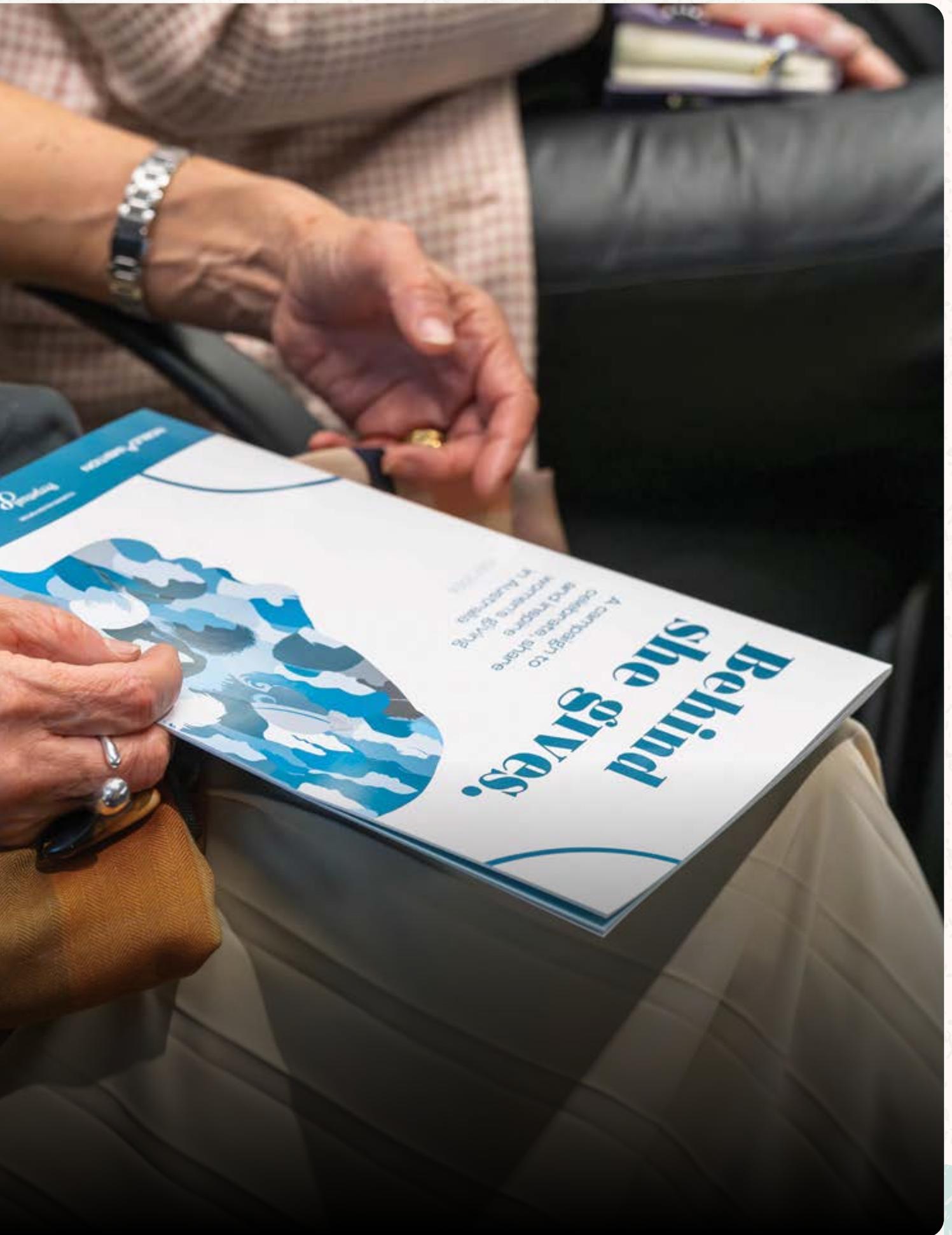




**she gives.**

**Growing Women's Giving in Australia**

FEBRUARY 2026



# Acknowledgement of Country

She Gives acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

Noble Ambition also acknowledges and pays respects to the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work: the Cammeraygal and Gadigal people of the Eora Nation; the Turrbal and Jagera people of Meanjin, and the Yugambah people; and acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands of all contributors to and readers of this paper.

## About the Authors

# she gives.

She Gives is an Australian campaign to celebrate, share and inspire women's giving to any cause at any scale to accelerate positive social change. She Gives is a Noble Ambition initiative, supported by She Gives funding partners, the She Gives Advisory Group, She Gives Research Advisory Group and She Gives sector partners. It reflects our commitment to research, storytelling and leadership, and to elevating the role of women's giving in achieving positive social change.

[www.shegives.com.au](http://www.shegives.com.au)

## NOBLE AMBITION

Noble Ambition is an Australian leader in philanthropy and fundraising strategy and capacity building in the for-purpose sector. Our vision is to be a catalyst for philanthropy at scale to achieve transformational positive social impact. We partner with clients in this spirit of shared ambition, impact and accountability.

[www.nobleambition.com.au](http://www.nobleambition.com.au)



**CENTRE**  
for **SOCIAL**  
**IMPACT**



The Centre for Social Impact UWA (CSI UWA) creates and delivers education that transforms, research that informs best practice, and public engagement that inspires and mobilises change makers. CSI UWA develops solutions that are rigorous and purpose-driven and works with people, communities and organisations across Australia to grow their capabilities. The Centre for Social Impact is a collaboration of four universities: Swinburne University of Technology, Flinders University, University of New South Wales and The University of Western Australia. Together as a network, their purpose is to catalyse positive change, to help enable others to achieve social impact.

[www.uwa.edu.au/schools/Centre-for-Social-Impact](http://www.uwa.edu.au/schools/Centre-for-Social-Impact)

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# FOREWORD



Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC  
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

## *She Gives: Growing Women's Giving in Australia 2026*

I am delighted to introduce *She Gives: Growing Women's Giving in Australia*. Compiled from the stories and perspectives of Australian women who give, the report is a rigorous examination of the data on women's giving. It is a snapshot to celebrate, and a blueprint for progress.

Australia's history is rich with the contributions of women whose acts of service, generosity and care have strengthened our communities. By studying their stories, *She Gives* has seized the opportunity of example and experience to help Australian women begin to tell a different story – one in which the diversity, power and strength of women's giving demonstrate how generosity is practiced, sustained and grown across Australian society.

The insights captured in the *She Gives* research form the basis of three important recommendations, including the need for wider recognition of women's crucial role in giving. As Chancellor of the Order of Australia, I am deeply committed to raising awareness of the opportunity of our national honours system as a means of recognising exceptional Australian women for their outstanding contributions and generosity.

As Governor-General, I promised to put care, kindness and respect at the centre of all I do. Care for each other, care for those who care for others, care for our environment, care for our institutions, and care for how we think and talk about issues – without anger or violence, and always with respect.

By uncovering what we don't know, identifying what we need to understand, asking the questions that need answering, and gathering the data that informs decision-making, *She Gives* is practicing care in its hardest form – coming face to face with truth and responding with honesty and integrity.

Accurately reflecting women's contributions, leadership and ambitions in our national story elevates women's giving as a powerful force for good and for positive and lasting change.

Since its founding in 2024, *She Gives* has elevated, amplified and celebrated the contribution of women working towards positive societal change. With this report, *She Gives* offers us the foundation for a movement towards transformation – growing women's giving and achieving social change.

# MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER SHE GIVES

**Over the past two years, I have had the privilege of interviewing more than 130 women across Australia and internationally about their individual, collective and global stories of giving. I have also spent time with more than 1,000 women across 20 events in private homes, boardrooms, museums and at Government House, Canberra. And every stage of the campaign has reinforced a conviction at the heart of She Gives: that women hold extraordinary power and are extraordinarily generous.**

Thank you to all those who have supported She Gives: our Founding Campaign Partners, Supporting Partners, Sector Partners and Research Partner.

Thank you especially to the women who shared their stories with me. Precious memories of childhood, moments of grief and loss, wisdom learned and courage gained. Each conversation was a reminder of the power of a story to inspire, to galvanise, to remind another woman that her giving matters. These stories have been the greatest gift from this campaign; and are the moments I treasure most.

At Noble Ambition, we are proudly ambitious for impact, yet even I was surprised by what She Gives has demonstrated - not just the scale and diversity of women's generosity - but the scale of collective appetite to be part of a movement seeking to contribute to a better world.

**For our part, we will continue to support what women have told us matters most: recognising women's crucial role in giving; growing the capacity of the ecosystem to enable women's giving at scale; and building more collaboration around women's giving to mobilise impact.**

**The movement continues and we hope you will join us.**



**MELISSA SMITH**  
Founder, She Gives



She Gives Advisory Group at the She Gives Research Launch, Government House, Canberra

L-R: Tanya Hosch AM, Georgina Byron AM, Catriona Fay, Paula McLean, Natalie Egleton, Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, Michelle Lin, Melissa Smith, Kristy Muir, Amanda Miller OAM (not present: Clare Herschell, Carol Schwartz AO, Deanne Weir)

# GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
<b>CALD</b>	Culturally and linguistically diverse.
<b>Collective giving</b>	The coming together of individuals or foundations to jointly fund social change.
<b>Feminist philanthropy</b>	A movement that aims to shift power to historically marginalised communities, including women, through acts of solidarity and flexible support (eg direct funding and resources) grounded in mutual trust, respect and collaboration.
<b>First Nations</b>	Being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin.
<b>Giving</b>	Often understood as a broader, more inclusive concept than 'philanthropy' that captures a range of contributions, monetary and non-monetary, formal and informal, without assuming scale, status or visibility.
<b>Giving circles</b>	A group of people with shared values who come together to create change by pooling their individual donations and then jointly deciding how and where the funds will be distributed.
<b>Intersectionality</b>	A recognition that people's lives are shaped by their identities, relationships and social factors. These combine to create intersecting forms of privilege and oppression depending on a person's context and existing power structures such as patriarchy, ableism, colonialism, imperialism, homophobia and racism.
<b>In-kind support / pro bono</b>	A donation of goods or services, time or expertise, rather than cash or appreciated property.
<b>Mutual aid</b>	A system in which different groups or people come together to work with and help each other.
<b>National Group</b>	This group comprised women who responded to the She Gives National survey via community panel, creating a dataset that reflects the broader population of Australian women.
<b>Network Group</b>	This group comprised women engaged through the She Gives network, using a snowball sampling approach. Participants were reached via the networks of She Gives and its partners across the philanthropic, community and corporate sectors. Women in this group participated in one or more elements of the campaign, including the She Gives campaign launch survey, the Network survey, Roundtable discussions and/or Individual or Collective Stories of Giving.
<b>Philanthropy</b>	Philanthropy Australia defines philanthropy as the planned and structured giving of time, information, goods and services, voice and influence, as well as money, to improve the wellbeing of humanity and the community.
<b>Private Ancillary Funds (PAFs)</b>	A legal structure which is often used by families, individuals or companies to establish grant making foundations. A PAF must only make grants and is not permitted to carry out charitable programs.
<b>Public Ancillary Funds (PuAFs)</b>	Not-for-profit entities with the purpose of providing money, property or benefits to eligible deductible gift entities eg community foundations.

Term	Definition
<b>Roundtable</b>	A specific event format held by She Gives to conduct qualitative research: 11 in-person research Roundtables were held across every State and Territory; and 3 online focus Roundtables were held with First Nations women, Women of Colour and rural, regional and remote women ensured women.
<b>Stories of Giving</b>	A feature of the She Gives campaign and research. Individual and Collective Stories of Giving were gathered from all corners of Australia; conducted, recorded, transcribed and approved by participants prior to being shared via the She Gives website and social media platforms.
<b>Structured giving</b>	Refers to relatively large-scale giving or philanthropy, and involves using a vehicle designed to enable giving, eg PAFs, giving circles, legacy trusts, and larger scale donations from individuals and families. Note: For the purposes of this research, structured giving includes giving through a PAF, PuAF or a sub-fund within a PuAF, community foundation, testamentary, will or private charitable trust and giving circles.
<b>Volunteering</b>	She Gives data collection defined volunteering as unpaid work, not just belonging to an organisation or group and of service or benefit to other people or the community, not just family or friends.
<b>Women of Colour</b>	A 'solidarity definition' that reclaims the minority status of Women of Colour while empowering them and demonstrating their commitment to champion change for themselves and the communities of colour they represent.



Melissa Smith, Michelle Steele, Anna-Maria Arabia OAM, Dr Marie-Louise Ayres – National Library of Australia – Oral Histories Announcement and Panel Event

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Australia is at a critical juncture. We are facing a polycrisis of rising pressures and unmet needs. Yet significant untapped wealth together with the largest intergenerational transfer of wealth in our history means there is enormous potential for Australian philanthropy to help accelerate the positive social impact so urgently needed. Women are already shaping how generosity is practised in Australia, yet women's giving remains under-recognised and poorly understood. Until now, Australia has lacked a robust, gender-informed evidence base to understand women's giving and its potential. She Gives was created to change this.**

Drawing on insights from more than 2,000 women through surveys, interviews and convening, *She Gives: Growing Women's Giving in Australia* presents the largest mixed-methods study of women's giving in Australia to date, and the second largest Australian study into giving overall after *Giving Australia 2016*. The findings capture how women across the country participate in giving and drive impact, and by elevating women's experiences and perspectives on philanthropy, address the existing knowledge gap and seek to reframe how we understand generosity, influence and social change in Australia. The recommendations call for a deliberate national shift to recognise women's leadership in giving, to strengthen the systems that support women to give with confidence and impact, and to mobilise collaboration at scale so women's generosity can be fully realised in service of future generations.

The need to grow giving is greater than ever before. In Australia, and around the world, we are facing a polycrisis of rising social, economic and environmental pressures that are stretching communities and systems beyond capacity. With more than 3.7 million Australians reported to be living below the poverty line in 2025, including 757,000 (1 in 6) children;<sup>1</sup> and one third of households having experienced food insecurity in the past 12 months;<sup>2</sup> more and more people are turning to charities for essentials like housing, food and care.

At the same time, Australia holds significant private wealth, ranking 5th in average wealth and 2nd in median wealth per adult globally.<sup>3</sup> And philanthropy plays a critical role, alongside government, business and civil society, in supporting communities to thrive. As we navigate the \$5.4 trillion intergenerational wealth transfer over the next 20 years<sup>4</sup>, the largest in Australian history, there is enormous opportunity for us to give, give more and give with greater impact.

Across Australia, women are quietly shaping the philanthropic landscape, giving with intention, supporting diverse causes and drawing on personal values, lived experience and community responsibility. While these contributions are significant, they remain underexplored and under-recognised. Most national data is typically aggregated in ways that do not show gendered differences and limited research into women's giving in Australia obscures the many forms of generosity women practise. When women's giving is represented, contributions from First Nations women, CALD women and other intersections often remain invisible. This continues to constrain effective policy and practice, and reinforce existing inequalities. The true potential of women's giving seems vastly unrealised.

She Gives' timing is significant. National reforms aim to double philanthropic giving by 2030. Ensuring that women's giving, and its intersections, are meaningfully explored and embedded in philanthropy is essential if we are to achieve the positive social impact communities across Australia and the world so urgently need.

## She Gives campaign

She Gives began with a clear purpose: grow women's giving in Australia by celebrating, sharing and inspiring women's giving, **at any scale, to any cause**, to accelerate positive social change. She Gives sought to deepen understanding, foster collaboration and inspire action through inclusive storytelling, convening and research.



