

Australian Genomics consumer honorarium and reimbursement policy

Community members and consumers are involved in various aspects of the work undertaken by Australian Genomics (AG). They are recognised as providing a strong and invaluable contribution to our research by ensuring that it is responsible, meaningful and benefits the end users – the Australian society.

Consumer: Patients and potential patients, carers, and people who use health care services.

Community: A group of people sharing a common interest (e.g. cultural, social, political, health, economic interests) but not necessarily a particular geographic association. Different types of communities are likely to have different perspectives and approaches to their involvement in research.

We refer to both consumers and community members as ‘community’ in this document

AG strongly supports the payment of an honorarium to a community member who contributes to our work program. The level of engagement outlined in the figure below presents an indicator as to how community and consumers can be paid.

Offers of payment should be made clear at the beginning of the interaction with community members. The information provided to community members should also include the rates of payment, the name and contact details of the staff member coordinating the payment processes as well as timeframes for payment. Payments should be provided in a timely manner, preferably within one month of the invoice date.

Community members involved in Australian Genomics projects should consistently be offered an honorarium in line with the table below. It is understood that not all community members will accept payment and other arrangements can be made, such as acknowledging this decline of payment as a donation to the project.

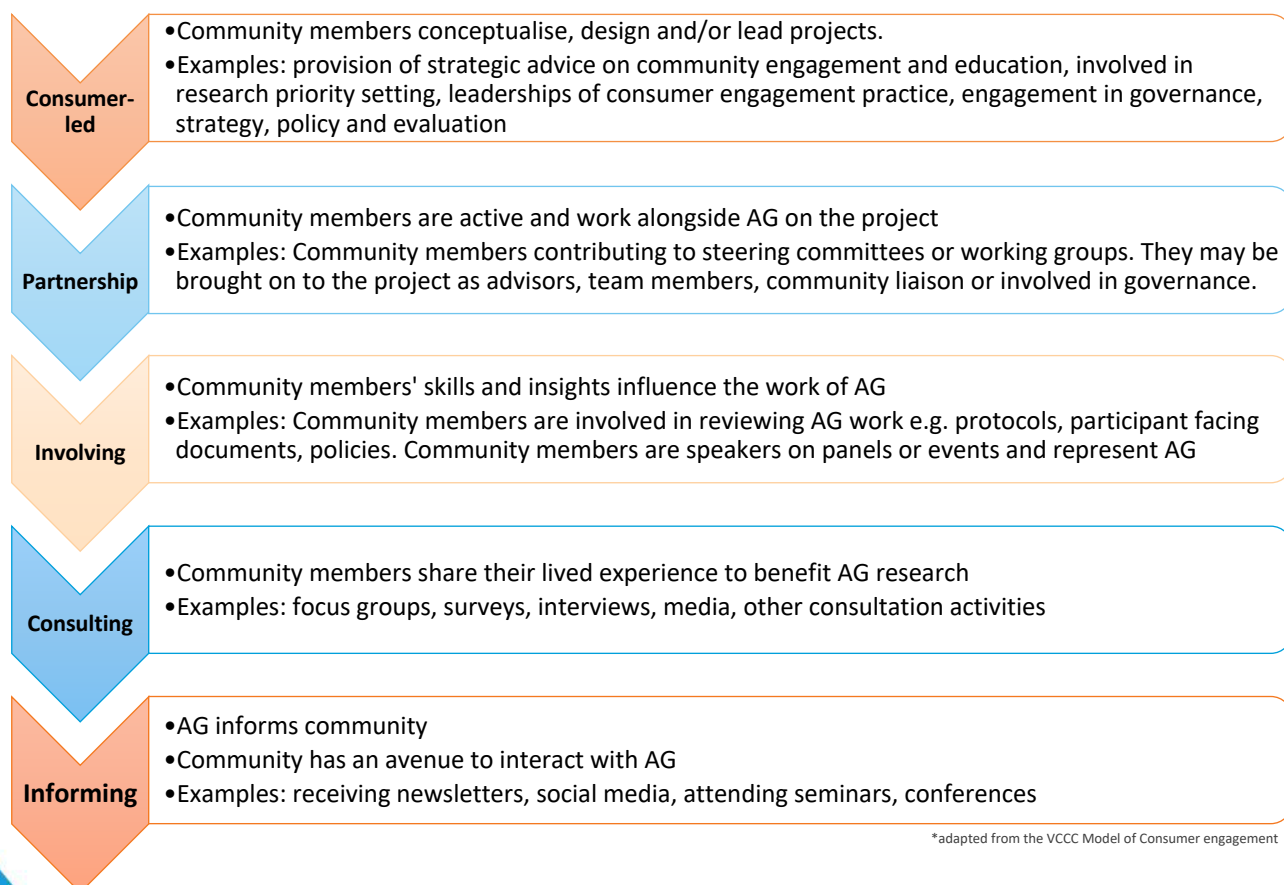
MCRI specific guidance

MCRI finance has provided the following advice regarding the payment of consumers:

Members of the public who have first hand experience in the issue being investigated do not require a service agreement. The issue being investigated should not be related to their profession/ field of expertise.

If engaging a professional in their field of expertise they are not classified as consumers but as consultants and will require an agreement to be put in place before invoices can be paid.

Spectrum of community involvement



Community member honorarium payment table

Level of engagement	Honorarium type	Committee Chair	Committee Member	Participation
Consumer-led	Sitting fee [±]	\$288 (≥ 4h) ¹ \$144 (< 4h)	\$247 (≥ 4 h) ¹ \$123 (< 4h)	
Partnership	Sitting fee [±]	\$247 (≥ 4h) ² \$124 (< 4h)	\$212 (≥ 4h) ² \$ 106 (< 4h)	
Involving	Hourly rate			\$54/h
Consulting	Hourly rate			\$43/h
Informing	N/A			\$0

*adapted from the VCCC Model of Consumer engagement

1 Amounts determined by Safer Care Victoria A guide to consumer remuneration citing Department of Premier and Cabinet Appointments and Remuneration Guidelines (2019). Schedule C: Classification criteria and remuneration schedule - Group C organisations (Section 3a) relates to advisory bodies to departments. The upper limit has been used for sitting fees to acknowledge the additional time required in pre- and post-meeting reading, preparation, and follow-up actions. The committee member rate is 85% of the Chair rate.

2 Amounts apportioned for comparative complexity of consumer contribution to align with AG model of consumer engagement.

± Sitting fees have been segmented into 4 hour blocks, with maximum payment capped at the full day rate.

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These rates should be increased by 2.5 percent annually.

The Australian Tax Office does not consider an honorarium as taxable income. Recipients are not required to declare honoraria received from involvement activities and tasks conducted in this capacity on tax returns.

Community member reimbursement

Community members involved in AG projects should also be reimbursed for costs related to their involvement, such as:

- parking
- travel expenses
- other reasonable expenses on request such as
 - meal allowances when meeting occur during a usual mealtime
 - childcare costs

This policy came into effect on the 16th January 2023

This policy has been adapted from:

1. VCCC cost model for consumer sitting fees and hourly rate remuneration
2. Telethon Kids Institute - Honorarium Payment Guidelines
3. Health Consumers NSW position statement: Remuneration and reimbursement of health consumers