)
- External service provider(s)

### The role of the Research Manager

The Research Manager leads all research and evaluation related activities at Hello Sunday Morning including the conduct of external research projects, and also ensures that the Research and Evaluation Framework is regularly reviewed and updated.

The Research Manager is responsible for establishing and maintaining the Research Reference Group, leading the meetings and ensuring all relevant stakeholders are kept informed of research requests, activities and progress.

The Research Manager is responsible for writing up the findings of all internally conducted research and evaluation activities. The Marketing Manager will support the write up of any documents used for marketing purposes (for example, social media posts).



## Research

Research and evaluation framework



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The Research Manager is responsible for maintaining partnerships that facilitate research and evaluation activities. Partnerships are central to the Hello Sunday Morning Research and Evaluation Framework, with representatives from key organisations acting as members of the Research Reference Group. Collaborating with key stakeholders is also important to advance research at Hello Sunday Morning.

## HOW OUR RESEARCH AND EVALUATION IS FUNDED

The Ian Potter Foundation generously provides support to enable development and implementation of our Research and Evaluation Framework, including the role of the Research Manager to coordinate our research and evaluation activities.

New initiatives and funded projects all include an allocation for evaluation and monitoring activities.

Additional funding is sought from external sources by the Philanthropy and Partnerships Manager and the Research Manager, who work together to identify opportunities for funding through relevant research, philanthropic and corporate organisations.

We expect external researchers who wish to partner with Hello Sunday Morning and/or to access our services for research to contribute financially to Hello Sunday Morning. In some circumstances we may waive this contribution.

## EXTERNAL RESEARCHERS WISHING TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT HELLO SUNDAY MORNING

Hello Sunday Morning can be involved in external research in the following ways:

- External researchers wanting to use our existing data
- External researchers wanting to conduct research with our community
- External researchers wanting to promote their research to our community

### Making an application to conduct research

Research must be aligned with Hello Sunday Morning's mission, values and research priority areas, as well as asking important questions whose answers will directly or indirectly benefit our existing or future community members and/or the organisation.

All research needs ethics approval from an NHMRC Human Research Ethics Committee. We will accept applications with ethics approval pending, but the project cannot begin until final ethics approval has been given.

Anyone wishing to conduct research at Hello Sunday Morning should first contact the Research Manager. There is a fee for all approved external projects. The Research Manager will discuss payment options before an application is submitted, depending on the type of research. The Research Manager will also give an indication of whether the proposed research is in line with our guidelines.

All external researchers should make an application to the Research Manager of no more than three pages using the application template in Appendix 1. The application should include:

- Project purpose and expected outcomes
- Proposed methodology
- Alignment with our vision, mission and priority areas
- Stakeholder involvement
- Ethics approval
- Dissemination activities

Hello Sunday Morning does not accept applications that are funded and/or conducted by alcohol, gambling or tobacco companies.

It is a condition of conducting research at Hello Sunday Morning that researchers discuss planned publications with the Research Manager. Involvement and acknowledgement of Hello Sunday Morning and possible authorship should be decided upon before writing has started, ideally at the beginning of the study that is to be published. External partners and the Research Manager should discuss authorship issues openly throughout their work together.

### Decision making process for external research

Diagram 1 describes the decision making process for external research applications.

The Hello Sunday Morning Research Reference Group does an initial assessment and checks if the external research application fits with Hello Sunday Morning's mission and values and aligns with the Research and Evaluation Framework.