She Gives Melbourne Launch

Over 18 months of planning, and 18 months of the campaign, She Gives captured more women's perspectives on giving than ever before in Australia, offering unprecedented insight into why women give, how women give and what women hope to achieve through giving in the future. To date, She Gives has:

- Published **142 Stories** of Giving
- Generated **high-reach media and social media engagement** around women's giving
- Convened **1000+ women at events** spanning the breadth of Australia (including launch events, research Roundtables and events to share concluding insights with sector leaders)
- **Captured women's experiences** in an oral history partnership with National Library of Australia
- **Enabled thousands more women** to see themselves represented in philanthropy, often for the first time

## The research

Building the evidence base around women's giving was a core part of She Gives' strategy from the beginning, responding to women's desire for more data to better understand women's giving and to strengthen the case for how best to support women's giving to grow.

She Gives and research partner the Centre for Social Impact, University of Western Australia (CSI UWA) worked together to design and deliver the largest mixed-methods study of women's giving in Australian history – and the second largest Australian study into giving to date. Over 2,000 women from across the country took part in this research, creating a rich dataset that captures how women participate in giving and drive impact. This report directly responds to the existing knowledge gap. By elevating women's experiences and perspectives on giving and philanthropy, it seeks to reframe how we understand generosity, influence and social change in Australia.

Crucially, how we conducted this research shaped what we learned. Each element of our mixed-methods approach fostered a strong sense of trust, care and shared purpose. Centring a diverse range of women's voices created an environment where many felt able to share perspectives they had rarely, if ever, expressed publicly. Partnerships with academic, funding and community organisations enabled the research to grow in both scale and depth far beyond initial expectations.

In presenting these insights, opportunities and recommendations we recognise that growing giving is a shared responsibility and focusing on women does not diminish the role of men in both giving and in fostering a giving culture. Rather, we focused on women because women's giving is under-recognised, under-valued and vastly unrealised in

its potential. Furthermore, we recognise that for tens of thousands of years, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have practised reciprocity, care, resource-sharing, and collective responsibility to kin and Country. These cultural practices reflect a long-standing commitment to generosity and community care; and remind us that concepts and practices of giving and generosity in Australia are far from new. We also recognise that She Gives is part of a broader global movement in philanthropy where women are leading bold, innovative efforts advancing change across many areas.

## Research methodology

The research approach was co-designed by She Gives and CSI UWA. Data sources included:

- A campaign launch survey
- Network survey
- National survey
- Roundtable discussions
- Individual and Collective Stories of Giving

All data was collected by the She Gives project team and analysed by CSI UWA. Sources contributed to quantitative and qualitative datasets, collected from two groups.



### Network Group

The Network Group comprised women engaged through the She Gives network, using a snowball sampling approach. Participants were reached via the networks of She Gives and its partners across the philanthropic, community and corporate sectors. Women in this group participated in one or more elements of the campaign, including the She Gives campaign launch survey, the Network survey, Roundtable discussions and/or Individual or Collective Stories of Giving. Total sample (n) = 1273.



### National Group

The National Group comprised women who responded to the She Gives National survey via community panel – the first survey of its kind, at this scale, focused explicitly on women's giving in Australia. This created a valuable dataset that reflects the broader population of Australian women. Total sample (n) = 1033. For more detail on the participants, please refer to Research Methodology.

## What women's giving in Australia looks like today

Findings shared through this paper draw equally from She Gives quantitative survey data and qualitative insights gathered through research Roundtables and Stories of Giving. Taken together, key insights across six themes provide a first-of-its-kind baseline against which future growth of women's giving in Australia can be measured.

### Key insights from quantitative and qualitative data across six themes

#### Culture and context

- A majority of women think there is a culture of giving in their family, community, and Australia 'to some or a great extent'.
- Across both survey groups, a culture of giving is felt most strongly within family.
- A majority of women believe that women influence decisions on giving within families, households, social networks and foundations 'to some or great extent'.
- A majority of women who live with a partner say they 'always or usually' make the giving decisions in their household.

#### How women give

- Women give in diverse ways, through time, expertise, money, care and community work, and their giving is best understood as a constellation of practices, often grounded in values of care, responsibility and connection.
- Volunteering creates opportunities for connection, community and engagement. 90% of women in the Network Group and 39% of women in the National Group volunteered at least once in the last financial year.
- The value women place on giving their time, skills and expertise reflects a more expansive and accessible model of giving than financial donations alone.
- Most women reported that one way they give is in the spur of the moment or spontaneously.
- 46% of women in the Network Group vs 6% of women in National Group use structured giving.\*
- Women in the Network Group's top reasons for using structured giving vehicles are to make a bigger difference, be more strategic and organised, and as a response to need.
- Collective giving, such as giving circles, offer opportunities for collaboration, to amplify impact and reinforce a sense of belonging.

\*Note: For the purposes of this research, structured giving includes giving through a PAF, PuAF or a sub-fund within a PuAF, community foundation, testamentary, will or private charitable trust and giving circles.

#### Why women give

- Women's top reasons for giving were broadly consistent: women give because they care about the cause, they want to make a difference, they trust the organisation or they want to give back. In the Network survey, women also cited 'philosophical beliefs' (eg personal values like social or environment issues) as a top motivator for giving.
- Across both groups, societal expectations and tax incentives featured amongst the lowest motivations for giving.
- **Key themes around motivations include:**
  - ◇ Family influence and role modelling is a strong motivator for giving and giving is a way of honouring family traditions and preserving 'legacy'.
  - ◇ Giving is a way for women to reciprocate for opportunities they had benefited from, or to 'give back' to communities and causes that mattered to them.
  - ◇ Giving is an expression of personal values and identity and a way to sustain personal connections to culture and communities.
  - ◇ Many women felt motivated to give to causes that had affected their own lives or the lives of loved ones.
  - ◇ Women give because it brings joy and feels good.

#### What women give to

- On average, women in the Network Group supported three different cause areas, while women in the National Group supported two causes.
- Across both the Network and National Group surveys, the top two cause areas were consistent: social or public welfare and health.
- After the top two causes, the results diverged. Animal welfare was a more prominent cause for National Group respondents; while education and arts, culture, humanities were more prominent among Network Group respondents.
- Whilst higher within the Network Group, lower rates of giving to First Nations causes and environment within the National Group reflect broader patterns in Australia and globally.
- A majority of women rated giving to women or girls as very or extremely important (67% Network Group and 58% National Group).



She Gives Research Roundtable Perth

- A majority of women give within their local community or Australia.
- Women give to causes that reflect their lived experience; with women’s health and family and domestic violence being two key examples.

### Barriers to giving

- Across both groups, financial security and feeling overwhelmed by the number of requests featured in top barriers to giving.
- Giving is constrained by broader cultural narratives:
  - ◊ Tall poppy norms limit discussion of giving, creating a visibility barrier.
  - ◊ Narrow definitions of philanthropy limit who counts as a ‘legitimate giver’, creating an identity barrier.
  - ◊ Suspicion around wealth and elitism makes giving feel inaccessible, creating an inclusion barrier.
- The barriers women face in giving reflect the same structural and cultural inequities women encounter across society, including financial literacy and caregiving commitments.
- Cultural and structural barriers create a lack of representation and access, particularly for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and First Nations women.
- How charities engage with women donors is a barrier because they feel overwhelmed by the number of requests and campaigns don’t speak to their values.

### Women’s ambitions for giving

- The majority of women say they want to give more.
- Almost 60% of women in the Network Group and over 25% women in the National Group say they will increase their giving in the next financial year.
- Women want philanthropy to recognise the different ways women give through talent, time and treasure, and the breadth of their contributions.
- Women want giving to be embedded into the national culture now and for future generations.
- Women want philanthropy to be strategic, collaborative and have long term impact.
- Women want a greater diversity of voices and experiences in the room to diversify participation and enrich collective understanding of what giving means and looks like.
- Women want to give collectively to feel more confident and connected in their giving decisions.
- Women want to have greater knowledge and confidence; financial literacy, role modelling and storytelling were identified as enablers.

## Recommendations and actions

She Gives findings make it clear that women across Australia are already giving in myriad ways and having significant impact. Yet much of women's giving remains under-recognised and under-valued; and the systems designed to support giving more broadly are not consistently accessible, inclusive or aligned with women's motivations. The opportunity ahead is how to better support women's generosity and ambitions for giving in ways that effectively enable it to grow in scale and impact.

Based on our experiences from the campaign and the insights presented in this report, She Gives offers these recommendations to grow women's giving in Australia and sets out key actions to take forward.

We also take this opportunity to note that while this research provides significant insights into the character of women's giving and a benchmark against which to measure its future growth, the research is not exhaustive and there is much that we still want and need to know. For example, more research is needed to better understand the size and scale of women's giving to specific areas and explore nuance behind the broad ACNC sub-groups. More research is needed to explore diverse perspectives of First Nations women, CALD women and women from rural, regional and remote communities. And more research is needed to truly quantify the scale of women's giving within a more holistic recognition of the diversity and impact of women's giving beyond tax-deductible donation claims.

### RECOMMENDATION 1: Recognise women's crucial role in giving

When women can see other women giving, they are more likely to engage, contribute and lead. Normalising conversations about women's influence helps counter the tall poppy effect ingrained in Australian culture and builds new social norms where generosity is celebrated as a shared force for good. Philanthropy is often perceived as insular and exclusive, creating barriers. Expanding entry points to giving and including more inclusive models can reduce overwhelm, build confidence and enable broader participation. Recognising family-centred motivations, cultural difference and lived experience is also essential, especially among First Nations women, CALD women and women from rural, regional and remote communities. Embedding recognition, celebration and visibility of women's giving can strengthen participation, grow giving and accelerate social impact at scale, as She Gives has demonstrated.

#### Actions

##### Parity in representation and diversity of stories

- 1.1 Encourage parity in media coverage of philanthropy representing women's leadership and stories of giving alongside men.
- 1.2 Introduce an independent annual count of female-led stories of giving amongst mainstream media to support accountability and track progress.
- 1.3 Invest in media training for women at different stages of giving to build confidence and public leadership.
- 1.4 Support role-modelling and storytelling by sector bodies and charities to strive towards parity and diversity so women can see themselves represented in stories of giving.

##### Parity in formal public recognition of women's giving

- 1.5 Seek gender parity and increased diversity in national honours (both in number and level of award) by increasing the number of nominations recognising women's contributions to philanthropy, volunteering and community leadership.
- 1.6 Fund a resource to champion and support the nomination of more women who represent diverse contributions across cultures, regions, causes and life stages.
- 1.7 Encourage regular pulse checks of national honours to track progress toward gender parity and increased diversity recognising women's contributions to philanthropy, volunteering and community leadership.

## RECOMMENDATION 2:

# Grow the capacity of the ecosystem to enable women's giving at scale

Women told us they want to give more; and are hungry for more knowledge, confidence and connection. Good practice and support exist within the philanthropic sector and ecosystem, but challenges remain around awareness, accessibility and relevance, particularly for women new to philanthropy. By working more effectively and collaboratively, the sector can make existing resources easier to find and develop new opportunities that are potentially more engaging and closely aligned with women's motivations, confidence and desire for impact. At all levels, and particularly in leadership and decision-making structures, the sector needs to reflect the diversity of women in Australia and invest in women's skills, confidence and networks across all areas of giving, including where capital flows. Introducing more women to structured giving as an accessible tool; strengthening the role of professional advisers as trusted enablers of generosity; and improving how charities engage women can also support a more accessible, transparent and values-aligned philanthropic ecosystem. With the significant intergenerational wealth transfer underway, building women's confidence, trust and capability to give has never been more critical.

## Actions

### Invest in infrastructure and capacity building to support women's giving at scale

- 2.1 Philanthropy to commit sustained funding to develop infrastructure that supports, elevates and empowers women's giving over the long term.
- 2.2 Organisations (eg charities, intermediaries and sector bodies) to strengthen their capacity to engage women more effectively (eg make resources about giving more accessible in both language and representation, and ensure communications support women's experiences and a more expansive framing of philanthropy).
- 2.3 This includes dedicating capacity within relevant organisations to champion women's giving across the ecosystem.

### Increase representation and diversity of women across the sector

- 2.4 Increase levels of genuine and authentic representation for First Nations women and CALD women in peak bodies, intermediaries and philanthropic organisations.
- 2.5 Commit to including multiple, diverse perspectives on boards, at events and in forums (ie not rely on 'one voice').
- 2.6 Develop the capacity of the sector and provide opportunities to ensure greater diversity of women's leadership.

### Build advisory capability to better support women's giving

- 2.7 Support adviser membership organisations to embed practical information and training on how to effectively support women with their giving within adviser professional development.
- 2.8 Develop tailored capability training for advisory professionals (all professions, emerging and established, men and women) to better support women with their giving.

## RECOMMENDATION 3: Build more collaboration around women's giving to mobilise impact

Building more collaboration around women's giving is an important growth strategy. Women consistently told us they like to give together, and women embedded in giving networks show greater confidence, collective influence and intention to give more. Nurturing the networks and platforms that enable women to experience giving together, and mobilising around shared interests, can lead to accelerated impact. Community foundations and collective giving networks, so influential during the She Gives campaign, are proven models for the effectiveness of inclusive, collaborative approaches to giving. By investing in convening and coordination as core infrastructure, and by growing and normalising collective giving models, the sector can translate the joy women feel when giving collaboratively into more giving, enabling positive social change at the scale women around Australia have told us they are ready to lead.

### Actions

#### Elevate and strengthen collective giving pathways

- 3.1 Increase awareness of collective giving opportunities and tap into existing community groups that sit outside of established giving networks to mobilise engagement more quickly.
- 3.2 Grow investment in and capacity of community foundations, women's funds and Indigenous-led funds across Australia to accelerate local impact at a national scale.

#### Mobilise women around shared priorities

- 3.3 Explore opportunities for collaborative campaigns to mobilise women, intermediaries and infrastructure around critical issues (eg women's health and family and domestic violence) to significantly increase both the scale of funding and number of women participating.



Melissa Smith, Carrie Bickmore OAM, Sarah O'Brien, Deborah Barlow, Tanya Hosch AM – She Gives Research Launch, Government House, Canberra



She Gives Research Launch, Government House, Canberra

## Conclusion

Women's giving is one of the most powerful forces shaping Australia for the better today. It reflects women's vision for their families, their communities, the country and world they want future generations to inherit. The momentum generated through She Gives reflected what many women's movements before us have shown: this is how women organise, lead and create progress – by working together.

She Gives built on these fundamentals, providing access, visibility and legitimacy to women's giving, and in doing so, demonstrated that women can be mobilised around a collective purpose even when the impact is not tied to a single cause or outcome. In doing so, the She Gives campaign proved that women's giving is powerful, scalable and far from fully realised. Realising its potential requires coordinated action across philanthropy, government, professional services, civil society and the research community working together to remove barriers, strengthen pathways and create the conditions to mobilise women's giving at scale.

She Gives remains deeply committed to growing women's giving and taking these recommendations forward. However, progress lies not with a single campaign or organisation, but through a collective call to action. Realising the full potential of women's giving in Australia will require shared leadership and shared responsibility. It requires all of us committed to growing giving to work together to catalyse women's giving in service of future generations.

# 1. BEHIND SHE GIVES

# STORIES OF GIVING

100 STORIES OF GIVING  
AMANDA MILLER

I think women have a slightly different perspective when it comes to giving. The women I've been involved with are very collaborative. They like to **work together**; they like to grow together.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
ANNE PANG

There's so much we can learn from women's giving, but so much of it is silent and invisible. It needs to have a **louder voice** so it can inspire more people to do the same.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
CATHY SCALZO

There's so much evidence that whatever you give to women, they will **return it in spades**.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
NORTHERN RIVERS COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION WOMEN'S GIVING CIRCLE

As a collective, we are contributing to the wellbeing, safety and **empowerment of women** and girls across our community with far more impact than if we were giving alone.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
BRENDA GADDI

If you have the privilege to share what you know, pass the microphone, **lift up your sister** and hold the door wide open until she steps in – that will give more women the power to change the world.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
CAROLYN VINCENT

I realised that I want to be seen because I **want to inspire** other women to do what I'm doing.



