



Noble Ambition's Submission to the Productivity Commission

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2 Introduction

As part of its commitment to doubling philanthropic giving by 2030, the Government has asked the Productivity Commission to undertake an inquiry into philanthropy to better understand trends in philanthropic giving in Australia, the underlying drivers of these trends, and to identify opportunities and obstacles to increasing such giving.

Noble Ambition is an Australian leader in fundraising strategy and capacity building for Boards and CEOs in the for-purpose sector. We develop strategy and advise our clients on how to increase giving to their organisations through mega and major gifts every day. Having worked with over 150 clients over the last 7 years and with more than \$1.5 billion of fundraising ambitions in the philanthropic market right now, our work is informed by our deep understanding of the philanthropic market and the motivations of ultra-high net worth and high net worth individuals to give significantly more ambitious gifts. We are uniquely positioned at the nexus between philanthropic giving and fundraising strategy at a leadership level across giving to every for-purpose sector in Australia and have seen firsthand how when done effectively, fundraising can lead to catalytic giving and transformational social benefit.

Our mission is to see billions more in philanthropy invested in the for-purpose sector to achieve transformational change. We are working towards achieving this mission through our work with individual clients, thought leadership including [white papers](#), case studies and [podcasts](#) and a future female-led philanthropy campaign, which we are currently testing.

Noble Ambition makes this submission in response to the Productivity Commission's inquiry into philanthropy, and in particular to the call for submissions around opportunities and obstacles to increasing philanthropic giving. Our recommendations are in two areas; 1) actively support and mobilise sector around a national female-led philanthropy campaign and 2) invest in fundraising capacity building for charitable boards.

3 Female-led philanthropy campaign

Recommendation: Actively support and mobilise sector around a national female-led philanthropy campaign

The data shows that there is significant unrealised philanthropic potential in the Australian market. Australian charities received a record \$12.7 billion in donations and bequests in 2020, a number that continues to rise each year¹ and yet we know there is so much more untapped philanthropic potential in Australia (2/3 taxable income earners didn't report tax deductible donations and ~50% highest income earners didn't report any donations in 2018/19)². How can we harness that potential? One way to do so is to actively focus on women, encourage women to give and raise the profile and agency of female philanthropists.

Based on Noble Ambition's nexus between fundraising and philanthropy, and informed by our research and consultation, we believe one strategy to harness this immense potential is to undertake a national female-led philanthropy campaign. Australians Investing in Women has played an important role in putting a spotlight on gender lens giving and female donors. While there are Australian signatories of US-based global Women Moving Millions campaign which has a minimum \$1 million entry point, there is as yet, no national Australian campaign focused on harnessing female-led philanthropy.

A female-led philanthropy campaign is important to increase giving in Australia because across all age groups, a greater proportion of females make tax deductible donations compared to males³ and at most ages, females donate a little more of their taxable income.⁴ In Australia, there are approximately 10,000 bequests made each year with an estimated average value of \$40-50,000 for which there is no gender breakdown⁵, however an analysis of recent years' AFR top gifts shows that the most significant bequests are being made by women.⁶ US research reflects similar insights, including:

¹ Centre for Social Impact, High Net Wealth Giving in Australia, 2022

² Ibid.

³ JB Were Support Report, 2018: In 2017–18, 2.19 million males (**29.79 per cent of Australian male taxpayers**) claimed tax-deductible donations to DGRs, **amounting to \$2.15 billion**. This represents **57.31% of the total value of tax-deductible donations** claimed in 2017–18. A total of 2.24 million females (**32.29% of Australian female taxpayers**) claimed **tax-deductible donations** to DGRs in 2017–18, totalling **\$1.60 billion**.

⁴ Ibid: On average, **female Australian taxpayers who claimed donations to DGRs gave a slightly higher percentage of their income – 0.46% to 0.41% for Australian males**. It should be noted that on average, females outlive males and therefore make the final decisions when it comes to their estate. (JB Were stats & Downes analysis, 2021)

⁵ Ibid

⁶ **AFR Philanthropy Top 50 2021-2022**: Three of four bequests on the list were made by women. These included Marie Knispel's \$26M to Sydney Biomedical Accelerator with University of Sydney and Jennie Mackenzie's \$20M to Charles Perkins Centre, University of Sydney. **AFR Philanthropy Top 50 2020-2021**: Three of the five bequests on the list were made by women. These included Olga Tennison's \$45 million bequest to La Trobe University (top 10) and Julianna Lowy's \$25 million to JewishCare (top 10). **AFR Philanthropy Top 50 2019-2020**: Three of four bequests were made by women. These included Win Schubert's \$35 million to QLD Art Gallery and Margaret Caroline Reid's \$22.5 million to the Ian Potter Foundation.

- Single women are more likely to give to charity and give higher amounts than similarly situated men⁷; single women are also more likely than men to give to nearly every charitable subsector⁸;
- Women tend to spread their giving out, giving to more organizations than men⁹;
- Life expectancy tables suggest that many women will inherit twice—once from their parents and again from their spouses¹⁰;
- Women are more likely to make charitable bequests than men¹¹; and
- High net worth women are significantly more likely than men to have a strategy and/or a budget for their own giving (78.4 percent and 71.9 percent for women and men, respectively)¹².

While women have always engaged in giving, never have women had so much control over philanthropic resources. The biggest predictors of philanthropy are wealth, education and income. Women are on an upwards trajectory in all three areas.