## Research

Research and evaluation framework

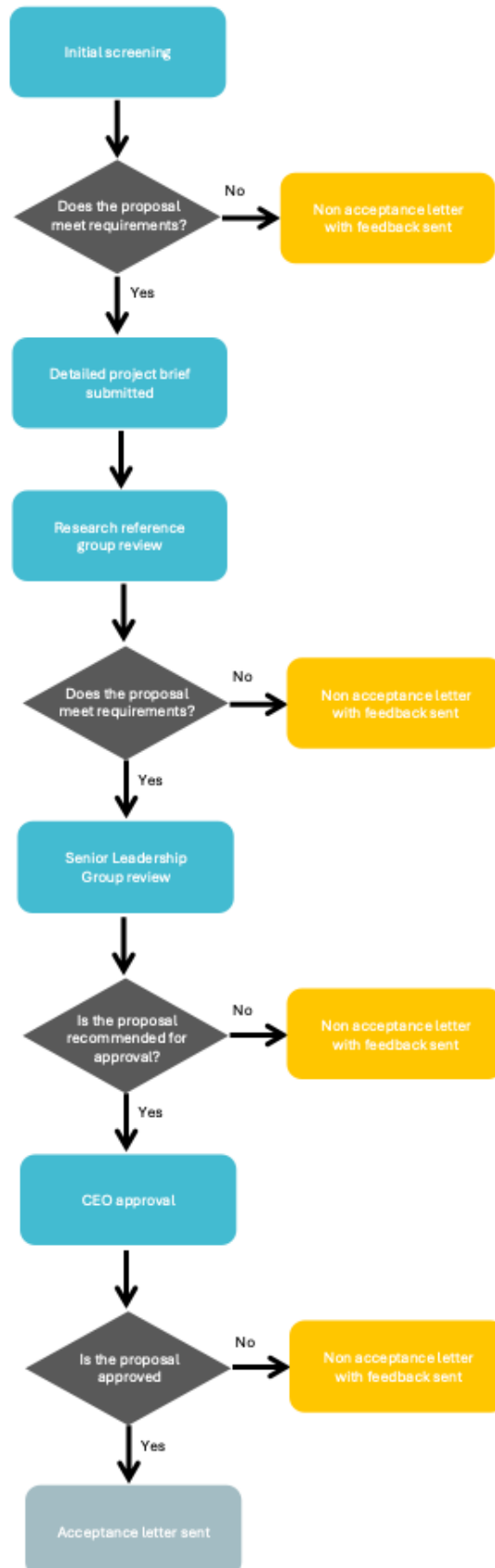


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If the application meets the requirements, the Senior Leadership Group will assess if the external research project can be effectively implemented and that sufficient resources are available at Hello Sunday Morning to ensure successful completion.

If the application is supported by the Senior Leadership Group, the CEO will review the application and give final approval. If a research project is not supported, we will offer brief written feedback on the main reasons and more detailed upon request.

Diagram 1: Research Project Approval Process



### Communication of research and evaluation activities and findings

Sharing findings is an integral component of any research and evaluation activity. Knowledge gained from research is disseminated in a way that can be used to inform the development and continuous improvement of practices, policy, standards, guidelines and decision-making processes. It should be published in an accessible format, where possible, including a formatted Word copy of any final manuscripts.

It is a condition of conducting research at Hello Sunday Morning that findings are able to be shared with stakeholders (including Hello Sunday Morning staff and members) following project completion. Findings should be widely disseminated via different avenues and targeted at different audiences.

The Research Manager and the Marketing Manager play an active role in ensuring findings are communicated to our Hello Sunday Morning staff, community members, funding partners, external providers, research partners and other key stakeholders.

Once a project is approved, the project brief needs to be circulated amongst all relevant stakeholders including, at a minimum, the Senior Leadership Group, the Research Reference Group, external partners and our members.

The following dissemination strategies should be considered in your proposal:

- A 1-2 page summary report for Hello Sunday Morning staff and Board, funding partners, research partners and community members
- A research summary for the Hello Sunday Morning newsletter, website, social media and annual report
- Presentations at conferences and forums
- Publications in peer reviewed journals



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## APPENDIX 1. HELLO SUNDAY MORNING EXTERNAL RESEARCH APPLICATION

All external research should use this application form. The application should not exceed *three pages*.

### Research checklist

Before you start your application, please check if:

- your project is alcohol related
- aligns with our values (page 3 and 4)
- aligns with our priority areas (page 9)
- your project is not funded and/or conducted by an alcohol, gambling and/or tobacco company
- your project has the required ethics approvals

### Project purpose and expected outcomes

*What are the aims and objectives of the project? What are the expected outcomes?*

### Proposed methodology

*What methodology is used? Please also outline your timeline.*

### Alignment with our vision and mission and priority areas

*How does the project align with Hello Sunday Morning's vision, mission and values? How does the project contribute towards service improvement and/or strengthening the outcomes of our members? How does the project align with our priority areas?*

### Stakeholder involvement

*What partners are involved in the project? What is Hello Sunday Morning's role? How are our members and/or people with lived and living experience involved in the project?*

### Ethics approval

*Has ethics approval been obtained. If yes, please provide detail. If not, please explain why.*

**Dissemination activities**

*Has a dissemination strategy been considered for different audiences? How will the outcomes be disseminated to the Hello Sunday Morning community? Please note that it is expected that external researchers discuss any possible outputs (including peer reviewed articles) with the Research Manager.*

Please send your application to:

Dr Katinka van de Ven  
Research Manager

[katinka.vandeven@hellosundaymorning.org](mailto:katinka.vandeven@hellosundaymorning.org)



[hellosundaymorning.org](http://hellosundaymorning.org)