STORIES OF GIVING  
DAME QUENTIN BRYCE AO CVO

Giving is about taking the time for the things that matter - its the most precious thing you can give.



STORIES OF GIVING  
NICOLA FORREST AO

It's so much more than writing cheques. It's about **listening**, about **unlocking communities' strengths** and **respecting partners' knowledge**. It's about elevating their leaders and amplifying their voices as they build stronger, cohesive communities.



STORIES OF GIVING  
CLARE AINSWORTH HERSHELL

Raising our philanthropic ambition is not just necessary, it **should be celebrated as a cultural value** that allows everyone to have a fair go.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
CHRISTINE CHRISTIAN AO

I tend to focus on areas where there's a social need, or that will result in a **cultural shift** or the perpetuation of something important.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
THE MON. ROS KELLY AO

I think it's important to realise that you don't need to give in huge amounts. **Even little bits** can bring people so much joy.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
COURTNEY TALBOT

It is hard to stand up for what you believe in when you're a young female voice just starting out in giving. But every year, the **more I give**, the more I get involved with organisations, the more my confidence grows.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
100 WOMEN

We want to create change wherever it's most needed, but always around education, health, safety and economic opportunities. The **ripple effects** of these outcomes are massive too, as we know when you invest in women, she invests back into her family and community.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
REBECCA CUTHILL & NICHOLA HARRIS

The way that our parents give and their thinking around it, is different to what Rebecca and I would be doing. And now we're being challenged by our children about how we do it. It's made us realise that we need to be **much more strategic** in the way we think about our giving longer term, so it can have the most impact.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
DEB BARLOW

Every person has the power to help **create a world** that works for everyone.



# BEHIND SHE GIVES

## 1.1 Why grow giving in Australia?

**Philanthropy plays an increasingly prominent role in Australia's social landscape, yet, against a backdrop of urgent unmet need and simultaneous growing wealth, the true potential of giving in Australia is vastly unrealised.**

### The growing need

Multiple and overlapping social, economic and environmental pressures are reshaping every aspect of our lives. Rising costs of living, growing inequality, global political instability, economic uncertainty, disruption from climate and technology, and declining trust in institutions is placing huge strain on communities and the traditional systems designed to support them now and into the future. With more than 3.7 million Australians living below the poverty line, including 757,000 (1 in 6) children;<sup>5</sup> and one third of households experiencing food insecurity in the past 12 months;<sup>6</sup> more and more people are turning to charities for essentials like housing, food and care. With increasing need comes unprecedented demand for support and more charities are finding they are unable to meet the surge in requests. In 2025, a survey of food network charities reported turning away 50,000 people each month (a 54% increase from 2024).<sup>7</sup> Cost of living factors are also impacting charities, with expenses rising at twice the rate of revenue.<sup>8</sup>

### Wealth in Australia and the untapped potential of philanthropy

Against this backdrop of growing need and financial insecurity facing many in our communities, Australia remains one of the world's wealthiest nations, ranking 5th in average wealth and 2nd in median wealth per adult globally.<sup>9</sup> In 2025, the country's 50 richest individuals increased their combined wealth to \$243 billion, up nearly 10% in one year alone, while the number of billionaires rose to 161 (more than doubling in a decade).<sup>10</sup> Despite high levels of wealth, the limited data we have on giving in Australia suggests there is significant potential for growth.

In 2023, Australians gave \$18.9 billion to charities through donations and bequests – a \$5 billion increase due almost entirely to a \$4.9 billion donation from Andrew and Nicola Forrest to the Minderoo Foundation, the largest donation to a single charity ever reported in Australia. Aside from that single gift, donations rose by less than 0.4% (\$54 million) compared to the previous year.<sup>11</sup>

#### For global comparison:

- In 2024, Australians donated 0.73% of their income on average, compared to 1.04% by people globally.<sup>12</sup>
- In 2022, Australians donated \$13.9 billion to charity, equivalent to 0.81% of GDP. This is less than half the proportion given in New Zealand during the same year (1.84%) and lower than comparable contributions in the UK (0.96%), Canada (1.0%), and the United States (2.1%).<sup>13</sup>
- Only 53% of Australians with a taxable income over \$1 million give to charity and claim a tax deduction, compared with 90% in the US.<sup>14</sup>
- Only 1% of Australian inheritances are left to charities as bequests, compared with 3.7% in the UK.<sup>15</sup>

Not all donations by individuals made to charities are tax-deductible, often because the recipient organisation does not have deductible gift recipient (DGR) status (eg most religious or small grass roots organisations). Even if the donation is tax-deductible, many are not in fact claimed by individual taxpayers for a range of reasons (most commonly by individuals choosing not to make any claims or not



Tania Austin, Melissa Smith, Tanya Hosch AM  
– She Gives Melbourne Launch

keeping receipts.)<sup>16</sup> However, against the backdrop of the \$5.4 trillion intergenerational wealth transfer currently underway in Australia, the imperative and opportunity to grow philanthropy is unprecedented.

## Defining philanthropy

The true picture of Australian philanthropy is more nuanced than these headline statistics. Outside financial contributions, traditions of volunteering, mutual aid, and community organising – particularly in rural, regional and remote, and First Nations communities – reflect collective, relational and in-kind forms of giving that centre reciprocity and shared responsibility. The volunteering workforce is the largest industry by employment in Australia. Around 14 million Australians volunteer (64% of people aged over 15), contributing social, cultural and economic benefits of \$566 billion.<sup>17</sup>

What counts as ‘philanthropy’, and who counts as a ‘philanthropist’, varies greatly across contexts. Sector peak body, Philanthropy Australia, defines philanthropy as “the planned and structured giving of time, information, goods and services, voice and influence, as well as money, to improve the wellbeing of humanity and the community.”<sup>18</sup> Notwithstanding this, dominant perceptions of high net worth or high profile donors obscure the diverse ways people and communities contribute. We refer to philanthropy and giving interchangeably but recognise there are cultural connotations and assumptions embedded within the term ‘philanthropy’. By contrast, ‘giving’ is often understood as a broader, more inclusive concept that captures a range of contributions, monetary and non-monetary, formal and informal, without assuming scale, status or visibility. Giving offers a more neutral lens to examine acts of generosity across diverse contexts and communities.

## The unique role of philanthropy

Philanthropy plays an increasingly prominent role in Australia’s social landscape – in meeting both immediate needs and driving long-term social change. It funds initiatives across the arts, social justice, health research, climate action and education. Charities are often the first to respond to people or communities in need. Rural, regional and remote communities rely heavily on local not-for-profit organisations during crises such as bushfires and floods. The role of charities has grown over time in response to significant policy shifts that transferred much of the responsibility for social care to the community sector.

Yet, the role and power of philanthropy is so much more than just transacting funds. While philanthropy only provides 8.5% of sector income (the remainder coming from Government and self-earned income

from fees and investments),<sup>19</sup> it comes with more freedom and enables organisations to act where public or private systems can’t, responding quickly, locally and creatively. Beyond relief, philanthropy funds the ideas, advocacy and innovation that move us toward fairer, more sustainable systems. Giving helps people feel part of something bigger and reminds us that generosity is a source of hope and belonging. Growing giving strengthens our collective ability to respond to immediate need, support new solutions, and invest in a future that is fairer, more sustainable and shared by all.

## Why focus on growing giving now

Sector leaders, including peak body Philanthropy Australia, recognise the urgent need to grow giving in Australia. Philanthropy Australia’s *Blueprint to Grow Structured Giving* released in 2021 set a goal to double structured giving by 2030.<sup>20</sup> In 2023, the Australian Government set a national goal to double giving by 2030; a commitment supported by the 2024 Productivity Commission Inquiry into Philanthropy.<sup>21</sup> Broad ambition exists but it can take time for change to move through systems. Given the significant unmet need and growing demand facing communities across Australia, the opportunity is clear:

1. There is an urgent need to grow overall giving now to see significantly more funds being invested into the charitable sector to meet the pressing needs of our time.
2. The true potential of philanthropy in Australia is vastly unrealised and we need to create a much stronger giving culture to achieve the scale of impact required.

She Gives’ focus on growing giving does not reduce the role of government or lower expectations of business to contribute to society. We focus on growing giving because we have a responsibility to each other as a civil society. Generosity is one of the most powerful levers for change we have.



She Gives Research Roundtable Adelaide

## 1.2 Why focus on women?

**Growing giving is a shared responsibility and focusing on women does not diminish the role of men in both giving, and in fostering a giving culture. Rather, She Gives has focused on women because women’s giving is under-recognised, under-valued and vastly unrealised in its potential.**

### Recognising women’s contributions

Despite systemic financial inequities, in most years of the last decade, women have given a higher percentage of their income than men and a greater proportion of women have given than men (29.39% of female taxpayers vs. 26.08% of male taxpayers).<sup>22</sup> More women (52.5%) claimed tax-deductible donations than men in 2022–23 (Figure 1), making and claiming tax-deductible donations totalling \$3.6 billion.<sup>23</sup> Women aged between 55 to 59 years claimed a higher proportion of tax-deductible donations (37.1%).<sup>24</sup> Women in lower income brackets often contribute a higher percentage of their income to charitable donations.<sup>25</sup>

Figure 1: Number of women and men donating between 2014-15 and 2022-23 (Australian Taxation Office 2025)



**Note:** Figure 1 does not capture everyone who made a donation during the period, it only shows those people who claimed a tax deduction for their donations.

Global research shows that much of women’s giving occurs through volunteering, workplace giving, local community foundations, and mutual aid, and that these forms of giving are often under-valued compared to high-profile individual donations.<sup>26</sup> Women’s giving networks, feminist philanthropy and women-led foundations are pushing back, challenging this narrative.<sup>27</sup> Collective giving models are growing, prioritising collaboration, relationality and community benefit over prestige or individual recognition. In this sense, women’s philanthropy is not only expanding the field but also reshaping its cultural and ethical foundations.<sup>28</sup>

Giving circles represent a collaborative and participatory model of philanthropy that is commonplace amongst women. Globally, approximately 60% of giving circles are women-only, and women constitute most members in most circles.<sup>29</sup> Philanthropy Together reports over 4,000 giving circles worldwide, including around 1,200 women-only circles and 230 men-only circles.<sup>30</sup>

## Making women, gender and power differences visible

To apply a gendered lens generally refers to a way of thinking, analysing, designing or explaining that considers how gender and other intersecting identities shape experiences and outcomes.<sup>31</sup> Fundamentally, it seeks to make women, gender and power differentials visible. By examining women's perspectives on giving, this research seeks to make philanthropy more inclusive, transforming it into a more equitable and more effective tool for social change.

A focus on women also seeks to highlight how the same societal structures, power dynamics and inequities that shape women's experiences and opportunities in other areas also shape giving. Decisions about who gives, who receives and whose voices are centred in philanthropy have social consequences, and unfold within broader systems of wealth accumulation and inequality.

## Recognising women's economic power

In Australia, women continue to earn less than men in 98% of occupations;<sup>32</sup> the superannuation gap remains another key driver of gender inequity, seeing women retire with a 25% lower superannuation balance than men<sup>33</sup> and gender gaps in financial literacy are also well-documented.<sup>34</sup>

While financial gender inequities persist, wealth held by women, in Australia and globally, is higher than at any point in history and continues to grow as

women strengthen their economic power, education, workforce participation, entrepreneurship and influence:

- Women now own one-third of all small businesses, with female entrepreneurship growing three times faster than that of men.<sup>35</sup>
- Female-founded businesses are projected to inject up to \$135 billion into the Australian economy, if barriers to growth are addressed.<sup>36</sup>
- The number of female millionaires is growing faster than men (5.7% vs. 3.6%), with Australia's richest 75 women holding a combined \$179.59 billion (up 19% from the previous year).<sup>37</sup>
- Of these women, 33 are self-made, holding \$26.9 billion.<sup>38</sup>
- Female students represent the majority of higher education commencing students in Australia (62%)<sup>39</sup> and complete their undergraduate and postgraduate higher degree courses at higher rates (60.4%).<sup>40</sup> Higher education participation alone is a significant predictor of future philanthropic behaviour.<sup>41</sup>

Women are poised to inherit approximately 65% of Australia's \$5.4 trillion intergenerational wealth transfer in the next decade. This is attributed to women's longer life expectancy, multiple inheritances (from parents, in-laws and spouses) and the 'oldest daughter effect' in which the oldest daughter in the family is 50% more likely to assume the role of family financial steward compared to her siblings.<sup>42</sup>

As women gain education, agency and wealth, all strong predictors of giving, the opportunity for social change through women's philanthropy is unprecedented.



She Gives Research Roundtable Hobart

## Challenging the dominant narrative

Finally, the decision to focus on women aims to redress the widespread public perception that philanthropy is male dominated. While, for tens of thousands of years, First Nations communities have practised principles of reciprocity, care, resource sharing and collective responsibility that recognise and balance women's contributions alongside men's, the public face of Australian philanthropy since colonisation has been predominantly male. Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, Australia did not see the growth of major women-led trusts and foundations; instead, most institutional philanthropy was consolidated under male names and priorities. These legacies have limited recognition of the significance of women's giving, despite the central efforts of women to introduce and embed giving within Australian culture.<sup>43</sup>

Women's emotional labour and social networks underpinned the success of early mass fundraising campaigns in the 1960s and 70s – organising, volunteering and mobilising communities through door-knocks, raffles, fetes and relief drives.<sup>44</sup> In the 1990s, women became even more deeply involved as fundraisers, volunteers and service providers.<sup>45</sup> By the 2000s, the social sector had become one of Australia's most female-dominated workforces – with women representing 80% of employees.<sup>46</sup> However, women remained underrepresented in leadership roles and in decisions about where philanthropic capital flowed.<sup>47</sup>

**In 1975-76, two women, Lady Meriel Wright of The Myer Foundation and Pat Feilman AM of The Ian Potter Foundation, founded the national peak body for philanthropy, the Association of Australian Philanthropic Trusts which later became Philanthropy Australia.<sup>50</sup>**

In more recent years, the visibility of women in philanthropy has grown. Research from Australians Investing in Women and Philanthropy Australia showed that women are increasingly active as donors, professionals and advocates.<sup>48</sup> However, women's significant contributions are still not as visible nor attract the same recognition as male counterparts. Women feel this and the data supports it. She Gives media analysis of the 100 top stories on Australian philanthropy in FY2023-24 revealed 54 stories focused on a man, 32 focused on an organisation or foundation, and only 14 featured a woman, 2 in memoriam.<sup>49</sup>

While there is still immense work to achieve gender equity, particularly with intersectional attention, women continue to overcome existing barriers to lead the way in terms of their power to influence positive social change through giving. It is against this backdrop that She Gives emerged. In the face of urgent and unmet need, and recognising the vast untapped potential to grow giving in Australia. Seeing the rise in women's leadership and agency, and understanding that the story of women's giving, shared by women themselves, remained largely untold. She Gives grew in response to this moment and as part of a deliberate effort to make women's giving visible, valued and mobilised as a powerful force for positive social change.

## A note on Intersectionality

It is critical to recognise that neither women nor men are a homogenous group. Experiences of inequity are shaped by multiple, intersecting factors, including gender, ethnicity, culture, class, disability, geography, sexuality and more. Many challenges, such as pay and superannuation gaps, unequal access to wealth and lower financial confidence, are felt more acutely by women with less social or economic power. Similarly, many gains of past decades, such as wealth accumulation, business ownership, inheritance opportunities and access to education, are not evenly distributed across all Australian women. They are more likely to accrue to women who already hold social, economic or cultural privilege.