Philanthropy, like many areas, tends to be dominated by men in terms of public power, decision-making, profile and recognition; there is a disconnect between what we see in the sector and media, and the less public but significant influence, power and national contribution women make at all levels of giving across Australia¹³. To engage and harness the full potential of philanthropy in Australia, and offer 50% of the population agency, role models and case studies of excellence, a female-led philanthropy campaign offers an opportunity to redress the balance of female-led philanthropy in Australia, and inspire significantly greater agency, impact and scale of women's giving into the future.

We have seen it work firsthand from our unique experience on the board of Stella and working on the Stella Forever Campaign which raised \$2M in 10 months through female-led philanthropy. During that campaign we spoke with over 100 women across Australia, heard amazing stories and sensed a palpable connection with the concept of female led philanthropy – women were excited empowered. The campaign tapped into unrealised potential of harnessing female-led philanthropy nationally - it is this potential we seek to build upon.

⁷ WPI How and Why Women Give; Current and Future Directions for Research on Women's Philanthropy 2015

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ WPI Giving by and for Women: Understanding HNW donors' support for women and girls 2018

¹¹ Ibid

¹² WPI Giving by and for Women: Understanding HNW donors' support for women and girls 2018

¹³ Philanthropy Australia Leading Philanthropist Award; Only two women have received this award in the last 7 years: Carol Schwartz AO (2020); Audette Exel AO (2016). Creative Partnerships Leading Philanthropist Award: Between 2017 and 2021 the award has been given to couples; in 2016 it was awarded to Naomi Milgrom AC.

We are currently scoping a national campaign seeking to mobilise the entire country around a cause and see the critical role philanthropy can play in advocacy and the critical factors that can be used to underpin a successful deployment of a female-led philanthropy campaign.

Australia has an opportunity to be a leader in disrupting the status quo in philanthropy, and to lead in case studies, learnings and impact of female-led philanthropy globally and at the same time to increase giving and harness untapped philanthropic potential locally.

Recommendation: Actively support and mobilise sector around female-led philanthropy.

4 Fundraising capacity building for charitable boards

Recommendation: Invest in fundraising capacity building for charitable boards

In our experience, the increasing sophistication of fundraising strategy alongside increased wealth and philanthropic appetite has underpinned the increasing number of mega gifts and record-breaking fundraising campaigns. This sophisticated fundraising strategy includes being able to articulate a compelling case and having leaders who are able to take that case directly to philanthropy leaders.

In the current highly competitive philanthropy and fundraising market, the role of for-purpose leadership in advocating and engaging in fundraising is becoming increasingly important and more prevalent, particularly in higher education and the arts sectors. Board members play a critical governance role and increasingly are expected to advocate and leverage their networks with a number of high net worth and philanthropic people joining boards.

Through our thought leadership in the sector, we have developed structures around what best practice in fundraising leadership looks like and explored many case studies of how organisations are demonstrating effective fundraising leadership. We have also presented data around which and how many organisations are engaging effectively in fundraising leadership in the [National Benchmarking Report on Fundraising Leadership](#).

Our anecdotal understanding of the market matched the findings of the Benchmarking Report - while 89 per cent of respondents indicated Board engagement in fundraising was important or very important, and 95 per cent of respondents indicated CEO engagement in fundraising was important or very important, only 8 per cent collectively rated their organisation's Board, CEO and Head of Fundraising as strong or very strong performers in this space. Further, consistently across boards, CEOs and Heads of Fundraising, significant barriers to fundraising were cited as a lack of skills and/or knowledge and time.

To overcome these barriers, we recommend:

- Building a level of increased understanding of the critical role boards can play (in addition to governance) in advocating for fundraising and philanthropy and securing greater philanthropic investment for individual charities and the sector as a whole.
- Government appointed boards (particularly arts boards) where philanthropy has a role to play, increasing the awareness and expectation that boards have a role to play (particularly in the arts space).

- Increased investment by the sector in capacity building (training, peer mentoring and executive coaching) to build collective performance and effective fundraising leadership teams.

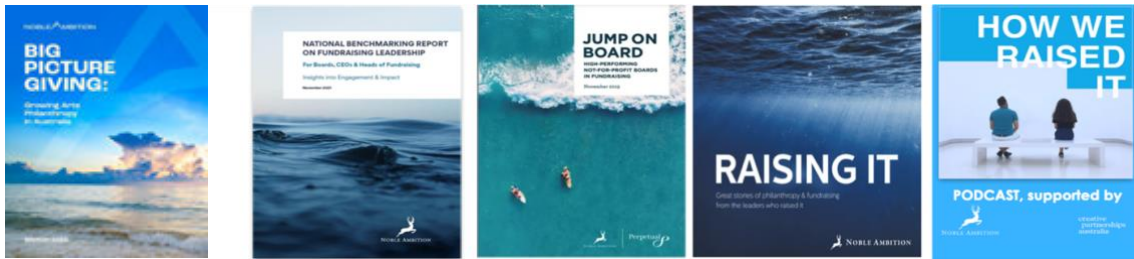
Recommendation: Invest in fundraising capacity building for charitable boards.

5 About Noble Ambition

Noble Ambition is an Australian leader in fundraising strategy and capacity building for Boards and CEOs. We work with organisational leadership, industry and government agencies in the for-purpose sector. Our client base is national, representative of the breadth of the for-purpose sector, from Australia's largest charities to high impact start-ups.

Our noble ambition is to see transformational social impact through philanthropic investment in the for-purpose sector, at scale. To achieve this, we deliver a range of strategy and capacity building services from complex campaign counsel and bespoke strategic advice to executive coaching and online fundraising leadership courses.

www.nobleambition.com.au



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Acknowledgment

Noble Ambition acknowledges Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past, present, and emerging. We also accept the invitation in the Uluru Statement from the Heart to walk together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in a movement of the Australian people for a better future.

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