



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Peak body calls for greater focus on philanthropy

Australia's peak body for giving, Philanthropy Australia, is calling for a greater focus on philanthropy from both sides of politics in the lead up to this year's Federal Election.

The member-based organisation representing Australia's philanthropic sector has released its 'Federal Election Policy Priorities for a More Giving Australia', through which it is seeking to spur action on the policy changes we need to encourage more and better philanthropy in Australia.

Philanthropy plays a vital role in Australia by supporting the diverse, vibrant and innovative charities, not-for-profits and community groups that form the 'social capital' that strengthens communities right across our nation.

Philanthropy Australia Chief Executive Officer, Sarah Davies, said philanthropy provides essential funding which helps charities innovate and find new ways to increase their impact. This can also enhance the effectiveness of government programs, which can be shaped by 'on the ground' experience and expertise of charities and the perspectives of those whom they serve.

"Although we currently have a relatively good policy and regulatory framework for philanthropy in Australia, change is needed if we want to grow philanthropy further, promote a flourishing civil society and support a vibrant and inclusive community," she said.

Philanthropy Australia's 'Policy priorities for the Federal Election' set out 10 reforms to help achieve change to grow philanthropy. These include six short-term priorities which can realistically be achieved within one to two years of the 2019 Federal Election and with minimal budgetary impact, and four medium to long-term priorities, which have a time horizon of up to five years and a higher budgetary impact.

"We need our political leaders to demonstrate their commitment to philanthropy and the contribution it makes to our community, and we encourage them to support these policy priorities," Ms Davies said.

Copies of Philanthropy Australia's 'Federal Election Policy Priorities for a More Giving Australia' are available from <https://www.philanthropy.org.au/tools-resources/2019-federal-election>.

**-ENDS-**

As the peak body for giving, Philanthropy Australia uses the collective voice of the hundreds of funders, social investors, for-purpose organisations and change agents that comprise its membership community to advocate for policy and regulatory environments that enable more philanthropy with impact in Australia.

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## Summary of Philanthropy Australia's policy priorities

### Short-Term Priorities

Below are short-term policy priorities, which Philanthropy Australia believes can be delivered within 1-2 years of the 2019 Federal Election and with minimal budgetary impact.



**No Changes to Refundable Franking Credit Arrangements Which Would Harm Philanthropy**

They are a vital source of income for philanthropic trusts and foundations, and enable them to provide more grant funding to charities. No changes should be made which would jeopardise this.



**Protecting Advocacy by Charities**

In recent years, a negative atmosphere has been created for charities undertaking advocacy. This needs to change.



**An Effective and Responsive ACNC**

The Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) is vital to Australia's not-for-profit sector, and it is essential that it delivers on its purpose.



**#FixFundraising**

Australia's framework for regulating fundraising by charities (and other not-for-profit organisations) is not fit-for-purpose. Fundraising regulation needs to be reformed to reduce red tape whilst maintaining protections for donors.



**Allowing Public Ancillary Funds to Receive Distributions From Other Ancillary Funds**

Currently red tape hampers the ability of philanthropy to fund organisations such as community foundations.



**Supporting Better Collaboration Between Government and Philanthropy**

This could facilitate more effective partnerships between the Australian Government, philanthropy and not-for-profits, to deliver initiatives and programs with more impact.

### Medium to Long-term Priorities

Below are medium to long-term policy priorities, which have a time horizon of up to 5 years with a higher budgetary impact.



**Reforming Our Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) Framework**

The current framework is a source of red tape, with many charities falling through the cracks, which makes accessing philanthropy is much harder.



**Establishing the Living Legacy Trust Structure**

With the right policy settings, Australia can take advantage of the record \$2.4 trillion intergenerational wealth transfer over the coming two decades, to benefit the community.



**A National Giving Campaign**

A national giving campaign co-funded by the Australian Government and philanthropy can enhance Australia's culture of giving, benefiting the community.



**Growing Legacy Giving from Superannuation**

Many retirees will leave substantial inheritances from their unspent superannuation. If a retiree decides to use these funds to leave a bequest to a charity, this is generally taxed at a minimum of 15 per cent upon their death, which is a disincentive to giving.