Applying an intersectional lens is essential to understanding the full picture of women's participation in giving. While some women are gaining unprecedented access to wealth and opportunity, others continue to face structural barriers that limit both their resources and their visibility within formal philanthropic systems. Inequity for marginalised groups, including CALD and LGBTQI+ people, applies at every level in giving: causes not being recognised, capital not flowing and diverse representatives not being given a seat at decision making tables. Recognising these differences allows us to better enable all women to give in ways they feel are meaningful, valued and legitimised.



She Gives Sydney Launch

# **2.** **ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN**

# STORIES OF GIVING

STORIES OF GIVING  
AMANDA SMORGAN

The next generation are going to be the catalyst for a lot of economic and social change.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
ANNA & LILY AINSWORTH

There are so many women around the world suffering from endometriosis. We want to give them the opportunity to imagine a future where their endo is understood and manageable, and they can live full, healthy lives.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
ANNIE FOGARTY AM

One of our philosophies at the foundation is, "if not you, then who?" If there's something that you think needs to be changed, then perhaps you need to get involved.



STORIES OF GIVING  
ANN SHERRY AO

Anything that builds capacity, hope and ambition, especially for the lives of people with disabilities, rather than simply managing them – really matters to me.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
CAITRIONA FAY

Giving is intrinsic to most women. They do it in lots of different ways: around the kitchen table, through mentorship and when they have capacity financially, they give at greater rates than men ...

We need a coalition of women who understand that this moment in time can be a generational legacy for our communities, it truly can be a moment to realise our potential and purpose as a nation.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
CAMILLA FREEMAN-TOPPER

In the beginning, I still felt uncomfortable talking about it publicly. It was very confronting. As the months and years have gone by, being able to talk about it has empowered me and given me courage. By talking, you heal and grow.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
CAROL SCHWARTZ AO

Women need to acknowledge their financial power and their own ability to give, particularly in areas where they believe they can have a positive impact.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
AUDETTE EXEL AO

We need more awareness, and we need more courage, to talk about our giving and to give against the currents of what is trendy. It's about taking the time to find your thread in the beautiful tapestry of social change.



STORIES OF GIVING  
MECCA M-POWER

Ultimately, our greatest opportunity is to mobilise a movement around the MECCA brand in service of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
GEORGIE SOMERSET

I think that philanthropy is really simple: think about what you have to offer and give that.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
DEANNE WEIR

There are so many extraordinary people doing incredible things to make the world a better place. Sometimes all they need is a bit of untied funding and support.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
DEBBIE DADON

I want to encourage our next generation to develop their own philanthropy and take the lead... there's so much you can learn from a multi-generational engagement in giving.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
KERIN HAYDEN

The role I play within my family is that I'm that person pushing the envelope, reminding them and finding opportunities where we can give and share the impact.



COLLECTIVE GIVING  
ARISE FUND

This is the time for us to step up, fill in some of those global funding gaps and make a genuine difference in the world.



STORIES OF GIVING  
DR VARINA MICHAELS

My advocacy is about creating spaces where our voices aren't just included, but centred. It's time for the spotlight to catch up with reality.



## 2.1 The road we travelled

**A bold idea to shine a light on women’s giving turned into a first-of-its-kind campaign which ultimately became a national movement. This is the story of the She Gives campaign.**

2022

At a dinner to announce the 2022 Stella Prize and successful completion of the Stella Forever Endowment Campaign, a conversation between friends and collaborators Melissa Smith and Paula McLean planted a seed for action. How can we harness the potential of women’s giving to accelerate positive social change on a national scale?

We consulted 60 women and sector leaders on this question. Two clear messages emerged:

1. We need more visible role models. Women told us “We don’t see ourselves represented in public conversations about philanthropy.”
2. We need more data. To grow women’s giving we need to understand what motivates women to give, how they give, and what stands in their way.

**December**

She Gives campaign was born to bring together a diverse community of women united by purpose to grow giving as a lever for positive social change.

Women’s giving concept paused to support mobilising philanthropy for an Indigenous Voice to Parliament Referendum campaign.

2023

2024

Seed funding committed by Noble Ambition and Paula McLean.

She Gives Advisory Group formed.

She Gives gained critical financial support from Major Founding Campaign Partner, Perpetual and Founding Campaign Partners, McLean Foundation, Snow Foundation and Noble Ambition; followed later by Fairground and Minderoo Foundation.



**First Story of Giving interview completed featuring Tanya Hosch AM.**

**Behind she gives.**



**Behind She Gives report completed.**

**July**

She Gives launched with a national media campaign, packed events and first Stories of Giving published.



**November** Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia launched the She Gives research phase at Government House in Canberra with leading women in philanthropy.



**December**

Research partner Centre for Social Impact, University of Western Australia (CSI UWA) appointed.

2025

**March**

She Gives Research Roundtable events commenced in Melbourne totalling 11 events held across every State and Territory and 3 focussed Roundtables held online over the next 6 months.



**May**

Oral History partnership with National Library of Australia announced. Part of campaign but separate to the research, this project will capture 20 stories as part of permanent collection.

**July**

She Gives celebrated 1 year anniversary and 100th Story of Giving with an exclusive interview with Australia's first female Prime Minister, the Honourable Julia Gillard AC.



**September**

Final event in Alice Springs marked the 14th Research Roundtable event fulfilling campaign promise to reach every state and territory.

Data analysis finalised with CSI UWA.

2026

**February**

Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia launched *She Gives: Growing Women's Giving in Australia* – the largest mixed-methods research into women's giving in Australian history surrounded by women from She Gives research and stories.

## 2.2. What we set out to achieve

**She Gives began as a campaign to celebrate, share and inspire women's giving at any scale, to any cause, accelerating positive social change. It sought to deepen understanding, foster collaboration and inspire action to grow giving in Australia. Through early conversations, listening and observation, three consistent themes emerged and became the focus of the She Gives campaign:**

### 1. MORE STORIES

Women are more likely to step into giving when they can see themselves in the story. Women want more authentic, diverse, relatable stories of women who look like them, give like them and care about what they care about.

### 2. MORE COLLABORATION

When women act together, they can achieve more. Women want more opportunities to connect with each other and build their networks and opportunities for collaboration.

### 3. MORE DATA

We still know surprisingly little about women's giving in Australia. If we want giving to grow, we need a clearer baseline and better evidence about women's motivations, behaviours and aspirations.

## More stories

Shifting Australia's culture of giving requires more than structural reform. She Gives' objective was to inspire women who are already giving to recognise their influence and agency through stories of other women who look like them and give like them to causes that align to their values. The goal was to share 100 individual and collective Stories of Giving gathered from all corners of Australia – respectfully conducted, recorded, transcribed and approved by participants prior to being shared widely via the She Gives website and social media platforms.

The process was designed to reflect the She Gives campaign values: be inclusive, empowering and collaborative. Stories were collected from women

who give to any cause, at any level, that accelerates positive social change; with demographic targets set to ensure stories offered a broad reflection of the diversity of cultures, regions and experiences of Australian women. The aim was for all women, regardless of background or experience, to see themselves in the stories shared. She Gives proudly welcomed and sought the participation of all people who identify as women, as well as gender-diverse individuals, in the movement.

For more detail, see [Appendix 1: Demographic Data](#).



Deanne Weir, Georgie Harman AO, Amelia Telford, Melissa Smith, Georgina Byron AM – She Gives Research Roundtable Canberra



She Gives Research Roundtable Adelaide

### Published 141 Stories of Giving

- She Gives surpassed the campaign goal by publishing 141 Stories of Giving\* including:
- 107 Individual Stories celebrating the hopes, ambitions and achievements of women around Australia
- 28 Collective Giving stories highlighting the impact of collective action
- 6 Global Postcards celebrating giving campaigns and movements across the globe

\*Figures to end February 2026.

### Engaged audiences



#### Social media insights:

Total followers: **6,013**  
 Total impressions: **654,646**  
 Total video views: **72,666**

Figures represent purely organic growth through community engagement between 24 July 2024 and 30 January 2026.



#### Video content:

**73,000** views



#### Print, broadcast and online:

**50** stories, **132** total mentions,  
**30.7**million total reach

Media coverage during first 12 months of campaign between July 2024 and July 2025.

### Changed perceptions through representation

- Prior to She Gives, in FY2023/24, of the top 100 high-reach articles about philanthropy, 54 stories of philanthropy focussed on a man as the main character and just 14 focussed on a woman (2 in memorium) – just 20.5% focussing on women.
- By contrast, in FY2024/25, during She Gives, of the latest top 100 high-reach articles about philanthropy, 26 focussed on women and 46 on men – 36% focussing on women.

### Captured women’s experiences on the national record

- The landmark Oral History project with The National Library of Australia will capture the legacy and power of women’s giving for future generations and capture voices of 20 Australian female philanthropists on the national record.

**Over 18 months, She Gives captured more women’s perspectives on giving than ever before in Australia, offering unprecedented insight into why women give, how women give and what women hope to achieve through giving in the future, with additional inspiration and insights from aligned change movements around the world.**

**Explore all the She Gives Stories of Giving and highlights from the campaign via the website.**

## More collaboration

She Gives recognised the crucial importance of community-building from the outset. In designing the campaign approach, we were inspired by women-led movements more broadly, for example, by the leadership demonstrated by community independents in the 2022 federal election who showed women’s capacity to mobilise community support and influence change in collaborative ways.

Ensuring meaningful representation was central to the campaign’s design. She Gives intentionally engaged First Nations women, CALD women, Women of Colour, women in rural, regional and remote communities, and next-generation givers as part of She Gives launch events, Research Roundtables, focus Roundtables and sector events – as guests, hosts and speakers’ panels.

Three types of engagement opportunities were created to bring people together including launch events, Research Roundtables and events held to share concluding insights with sector leaders.

Events were held in locations spanning the breadth of Australia – from kitchen tables to boardrooms; from breweries, museums and a turf club to Government House in Canberra – the energy in each room was open, collaborative and invigorated. From a research perspective, hosting events enabled us to draw on the deep knowledge, lived experience and generosity of women from diverse cultural backgrounds, regions, identities and age.

Bringing women together in this way helped to build momentum for the campaign and shape the insights themselves. It made clear that women’s giving is not a single story but a diverse collection of motivations and experiences. It created space for forward-looking momentum and community building. Women told us that the process left them feeling seen, connected and part of something bigger.

One of the defining strengths of She Gives is the way each element of the campaign informed and reinforced the others. The storytelling, surveys, Roundtables, Stories of Giving and women who spoke on panels all fed into a consistent and connected movement narrative. This integration was intentional: every story shared, every panel conversation held and every insight gathered became part of a larger collective picture of women’s giving in Australia.

This work – ambitious in scope and scale – was organised and delivered by a small team of women, demonstrating the leadership, collaboration and impact that She Gives seeks to elevate.



**20** She Gives events held



**Hosted** in every State and Territory of Australia



**500+** women at launch events



**578** women participated in research Roundtables



**1000+** total women engaged through She Gives events



Melissa Smith, Maggie Beer AO, Alex Dimos, Kerin Hayden – She Gives Adelaide Launch

## More data

Alongside storytelling and engagement, She Gives was also collecting data. Data on giving is limited overall and outside basic tax data, there has been little evidence to illustrate the true scale and impact of women's giving in Australia. Women told us clearly from the beginning: we need data.

She Gives reviewed existing Australian and international research to help build a picture of what is already known about characteristics of women's giving; and gathered insights from other social movements and initiatives to grow giving to help shape the structure of the campaign. These findings

were collated in a paper, *Behind She Gives*, released to mark the official launch of the campaign.<sup>51</sup> *Behind She Gives* has been downloaded more than **640 times**; and **300 copies** have been printed and distributed.

She Gives partnered with the Centre for Social Impact at the University of Western Australia (CSI UWA) to co-design the research approach. As momentum around the campaign grew, and She Gives collected more and more data, She Gives' ambition to tell a truly national story expanded.

## Research

Research collection spanned the period from July 2024 to September 2025 during which time we engaged more than 2,000 women across Australia.

### STORIES OF GIVING

**107 Stories** of Individual and Collective Giving were analysed by CSI UWA

### SURVEYS

**1500+ women sampled** across three surveys to build a rare nationally representative dataset of women's giving.

### RESEARCH ROUNDTABLES

**500+ women engaged** through Research Roundtables featuring conversation panels, guest speakers and community hosts around the country.

**11 Research Roundtables** across every State and Territory created a truly national sample.

**3 focus Roundtables** with First Nations women, Women of Colour and rural, regional and remote women ensured women whose voices are often overlooked in philanthropy were highlighted, adding depth and context to the quantitative findings.

**She Gives is the largest mixed-methods study of women's giving in Australia to date and the second largest Australian study into giving overall after *Giving Australia 2016*.**

# **3.** **RESEARCH** **METHODOLOGY**

# STORIES OF GIVING

100 STORIES OF GIVING  
DIANE BALNAVES

As with most foundations, we want to see a **better world**. We want more opportunities for more people.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
DIANE SMITH-GANDER AO

I think we need to speak about giving more openly and understand the **real needs** within our community.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
DIV PILLAY

The kickback of giving is knowing that it made a **tangible difference**; that's what will drive me until my last day.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
FIONA MCLEAY

I want to be part of a philanthropic community – a whole ecosystem of givers and receivers – that helps to **shift the narrative** in Australia. To help people see that we are so blessed in this country and we have so much. To encourage people to think, "How can I be generous?"



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
FIRST NATIONS FUTURES

I want to continue supporting our communities to drive their own **self-determined futures**. We want to scale our model and create more money to flow, like a river.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
FIVE BUCKS

Our power comes from creating a **connected community** who each chip in and then pool their resources together.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
GEORGIA MATHEWS

The impact of a collective contribution is greater than the sum of its parts and there are **so many benefits** to giving as a member of a giving circle – they're engaging, they're enjoyable because you are giving with other people, and you also learn.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
GROUNDWELL

The reason why so many people are motivated to give is because they love this planet, they love their children, they want to look after the places and the people that they love. You can crunch numbers and data, and all that matters, but to tap into and lead from that **spirit of love** is incredibly powerful.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
GEORGINA BYRON AM

Once you start those relationships and you see the need and then the impact, it makes you **more engaged**, more aware, and it widens your perspective.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
GOFUNOME

The government can move as quickly as possible to react to unforeseen circumstances, but there are always people who **fall through the cracks** and on the flip side, there are always people who want to help.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
GEORGIE HARMAN AO

Whether it's giving a dollar, a piece of advice or just **being kind** to someone who looks like they need it. Generosity is something that makes all of us win.



STORIES OF GIVING  
DONNA DIGBY

I want more people to realise the impact of regular giving and that a small amount, given collectively, can make a significant difference.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
HOPE DYSON

Giving back to the community that helped raise us and having the opportunity to leave the world a **better place** – it's the ultimate really.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
JAHNA CEDAR OAM

As a community, when we rise we bring others up with us. I **love the feeling** that giving gives me.



STORIES OF GIVING  
JANET SAUNDERS

It doesn't have to be giving money; it can be time. It can be **listening to someone's story**



# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## 3.1 Research partners

**The research approach was co-designed with She Gives and the Centre for Social Impact, University of Western Australia (CSI UWA). The work was further strengthened by guidance from the She Gives Research Advisory Group, comprised of academic experts and sector leaders: Professor Kristy Muir, Adjunct Associate Professor Wendy Scaife, Cairtriona Fay, John McLeod and Krystian Seibert.**

The study received ethics approval from the UWA Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval Number: 2025/ET000125). All participation was voluntary and informed consent was obtained from every contributor. Key research questions posed were:

1. What does women's giving in Australia look like today; why, how and to what causes do women give?
2. What are the barriers to giving women face?
3. What are women's ambitions for giving?
4. Where are the opportunities to grow women's giving?

