

# Largest ever research into philanthropy reveals Australians' generosity

December 1 2016, by Rob Kidd

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Fewer Australians are giving to charity but those who do are giving more, according to the largest ever research into philanthropic behaviour.

The Giving Australia 2016 research, released today, was commissioned by the Commonwealth Government's Department of Social Services and is an initiative of the Prime Minister's Community Business Partnership.

The study was conducted by QUT's Australian Centre for Philanthropy Nonprofit Studies in partnership with the Centre for Social Impact at Swinburne University of Technology and the Centre for Corporate Public Affairs.

The report found 14.9 million Australian adults (80.8 per cent) donated \$12.5 billion over 12 months in 2015-16, compared to 87 per cent giving \$10.1 billion (adjusted for inflation) in 2005. The average donation in 15/16 was \$764.08.

Giving Australia 2016 is the largest review of giving and volunteering in Australia and will establish benchmark data to measure philanthropic and business giving. The research also provides a strong evidence base to assist future policy decisions to encourage charity in Australia.

Giving Australia 2016 findings include:

- Planned givers donate six times more than spontaneous givers

- Australian volunteers are generous with their time and money. Over 12 months in 2015-16, Australians volunteered 932 million hours and donated an average of \$1,017, which is nearly double the contribution of non-volunteers
- Corporate philanthropy is thriving – with large business giving \$9 billion and small and medium enterprises giving \$8.5 billion, totalling \$17.5 billion over the previous financial year

Lead researcher and director of Australian Centre for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies at QUT Associate Professor Wendy Scaife said compared to 2005 when the project was first run, Australia was not in a "gilded age of giving".

"It's not the wonderful growth in giving that we were noting back then but even though it is going ahead you would have to say with a note of caution it is starting to flatline," she said.

Associate Professor Scaife said there was also evidence of a "charity bypass", with people increasingly able to give directly to causes.

The project also shed light on the perception and success of different fundraising techniques. Nearly two-thirds of people said they disliked street fundraisers, or "chuggers", but 19.3 per cent still gave a donation.

The Assistant Minister for Social Services and Multicultural Affairs, Senator the Hon Zed Seselja, launched Giving Australia 2016 at Parliament House, Canberra.

Assistant Minister Seselja said the Australian Government provided \$1.7 million for the three-year research project to better understand how and why Australians give and volunteer, how much they donate and how these factors affect our non-profit and philanthropy sector.

**More information:** Giving Australia 2016 fact sheets, background paper and literature review summary report can be found here:

[www.communitybusinesspartnersh...t/research-projects/](http://www.communitybusinesspartnersh...t/research-projects/)

Provided by Queensland University of Technology

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