## 3.2 Research participants

**Data was collected via two distinct groups: the Network Group and the National Group.**



### Network Group

The Network Group participants included women reached through snowball sampling of women in the She Gives network, and the networks of partners across the philanthropic, community and corporate sectors. This group participated in the campaign launch survey and Network survey and contributed the majority of the qualitative data.

Within the Network Group, She Gives deliberately sought a diverse range of participants to capture different perspectives. This included geographic diversity (across states and territories, as well as rural, regional, and remote communities) and cultural diversity (including First Nations women, women from CALD communities, and women with English as a second language). To explore these intersections in more depth, three dedicated focus groups were conducted with Women of Colour, First Nations women, and women from rural, regional, and remote communities, helping to identify whether distinct motivations, barriers, or experiences emerged across these groups.

**Total sample (n) = 1273.**



### National Group

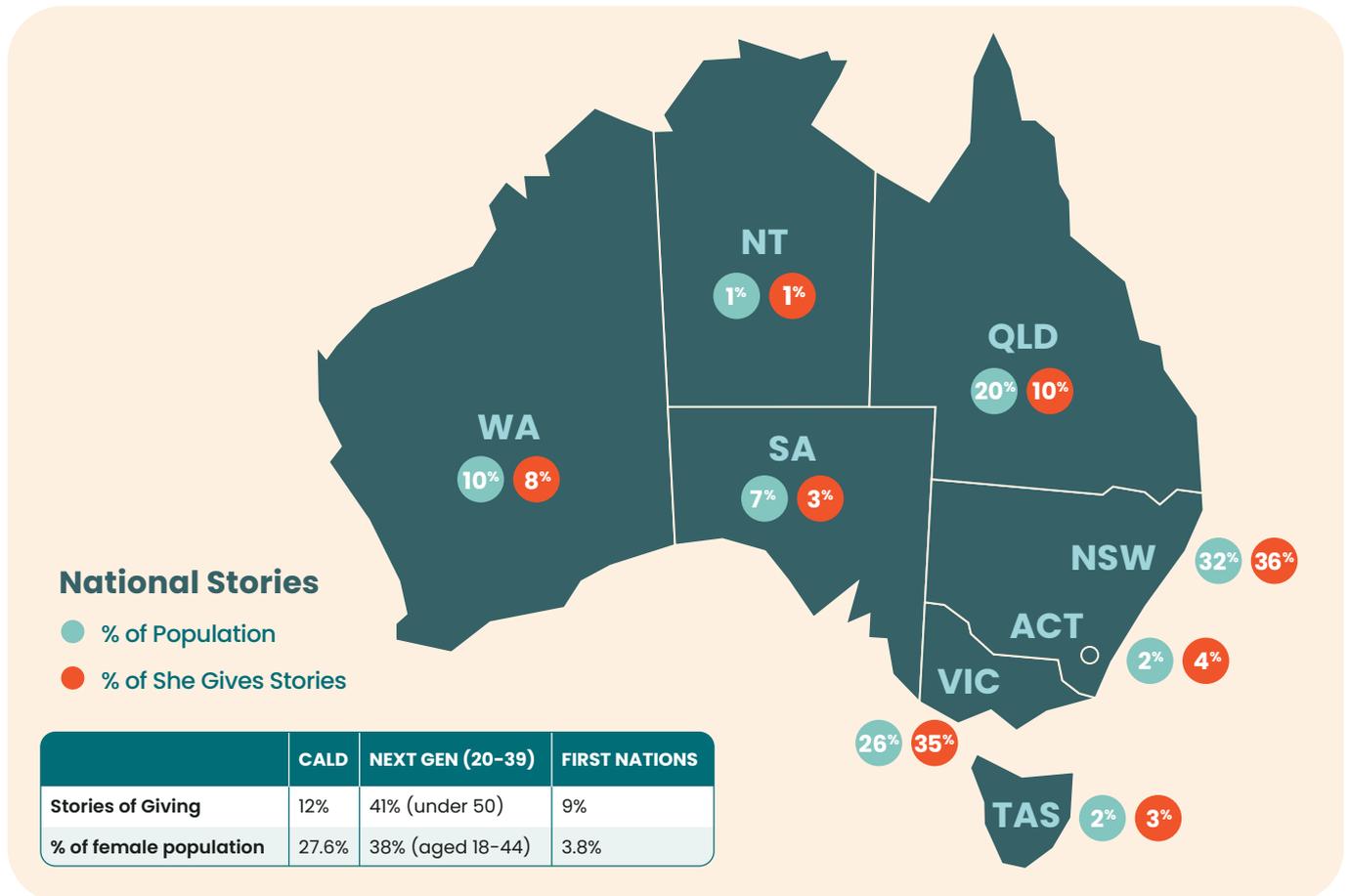
The second group of participants consisted of women who participated in the She Gives National survey via community panel – the first survey of its kind, at this scale, focused explicitly on women's giving in Australia. To ensure national representation, quotas were set using 2021 ABS Census data for age and state and territory distribution. This created a valuable dataset that reflects the broader population of Australian women. Given the survey's national reach, online distribution, and focus on balancing depth with scale, the data from this group is primarily quantitative and is intended to complement the richer qualitative insights gathered from the Network Group.

**Total sample (n) = 1033.**

## Building a national dataset

The research sought to faithfully represent women across Australia. Stories of Giving were collected in every state and territory, with deliberate effort made to elevate voices often overlooked in philanthropic research (Figure 2). Story targets were benchmarked against 2021 ABS Census data and adjusted throughout the research process to address gaps in representation. For a more detailed demographic breakdown, please refer to Appendix I: Demographic data.

Figure 2: Stories of Giving demographic breakdown



**Note:** Population statistics are based on 2021 ABS Census data. Stories of Giving statistics are based on number of Stories published by end September 2026 when data was provided to CSI UWA for analysis.

## Limitations

Recruitment of participants in Roundtables and Stories was organised by the She Gives team via considered and snowball sampling through the She Gives network and networks of partners across the philanthropic, community and corporate sectors. Given resourcing constraints, this approach was the most efficient way to access a range of women with giving-related experiences, and rich, contextually informed insights. However, it also means this group largely comes from existing networks. Insights presented may not fully reflect the diversity of experience of all women engaged in philanthropy. Additionally, quantitative survey methods reduce complex social and cultural phenomena into numerical categories, which can overlook context,

nuance and lived experience. Presenting survey findings alongside in-depth qualitative insights balances this risk. Finally, the report itself is presented based on interpretations that are inevitably influenced by She Gives and CSI UWA identities and experiences, the research participants, the questions asked, and the time spent understanding the many perspectives shared. We therefore present this report as one rich account of many possible accounts, recognising that every story holds more than we could capture in single report. She Gives hopes this research can be used as a platform for further research exploring additional diverse perspectives on women’s giving, for example, research that is First Nations-led and/or CALD-led.

## Rounding

All percentage figures derived from the research have been rounded to the nearest whole number for readability. Care has been taken to ensure that rounding does not materially affect interpretation. Percentage figures from external sources are presented as reported in the original sources.

## Quotes

Quotes from Individual and Collective Stories of Giving were collected, written up and approved prior to being published on the She Gives website and social media channels and as such these are presented in quotations as direct attributions (ie quotation marks). Quotes from Roundtable participants were collected and scribed by the She Gives team. While every effort has been made to reflect participants' voices, precise wording or emphasis may be slightly different and as such these quotes are presented without direct attribution.



Melissa Smith, Peggy Flannery, Gina Fairfax AC, Courtney Talbot – She Gives Brisbane Launch

### 3.3 Data sources

Data sources included a campaign launch survey, Network survey, National survey, Roundtable discussions, Individual and Collective Stories of Giving. Questions included in the online surveys were designed to enable comparison to other data sources and between different demographic groups. All data was collected by the She Gives project team and analysed by CSI UWA. Table 1 outlines each data source, including sample size and a brief description of the data collection method. For further detail on each data source, please refer to Appendix 2: Data sources.

Table 1: Summary of Data Sources for She Gives Research

Data source	Sample size	Collection method
<b>Literature review</b>	146 pieces	Targeted review of relevant academic and sector literature to better understand the nature and emerging trends in women's giving to provide additional context and comparative insights.
<b>Secondary data</b>	N/A	Analysis of publicly available datasets to estimate quantum, nature and scope of women's giving in Australia (including data retrieved from Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Australian Tax Office (ATO), Australian Financial Review (AFR) Top 200 Rich List, AFR Philanthropy 50 List, Philanthropy Australia and the Australian Securities Exchange. Information was also collected from company annual reports and documentation).
<b>Campaign launch survey</b>	164	20 minute survey for early adopters of the campaign.
<b>Network survey</b>	424	15 minute survey distributed through She Gives and Sector Partner channels.
<b>National survey</b>	1033	12 minute survey distributed through a national community panel using 2021 ABS Census data targets to ensure representative sample (state/territory populations and key age demographics).
<b>State and Territory Roundtables</b>	11 Roundtables, 523 participants	45 minute group interview (5-7 women per group) set within a 2 hour in person event conducted in every state and territory with host organisations. See Appendix 3: National and focus roundtables.
<b>Focus Roundtables</b>	3 Roundtables, 55 participants	45 minute group interview (3-5 women per group) set within a 1.5 hour online event. Conducted with First Nations women, Women of Colour and rural, regional and remote women. See Appendix 3: National and focus roundtables.
<b>Individual Stories</b>	86	30-60 minute interviews with individual women who give. Targets were set using 2021 ABS Census data to ensure the story sample was diverse and representative. See Appendix 4: Individual story contributors.
<b>Collective Stories</b>	21	30-60 minute interviews with women leaders of collective giving initiatives. Written up and approved by interviewees to be published as part of the 'She Gives 100 Stories'. See Appendix 5: Collective story contributors.

**Note:** The total raw sample included 2,306 participants. To allow for overlap in collection methods, the sample size has been rounded down to 2,000. The adjusted figure is intended to more accurately reflect the number of unique women engaged in the research.

# **4.** **THE CURRENT STATE OF WOMEN'S GIVING IN AUSTRALIA**

# STORIES OF GIVING

100 STORIES OF GIVING  
JENNA LIANG FARRELL

I'd really like to raise our children to be **people who care** about the community and their world; to truly see the needs and not turn away from them.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
JILL REICHSTEIN

I believe that having great women around the table has given us a **creative edge** because our trustees have always been prepared to take risks and push the boundaries of what we fund.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
JULIA & PEITA BURTON TAYLOR

It is crucial to involve the next generation in our efforts. By inviting them to the table, we not only share our values but also **actively engage** them in the process of giving.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
THE HON. JULIA GILLARD AC

In a world lacking a variety of women role models, to have women come to the forefront and be prepared to **tell their stories** of giving is an act of service in itself.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
JULIE KANTOR AO & BELINDA DUARTE AM

Sometimes the grand gesture that doesn't look like a grand gesture is the **seed of change** that we won't see until those that come after us.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
KAREN MUNDINE

Wherever I can to give back as **part of my reciprocity** and create those opportunities for others, that's where I invest my time and my money.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
KERRY GARDNER AM

For me, it doesn't start with the giving, it starts with **engagement**. The giving is really the end game.



STORIES OF GIVING  
IMPACT100 SYDNEY NORTH

While the grants themselves are significant, they are just the tip of the iceberg - the **quiet little ripples that follow** are often the most impactful.



COLLECTIVE GIVING  
KIMBERLEY JIYGAS

We have to create new paths for people to get out of disadvantage. We don't want to be charity seekers; we want to be **empowered to live** life on our own terms.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
KIRSHA KAECELE

If you want to be a **successful philanthropist**, you must work to put yourself out of a job.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
KIDS IN PHILANTHROPY

If you plant that seed early, people have their **whole lives** to give back to their community.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
KRISTY MUIR

If we are serious about tackling really complex social, environmental and cultural issues, and being **good ancestors** of the future, then we have to recognise that complexity can never be solved by one individual, one organisation or one big foundation.

I believe we need to work on that **collectively as a country**.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
LARISSA BEHRENDT AO

As somebody who loves the arts, there's **something magical** about watching how that giving helps develop somebody's creativity.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
LAURIE COWLED AM

I'm going on 96 years old and I'm full of **joy and happiness**, because of all these lovely young women who I've supported over the years.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
LEAH ARMSTRONG

If we have the opportunity, position, power and privilege to make our **communities and societies better**, then we have a responsibility to do so.



# CURRENT STATE OF WOMEN'S GIVING

**In this section we present insights shared from over 2000 women about why and how they give, the barriers they experience and their ambitions for giving in the future. Taken together, these insights present the largest mixed-methods study of women's giving in Australia to date and provide a baseline against which future growth of women's giving can be measured.**

Findings presented in this section draw equally on She Gives survey data and qualitative insights gathered through research Roundtables and Stories of Giving. Survey findings highlight patterns of giving and prevalence across Australia while qualitative findings provide deeper insight on how women experience, interpret and navigate giving in their lives. We note that the report does not present every data point collected, and for length and readability, we have focused on key insights gained from the data collected. Insights are presented across six themes:

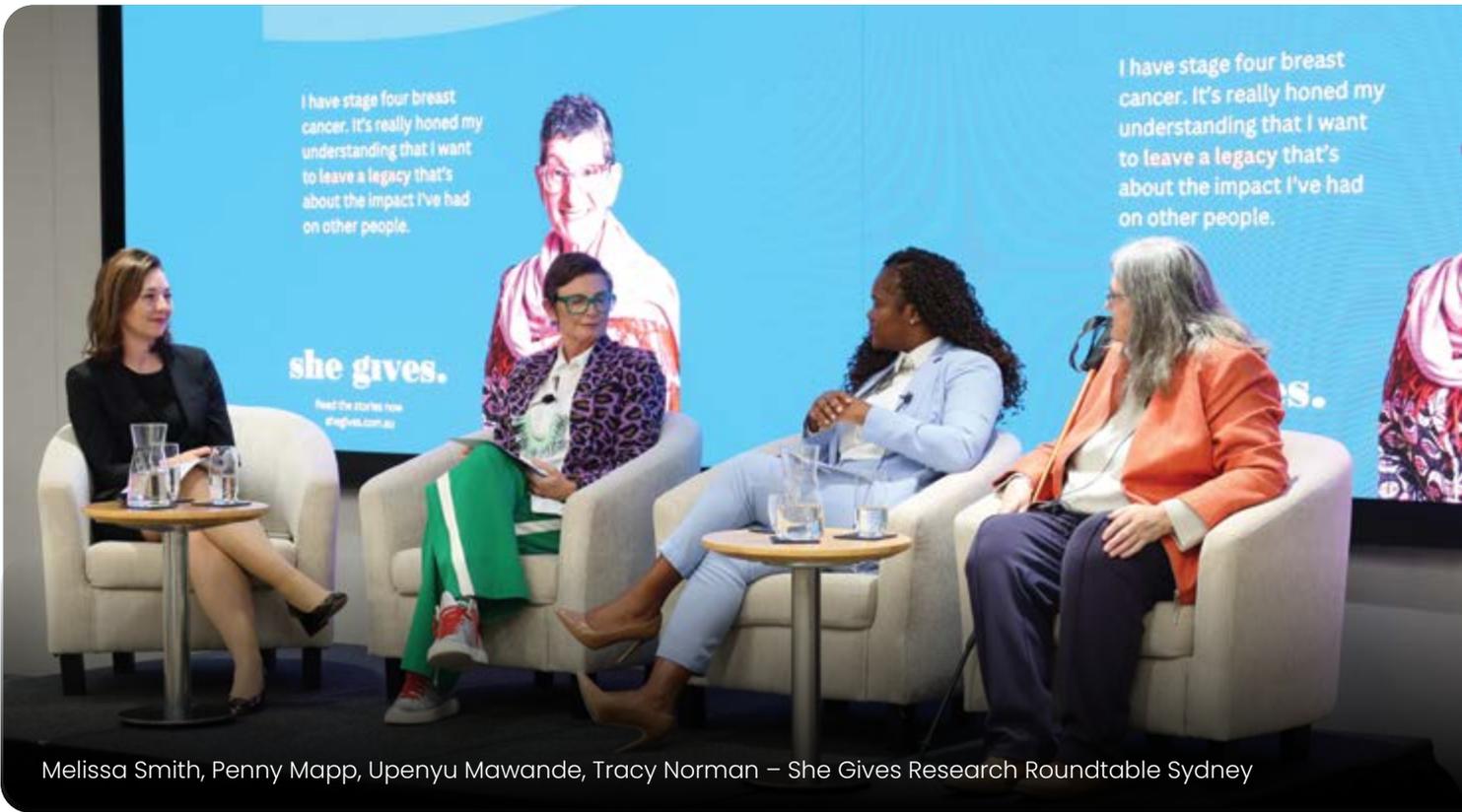
1. Culture and context
2. How women give
3. Why women give
4. What women give to
5. Barriers to giving
6. Women's ambitions for giving

## 4.1 Culture and context

**Understanding women's perceptions of giving culture and influence provides context around perceived norms and environments which shape giving. For example, whether giving is the norm, if people feel encouraged, obliged, or inspired to give, and whether places and spaces are perceived as giving-focused. We asked this because research shows that giving increases most when generosity is socially expected – particularly by close social groups – and when norms are already embedded within culture rather than externally imposed.<sup>52</sup>**

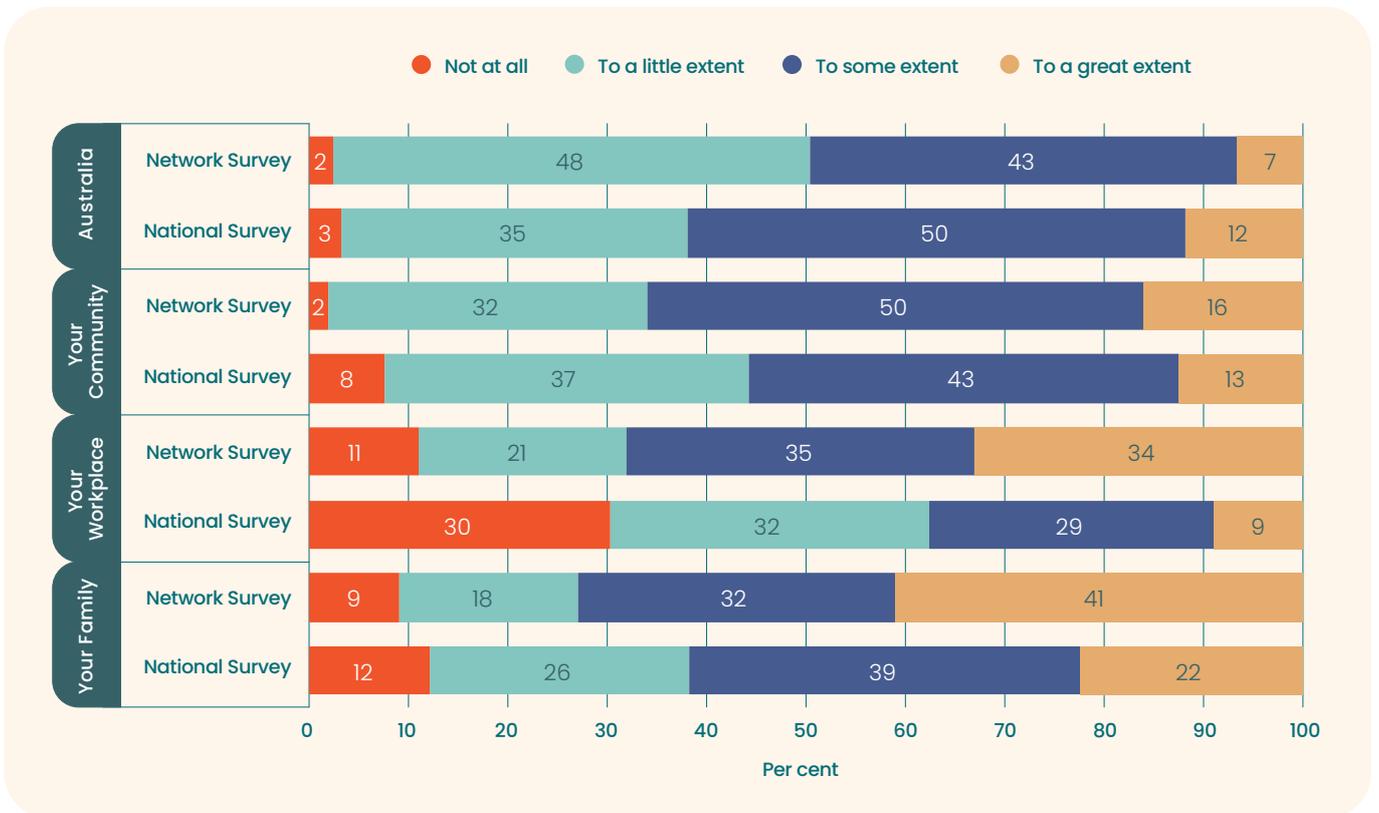
### Culture of giving

She Gives asked women to consider the extent to which they believed there was a 'culture of giving' across several social domains: family, workplace, community and Australia. The majority of women think there is a culture of giving in their family, community and Australia 'to some or a great extent' (Figure 2). Significantly more women in the Network Group think there is a culture of giving in the workplace 'to some or a great extent' than in the National Group (69% Network vs 38% National). This could suggest more women in the Network Group are professionally engaged in the philanthropy or charitable sector.



Melissa Smith, Penny Mapp, Upenyu Mawande, Tracy Norman – She Gives Research Roundtable Sydney

Figure 2: To what extent do you think there is a culture of giving – Network and National surveys



Survey findings suggest that, across both survey groups, a culture of giving is felt most strongly within family (41% Network and 22% National think there is a giving culture 'to a great extent' within family). However, the fact that a significantly larger proportion of women from the Network survey reported a culture of giving in their family 'to a great extent' compared to women from the National Group may reflect that this group would see giving as more intergenerational, structured or embedded in familial identity as compared with the National Group.

## Women’s influence on giving

The majority of women in the Network survey believe women influence decisions on giving within their social networks (87%: 49% to a great extent, 38% to some extent), a foundation they are part of (91%: 51% to a great extent, 40% to some extent), their family (92%: 59% to a great extent, 33% to some extent), and their household (94%: 65% to a great extent, 29% to some extent) (Figure 3).

The majority of women of the National Group believe women influence decisions on giving within their social networks (71%: 25% to a great extent, 46% to some extent), a foundation they are part of (73%: 24% to a great extent, 49% to some extent), their family (80%: 32% to a great extent, 48% to some extent), and their household (82%: 36% to a great extent, 46% to some extent).



### Network Group

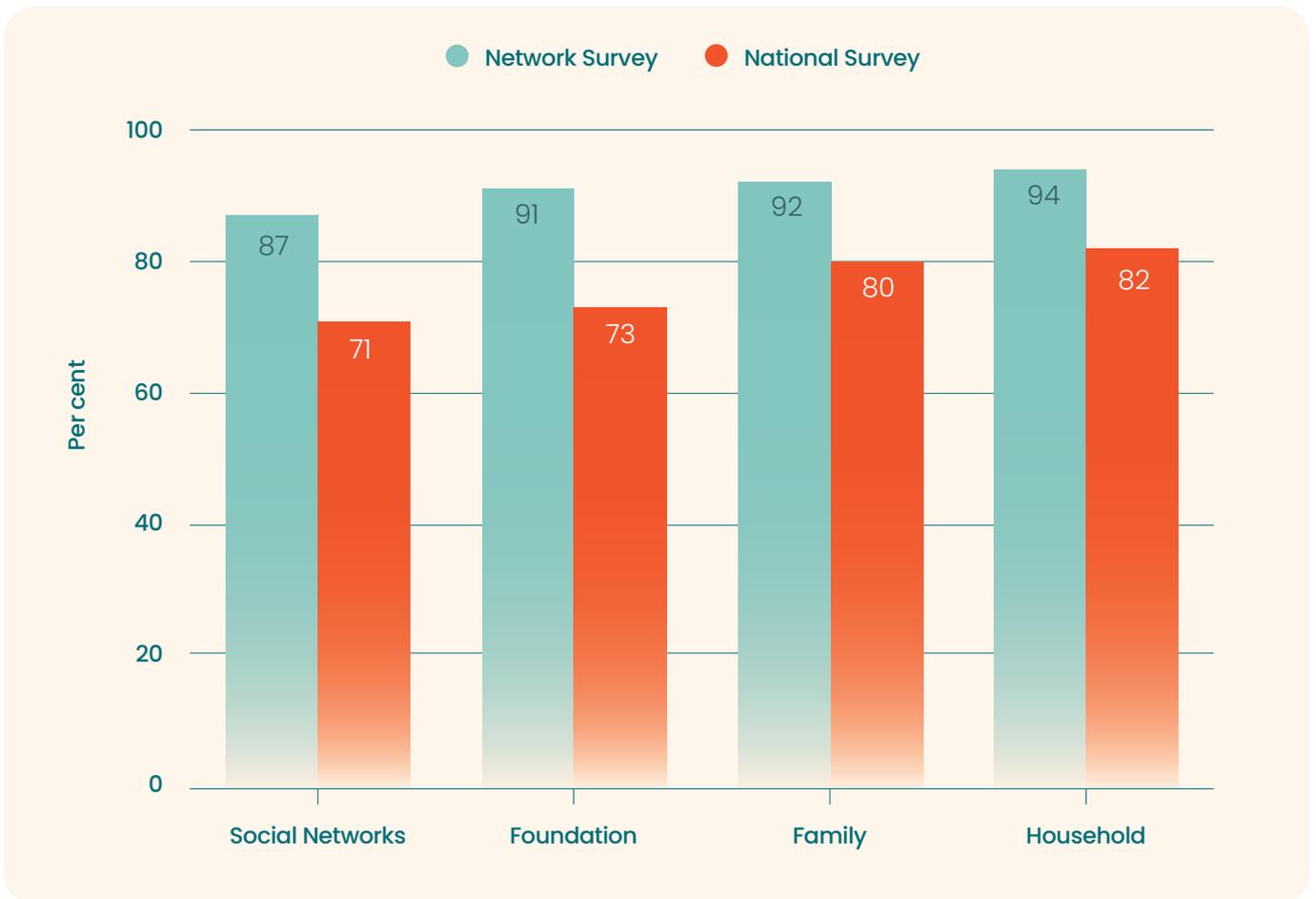
Women in or connected to the She Gives network.



### National Group

A broad sample of women who give.

Figure 3: Perceptions of a woman’s influence on giving – Network and National surveys



She Gives Research Roundtable Brisbane

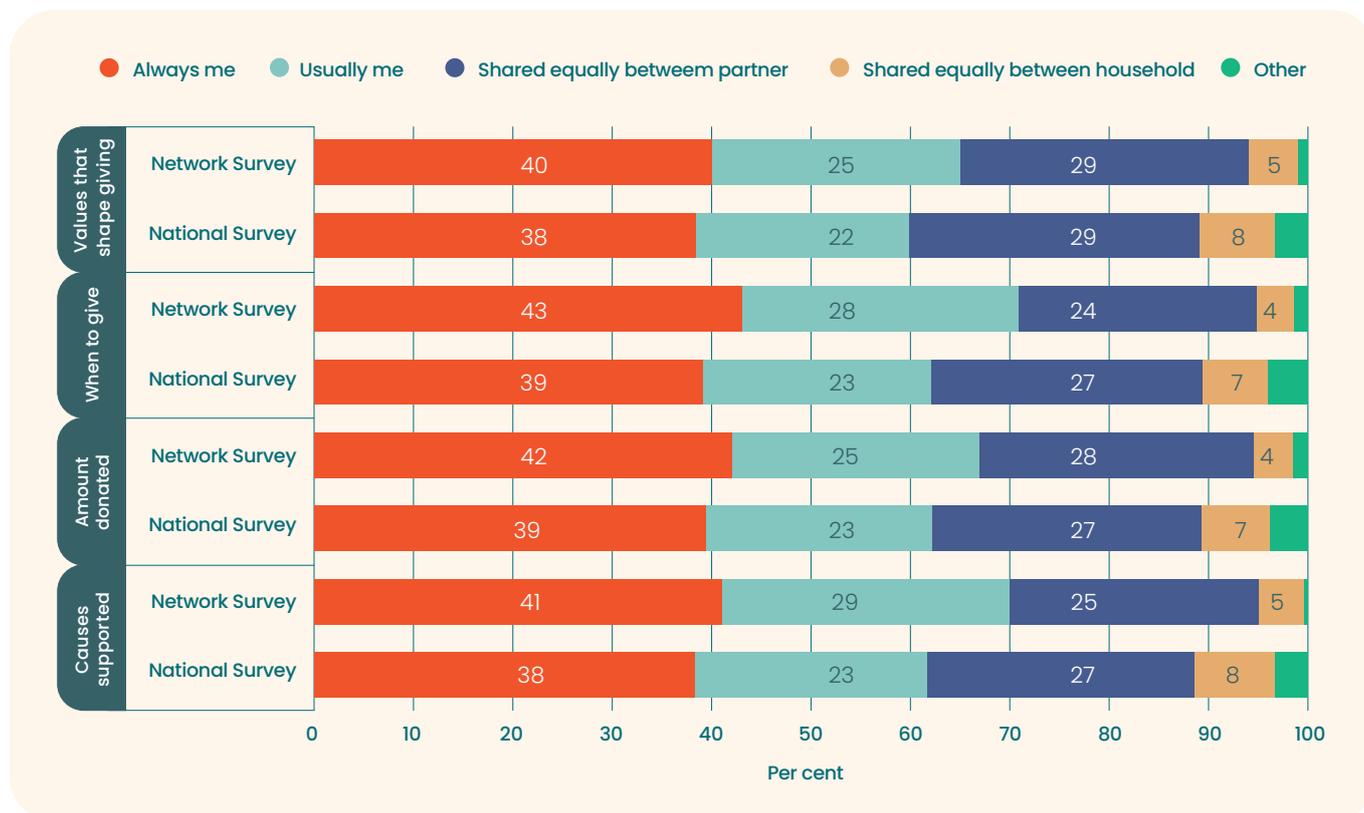
## Household decision making on giving

She Gives asked women who makes decisions about giving within their household, including about causes supported, the amount donated, when to give and what values inform the giving. At least 60% of women who live with a partner say they always or usually

make the giving decisions in their household (Figure 4). This reflects broader discourse that women often act as the primary decision-makers for charitable giving within families.<sup>53</sup>

Figure 4: Who makes the decisions about giving in your household – Network and National surveys\*

\*Multiple responses allowed



Survey data around shared decision-making highlights how relational and household dynamics shape women’s giving. Among partnered women, decision-making may be influenced by shared financial arrangements or social expectations of shared decision making within couples, particularly in households with traditional gender roles. Taken

together, these findings suggest that women’s giving is relational, negotiated, values-driven and shaped by household context. For women living alone, philanthropy may more directly reflect individual priorities and values, while for partnered women, giving decisions are embedded within shared identities, relationships and financial practices.

### KEY INSIGHTS

- ☑ A majority of women think there is a culture of giving in their family, community and Australia ‘to some or a great extent’.
- ☑ Across both survey groups, a culture of giving is felt most strongly within family.
- ☑ A majority of women believe that women influence decisions on giving within families, households, social networks and foundations ‘to some or great extent’.
- ☑ The majority of women who live with a partner say they ‘always or usually’ make the giving decisions in their household.



Tara Castle, Prue Pateras, Shweta Khan, Melissa Smith – She Gives Research Roundtable Brisbane

## 4.2 How women give

**Having explored the culture and context of giving, we turned to how women give, seeking to understand the methods and character of women's giving.**

### The metrics of giving: treasure and time

Women give in diverse ways; through financial contributions, volunteering, leadership and community engagement.

The majority of women in the Network survey (72%) donated money in the last financial year as an individual and 28% as a household. Individual donation amounts ranged from \$1- \$5,000,000, with 41% of women donating up to \$5,000. Nearly half (48%) of households donated up to \$5,000, and household donations ranged from \$1- \$1,000,000.

The majority of women in the National Group (59%) donated money in the last financial year as an individual and 41% as a household. Individual donation amounts ranged from \$1- \$20,000, with 81% of women donating up to \$500. Household donation amounts ranged from \$1 to over \$50,000, and 58% of households donated up to \$500.

Ninety per cent of women in the Network Group volunteered at least once in the last financial year, 64% volunteered at least six times. Women aged 45-74 reported volunteering more than women of younger age groups.

Thirty-nine per cent of women in the National Group volunteered at least once in the last financial year, 15% volunteered at least six times. Younger women aged 18-24 and couples with non-dependent children reported volunteering less than other women, whereas women in remote and very remote areas, CALD women, and women with taxable income under \$25,000 reported volunteering more.

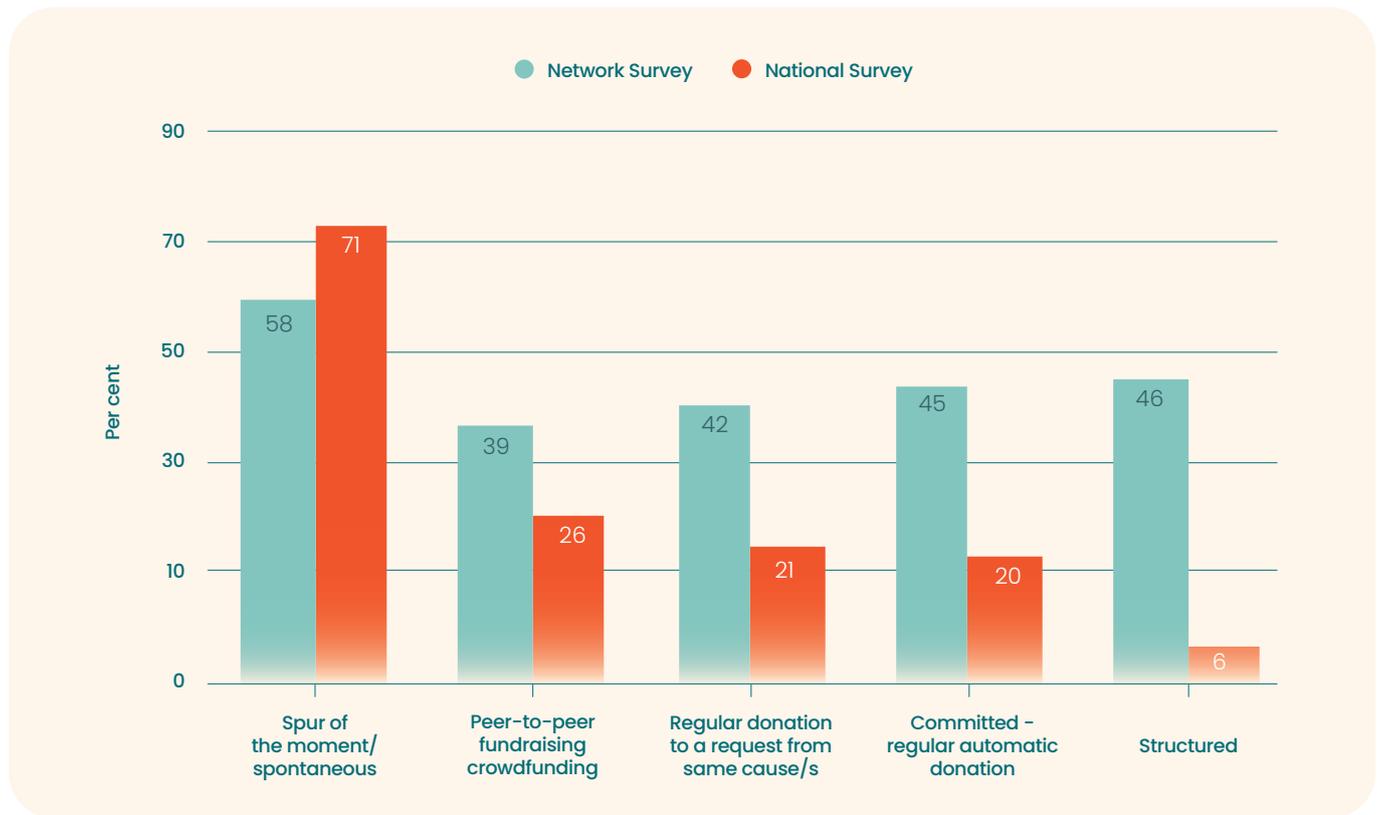
Volunteering was defined as 'unpaid work, not just belonging to an organisation or group' and 'of service or benefit to other people or the community, not just family or friends'.

### Methods of giving

Across both the Network and National Groups, most women reported they donate on the spur of the moment or spontaneously, although higher in the National Group (National 71%; Network 58%) (Figure 5). This compares with *Giving Australia 2016* findings where 53.2% respondents reported they gave on the spur of the moment.<sup>54</sup> However, beyond this there were some key differences in the ways women from each group give. Women in the Network Group have a much more diversified practice of giving (including spur of the moment, peer-to-peer, structured, etc.) Nearly half of all women of the Network Group reported using a structured vehicle to give (46%) as opposed to only 6% of National Group participants. Of those who use a structured vehicle, giving circles (21%) and Private Ancillary Funds (PAFs) (9%) were the most common ways of giving, followed by community foundations (8%), other Public Ancillary Funds (PuAFs) (4%), and testamentary, wills and private charitable trusts (4%).

Figure 5: Method of donation – Network and National surveys\*

\*Multiple responses allowed



**Note:** Structured giving includes giving through a PAF, PuAF or a sub-fund within a PuAF, community foundation, testamentary, will or private charitable trust, and giving circle.



She Gives Research Roundtable Melbourne

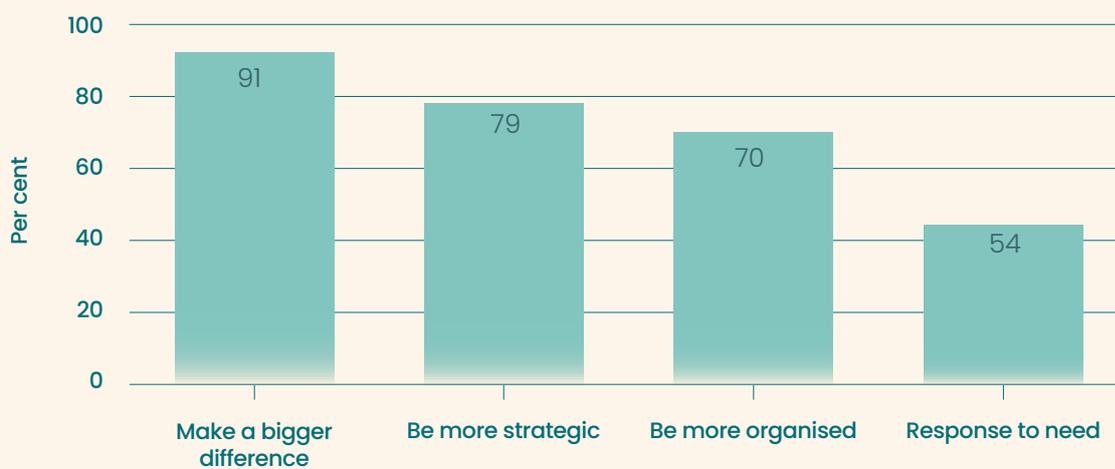
## STRUCTURED GIVING

# 46% of women in the Network Group vs 6% of women in National Group use structured giving

### Reasons for structured giving

Women in the Network Group were also asked to consider their reasons for structured giving. Participants who reported structured giving vehicles did so primarily to make a bigger difference, be more strategic and organised, and as a response to need (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Reasons for structured giving – Network survey\*



\*To some extent, to a great extent response options

The results suggest that individuals embedded in the philanthropic sector may approach giving with an emphasis on planning, impact and strategy, reflecting access to resources as well as familiarity with formal philanthropic mechanisms.

Women responding to the National survey give in ways that are reactive, relational and situational (spur of the moment). Low uptake of more structured or automated giving could suggest financial resourcing or formalising giving in regular or structured way are barriers.

Consistent with the quantitative data, across Roundtables, and several Individual and Collective Stories of Giving, giving was not simply about financial contribution, but may be best understood as a constellation of practices, often grounded in values of care, responsibility and connection (see Table 2).

Table 2: Roundtable themes: “How do you give?”

Theme	Description
Structured giving as strategy and legacy	Philanthropy organised through formal vehicles to maximise impact, institutionalise giving and establish intergenerational legacies.
Collective giving and community belonging	Relational models of giving that amplify impact, foster belonging and embed philanthropy within families and communities.
Time, skills, and expertise as under-valued contributions	Women’s contributions of labour, knowledge and leadership are central but less visible in mainstream accounts of philanthropy.
Spontaneous and relational giving	Giving shaped by empathy, responsiveness and relational ties, often occurring alongside structured giving.



She Gives Research Roundtable Brisbane

## Structured giving as strategy and legacy

Many women reported pursuing structured approaches to giving, such as family foundations, PAFs or salary sacrifice arrangements. These forms of giving were not only about impact but embedding philanthropy into day-to-day life and establishing legacies that could be carried forward by future generations.

*Love a structure – it's what we do. Structured giving is the fastest growing sector of the giving and philanthropy area – so keen and believe in it so strongly. Much more accessible approach – only need \$40k – not a million plus.*

– Roundtable participant

In the context of philanthropy and giving, 'legacy' generally refers to the lasting impact or influence a person, family or organisation leaves behind through their contributions. While the term has historically been associated with patriarchal inheritance, in Roundtable discussions women often referred to legacy in different ways, referencing long-term impact, sustained change and family influence. For several women, conversations surrounding legacy and strategy served as a vehicle for the intergenerational transfer of values: where funds are a teaching and role modelling tool for younger family members who are socialised into future giving. In this way, giving may be a means to embed generosity as part of the family identity, formalising continuity within the family structure.

*One thing that informs me is my daughter's view. She's starting to get engaged in what the family gives to.*

– Roundtable participant

*I give regularly, research in a big block, involving my kids in the decision making.*

– Roundtable participant

*"We like to support causes that connect us as a family to our values, and we're lucky that our values have aligned across three generations."*

– Individual story participant

While structured giving is often framed in economic terms and centred on efficiency and leverage, some of the women in Roundtables spoke about structure and legacy as more symbolic: where narratives were orientated towards privilege, responsibility and values.

*I give long term and strategically. I'm on several charity boards. I believe it's important to build a community of donors. I often give money and offer pro bono support. I'm good at crafting cases for support. I set up a fund for my son and myself, so he started giving from kindergarten. I didn't grow up with money, but I worked in very privileged environments. I know what it's like to struggle, so I want to help now. End-of-financial-year campaigns are important to me – they do a lot of work to make them happen, and I feel compelled to support that.*

– Roundtable participant

## Collective giving and community belonging

Within structured giving, 'collaborative and collective giving' such as giving circles offered opportunities for collaboration, to amplify impact and reinforce a sense of belonging.

*"We believe philanthropy works best when it's collective."*

– **Collective stories participant**

*"Giving is all about connection – people want to share space with like-minded people and to feel like they're making a difference."*

– **Individual stories participant**

This is often intertwined with relational and collective motivations. Women give in ways that strengthen social bonds, support communities and contribute to shared efforts.

*I always looking for collaboration when it comes to how I give.*

– **Roundtable participant**

*I give regularly; I'm part of the evolution of a giving circle.*

– **Roundtable participant**

Collective giving further illustrates how women's giving is deeply relational and identity-driven. For many, giving goes beyond resources and includes relationships and social networks. Collective giving shares decision-making and reinforces that giving is grounded in connection and mutual responsibility. The feeling of empowerment women described was understood as a more effective approach than individual giving.

*I believe in accessible giving like the funding network, the power of storytelling and collective giving, the impact is far greater.*

– **Roundtable participant**

## The value of time, skills and expertise

Many women strongly emphasised the importance of time, skills and expertise as valuable, contributing through volunteering, board leadership and pro bono professional work. Women described how non-monetary forms of philanthropy strengthen organisations' capacities and their achievement of social impact.

The value women place on giving their time, skills and expertise reflects a more inclusive and accessible model of giving. Despite its significance for many, giving time remains an undervalued and invisible method of philanthropy in comparison to financial donations. This is true for both formal reporting (eg tax data) but also, dominant cultural narratives of philanthropy. Recognising these other forms of giving may broaden understandings of philanthropy and equally ensure that the full scope of women's contributions is acknowledged.

*I have given my time more than anything when I couldn't give financially.*

– **Roundtable participant**

*"It's one thing to give money, but it's also about putting yourself out there and showing support."*

– **Individual stories participant**

*I like to volunteer my time but I also like to give the money, I find they go hand in hand.*

– **Roundtable participant**

*Recognise that giving is not just money. Put value on voluntary work.*

– **Roundtable participant**

*I internally don't value my own giving of time, I am embarrassed I don't give more money but I realise now that time is really valuable.*

– **Roundtable participant**

Women frequently discussed volunteering as offering personal value which extended beyond financial giving. Many emphasised that opportunities to volunteer created opportunities for connection, community and engagement. For some, volunteering was experienced as personally fulfilling as it fostered relationship building and a sense of belonging, often beyond what was experienced by financial giving alone.

*I don't have millions, but I know a lot of people and how to bring them together to give meaningfully.*

– Roundtable participant

*I started giving time to things – volunteer at the children's hospital – it was a wonderful way to meet people.*

– Roundtable participant

*I give by mentoring young women and men... helping women get a voice at the table.*

– Roundtable participant

## Spontaneous and relational giving

Many women described giving reactively in response to the immediate needs of friends, family or global events, alongside their more pre-determined or structured giving. Where women felt exposed to crises or problems, giving could be experienced as a tangible way to exercise agency and influence, especially in contexts where they might experience a sense of powerlessness.

*I give spontaneously, mostly when I feel powerless, like when I see global events that tug at the heart strings.*

– Roundtable participant

*I give to some organisations regularly, others I give as need emerges.*

– Roundtable participant

Giving can be a way to translate empathy and compassion into action. Many participants described spontaneous and relational giving as providing a sense of agency and efficacy in moments when they felt powerless, and reinforcing connections with communities. These experiences may suggest that such approaches to giving are experienced as empowering, and could contribute to a sense of moral or social influence, though further research would be needed to explore these broader implications.

### KEY INSIGHTS

- ☑ Women give in diverse ways, through time, expertise, money, care and community work and their giving is best understood as a constellation of practices, often grounded in values of care, responsibility and connection.
- ☑ Volunteering creates opportunities for connection, community and engagement. 90% of women in the Network Group and 39% of women in the National Group volunteered at least once in the last financial year.
- ☑ The value women place on giving their time, skills and expertise reflects a more expansive and accessible model of giving than financial donations alone.
- ☑ Most women reported that one way they give is in the spur of the moment or spontaneously.
- ☑ 46% of women in the Network Group vs 6% of women in National Group use structured giving.
- ☑ Women in the Network Group's top reasons for using structured giving vehicles are to make a bigger difference, be more strategic and organised, and as a response to need.
- ☑ Collective giving, such as giving circles, offered opportunities for collaboration, to amplify impact and reinforce a sense of belonging.

## 4.3 Why women give

**While understanding how women give reveals the forms and structures of their contributions, exploring why women give highlights the personal, relational and sociocultural influences that drive women’s giving decisions.**

### Reasons for giving

Across the Network and National Groups, women’s top reasons for giving were broadly consistent (see Table 3). ‘To some or a great extent’, women give because they care about the cause, they want to make a difference, they trust the organisation or they want to give back. In the Network survey, women also cited ‘philosophical beliefs’ (eg personal values like social or environment issues) as a top motivator for giving. Across both surveys, societal expectations and tax incentives featured amongst the lowest motivations. While the research indicates that tax incentives may not be a strong motivator, they can be a facilitator and encourage people to give more.

Table 3: Highest and lowest reasons for giving – Network and National surveys\*

Reason for giving	National Survey	Network Survey
<b>They care about the cause</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>98%</b>
<b>They want to make a difference</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>94%</b>
<b>They trust the organisation</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>92%</b>
<b>They want to give back</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>92%</b>
<b>Philosophical beliefs</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>91%</b>
<b>Responding to urgent need</b>	60%	58%
<b>Feel fortunate</b>	59%	89%
<b>On board or volunteer</b>	19%	65%
<b>Cultural heritage</b>	16%	26%
<b>Religious beliefs</b>	22%	18%
<b>Tax incentives</b>	11%	20%
<b>Societal expectations</b>	12%	8%

\*To some extent/to a great extent response options



She Gives Research Launch, Government House, Canberra

First Nations women in both the Network and National Groups report they are more likely to give due to their cultural heritage, and in the National Group, First Nations women were more likely to give spontaneously in response to need. Similarly, women who speak English as a second language in the Network Group were more likely to give due to their cultural heritage, religious beliefs and when they knew someone involved in a cause or an organisation.

Roundtables and Giving Stories provided rich insights into the diverse and nuanced ways women are motivated to give, with many themes mirroring discussions around how women give (Table 4). This suggests giving motivations and practices are intertwined and/or form a relational pattern where motivation informs giving choices and experiences of giving reinforces motivations.

Table 4: Roundtable themes:- “Why do you give?”

Theme	Description
Family influence and role modelling	Women’s giving is often rooted in family traditions, intergenerational influence and everyday role-modelling. Many see themselves as part of a continuum of generosity, with a responsibility to inspire others, especially younger women.
Giving back, privilege and responsibility	Acknowledging privilege whether financial, social or geographic, all fuels a sense of responsibility to ‘give back.’ This giving is often framed as a moral duty, discipline or expression of gratitude.
Values and community connection	Giving is an expression of values, cultural and faith traditions, and identity. Women link philanthropy with justice, equity, belonging and their connection to community.
Passion and personal experience	Lived experience and personal passions shape women’s philanthropic choices. Causes connected to their own or loved ones’ lives motivate action, reinforcing a sense of authenticity and commitment.
Desire for social change and empowerment	Women give to make a tangible difference, both through systemic change and individual empowerment. Education, safety, financial security and leadership for women and girls are especially prioritised as levers of transformation.
Joy and fulfilment in giving	Beyond duty or values, many women describe giving as a source of joy, satisfaction and meaning. Philanthropy is not only about impact but also about what it gives back to them personally and emotionally.



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She Gives Sydney Launch

## Family influence and role modelling

Family influence and role modelling is a strong motivator for giving. Women described being introduced to philanthropy by parents or grandparents, experiencing acts of generosity woven into everyday life. In this context, women's experiences with giving can be understood as a socialised practice shaped by norms, expectations and family values.

*I give because my family has always been giving – not just money, but also time. It runs in the family.*

– Roundtable participant

*It's an intergenerational piece for me; I want my kids to show up generously in the world.*

– Roundtable participant

*“Our mother – both in terms of the legacy of giving she left for us and the legacy we hope to create in her honour... Seeing her set such a great example made it easy for us to understand the importance of giving.”*

– Individual story participant

For many women, giving is experienced as a lineage of family values and practices: a strong identity rooted in generosity and, equally, inherited roles, responsibilities and expectations of care. For many, continuing this cycle was a source of pride and belonging. Giving is a way of honouring family traditions and preserving 'legacy'. Again, in this context, legacy referred not to public recognition but to the enduring impact of women's contributions on their families.

## Giving back, privilege and responsibility

Women expressed giving as a way to reciprocate for opportunities they had benefited from, or to 'give back' to communities and causes which mattered to them.

Where women identified a need, they reported feeling a pull to respond and a subsequent awareness of privilege or relative capacity. This awareness of privilege was motivating, but equally it brought with it a consideration of responsibility and obligation. For some, recognising their relative advantage created a sense of moral duty to act by using their access to resources in service of others.

*The responsibility is so big. I feel in a place of privilege.*

– Roundtable participant

*“...if you've got privilege, treat it like an obligation to make a positive difference.”*

– Individual story participant

*What drives me is the feeling I get from giving. I come from privilege, and I think I almost feel it's incumbent on me to give because I've won life's lottery.*

– Roundtable participant

*Privilege to be where you are... giving is a reflection of our shared sense of humanity.*

– Roundtable participant

## Values and community connection

For many women, giving was seen as an expression of their personal values and identity and a way to sustain a sense of belonging to cultures and communities.

For both First Nations and CALD women, giving was consistently rooted in shared values, cultural identity and a strong sense of community connection. These perspectives differ from traditional philanthropic narratives that sometimes centre individual wealth and public recognition.

*“Sri Lanka, influenced by Buddhist culture, carries strong messages about giving. From an early age, I was taught about the circularity of giving and receiving: if you wish to receive and live a better life, giving is a fundamental part of that exchange. One of my earliest memories is taking a plate of food to offer to the monks at the temple, a deeply rooted Sri Lankan tradition. I also have fond memories of community-run food stalls, where volunteers prepared free meals using donations collected from within our own neighbourhood on culturally significant days.”*

– Individual story participant

For First Nations women, giving is experienced as deeply embedded in cultural identity, kinship obligations and collective responsibility. Acts of care, reciprocity and resource sharing are not viewed as ‘philanthropy’ but as part of an enduring cultural tradition.

*Giving is a way for me to act and show my values as a First Nations woman. A lot of Aboriginal communities don’t have a lot, but they still give. It is cultural.*

– Roundtable participant

*“I like supporting the things that have opened up different opportunities for me. Wherever I can give back as part of my reciprocity, and create those opportunities for others, that’s where I invest my time and my money.”*

– Individual Story participant

Giving was frequently shaped by religious and cultural traditions which framed women’s early understandings of care, charity and service. More broadly, giving is seen as an act of service, aligned with teachings about compassion, generosity or duty to others.

*I grew up in Catholic family, church every Sunday. Weekly reinforcement of giving*

– Roundtable participant

*...we had giving conversations in our family, in a Christian family and discussions around helping, giving back to your community.*

– Roundtable participant

*“In Indian culture, whenever it’s your birthday it’s custom to donate either your time or money as a blessing for the year ahead. It was a ritual that was quite ingrained in my family.”*

– Individual story participant

*“My earliest memories of giving are of attending a Jewish school when I was a child. We always took a coin with us on a Friday to put into a charity box. That started when I was in kindergarten and continued throughout my entire childhood.”*

– Individual story participant

Women’s giving is deeply connected to broader systems of culture, power and belonging – and recognising diverse caring and contributory traditions is essential.

## Passion and personal experience

Broader values and identity may shape women's overarching approach to giving, but women make specific choices on individualised terms and often tied to personal passions and experiences.

Many women felt motivated to give to causes that had affected their own lives or the lives of loved ones. The responsive or reactive nature of women's philanthropy explored in how women give underscores the relational and experiential drivers or motivators of giving. This challenges the assumption that women are inherently or stereotypically drawn only to causes related to care, children and social support. Women in the Roundtables said their choices were not always expressions of generalised empathy. Instead, motivators for giving stemmed from lived experiences linked to these causes. Whether it be personal encounters with need, injustice or systemic oppression, either directly or indirectly through family or community. In this sense, women may give to causes with which they have a deep personal connection, rather than solely because they believe a cause is 'right'.

*...I've noted a pattern with clients that where/how they give seems to stem from personal life experiences. It's not always just supporting causes for women and children, it really depends on their personal experience.*

– Roundtable participant

*Reflection of values inspires my giving, lived experience.*

– Roundtable participant

*That personal connection is so powerful. We all have one.*

– Roundtable participant

*"I would say from one's lived experience as an international student and later as a young female lawyer in Melbourne. In both roles, I had to navigate complex challenges and barriers including cultural differences. These experiences heightened my awareness of and provided valuable insights into the journey of current skilled migrants in the settlement process."*

– Individual story participant

*And our giving has most definitely been driven by our experiences as a family.*

– Roundtable participant

## Desire for social change and empowerment

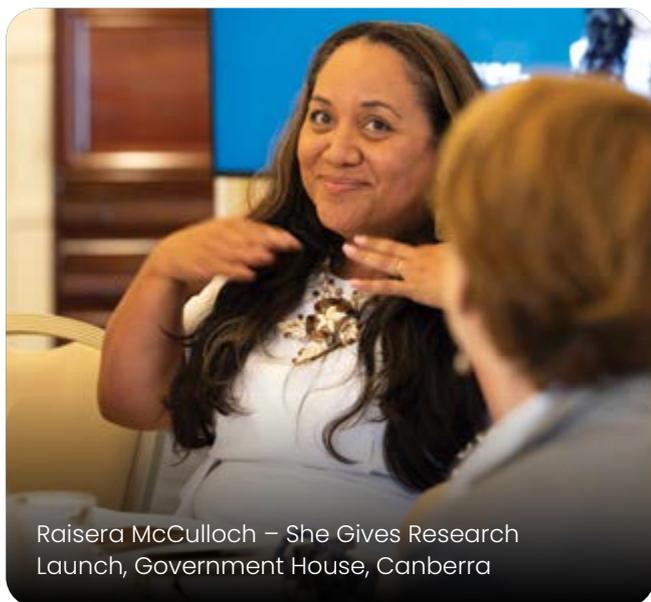
Many women described their motivations for giving as a moral response to inequity, intertwined with responsibility, social justice and long-term impact. Giving was understood not just as aid but as a vehicle for meaningful change. Contributions were directed toward initiatives that could create tangible outcomes, both at a systemic and individual level. In these instances, giving is motivated by both strategic and ethical considerations: women wish to act to address problems they have seen in society and to create conditions for greater opportunities or 'better' outcomes.

*To make a difference in people's lives and to ease their burden a little... it means I know the money's going to reach the people who really need it.*

– Roundtable participant



She Gives Sydney Launch



Raisera McCulloch – She Gives Research Launch, Government House, Canberra

*“People want to make a difference. It’s about not waiting for someone else to come and fix the problems but being part of the change-making process. We want to collaborate with communities, and with business and governments who want to empower people to be the change.”*

– *Collective story participant*

*Giving back to the community that helped raise us and having the opportunity to leave the world a better place – it’s the ultimate really.*

– *Roundtable participant*

*When you lift your eyes to that space of intergenerational influence, it gives you the time to think about how to truly make a long-term impact rather than worrying about the next month.*

– *Roundtable participant*

*Systemic change is what we’re looking for – what can we do to shift the system because education has a multiplier effect across generations.*

– *Roundtable participant*

## Prioritising giving to benefit women and girls

For many women, prioritising giving to benefit women and girls reflected both their concern for fairness and acute awareness of the systemic disadvantages women face in education, safety, financial security and leadership. Supporting other women was framed as both pragmatic and political – a way to address immediate needs while challenging the structures perpetuating inequality. In this context, giving enabled women to exercise agency, claim rights and expand opportunities.

*I give to a specific sector our community – women giving empowerment – I have people often approaching me. Through my network and my own experiences as a migrant family. I am practically empathetic to migrant women, so I select that area to work in. Migrants, refugees and disadvantaged women.*

– *Roundtable participant*

*It’s about supporting programs that support women. We know women are the key decision makers in a family.*

– *Roundtable participant*

*I believe in women. I want to back women because I see women as the force that will change the world*

– *Roundtable participant*

*“We’d use that Fund to continue backing women’s safety, financial independence, community belonging, education and leadership – for decades to come. Because the truth is, systemic change takes time. And women and families deserve that investment.”*

– *Collective story participant*

## Joy and fulfilment in giving

Beyond social change, obligation or values, many women spoke about the feeling they experienced when giving. Giving is not only strategic and moral, but significantly affective for those who give. Women described giving as feeling good, bringing peace of mind and providing reassurance of their positive contribution.

*You get so much more back than what you give.*

– Roundtable participant

*... I also give because giving feels good – and I believe that is a widely held experience.*

– Roundtable participant

*...It's incredibly rewarding to support organisations I care about.*

– Roundtable participant

*It's a way to sleep better at night, I don't worry as much, feel like you're doing your bit, feel like there are health benefits.*

– Roundtable participant

*The joy that I receive from giving far outweighs that money that I give.*

– Roundtable participant

Rather than illustrating self-interest, these experiences highlight a cycle of reciprocity where women give because it supports others and also give because it affirms their own purpose. Ultimately, feeling good was experienced as validation that their giving mattered. Giving is a practice of redistribution and affect – one that strengthens identity, belonging and commitment to community. affect – one that strengthens identity, belonging and commitment to community.

### KEY INSIGHTS

- ☑ Women's top reasons for giving were broadly consistent: women give because they care about the cause, they want to make a difference, they trust the organisation or they want to give back. In the Network survey, women also cited 'philosophical beliefs' as a top motivator for giving.
- ☑ Across both groups, societal expectations and tax incentives featured amongst the lowest motivations for giving.
- ☑ Key themes around motivations include:
  - ◇ Family influence and role modelling is a strong motivator for giving and giving is a way of honouring family traditions and preserving 'legacy'.
  - ◇ Giving is a way for women to reciprocate for opportunities they had benefited from, or to 'give back' to communities and causes which mattered to them.
  - ◇ Giving is an expression of broader values and identity and a way to sustain personal connections to culture and communities.
  - ◇ Many women felt motivated to give to causes that had affected their own lives or the lives of loved ones.
  - ◇ Women give because it brings joy and feels good.

## 4.4 What women give to

Having explored what motivates women to give we sought to better understand the causes women support.

### Causes women support

She Gives asked women which cause areas they had given to in the past 12 months using cause areas aligned with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) Charity Subtype Categories<sup>55</sup> to ensure consistency and comparability across survey datasets. While these categories provide a useful framework, they are broad and can mask important nuance. For example, 'social and public welfare' includes issues ranging from homelessness to youth programs to women's shelters. Further research into the specific causes women support within each category would offer a clearer understanding of the issues that matter most to them.

On average, women in the Network Group supported three different cause areas, while women in the National Group supported two causes (Table 5). Across both the Network and National Groups, the top two cause areas were consistent: social or public welfare and health. This aligns with the top two causes for giving nationally as highlighted by *Giving Australia 2016*.<sup>56</sup>

The results diverged after that, highlighting some differences between the Network and National Groups. Animal welfare was a more prominent cause for National survey respondents; while education and arts, culture, humanities were more prominent among Network survey respondents.

Whilst higher within the Network Group, lower rates of giving to First Nations causes and environment within the National Group reflect broader patterns in Australia and globally. Despite deep need and national significance, First Nations causes remain profoundly underfunded. Globally, Indigenous Peoples benefit from just 0.6% of all philanthropic giving (\$4.5 billion), and Indigenous women receive only 0.05% of total global giving.<sup>57</sup> Similar underfunding is prevalent among climate and environment. Of Australia's \$13.9 billion annual total giving in 2022, only 2% (~\$300million) went to environment-focused NGOs.<sup>58</sup>

Table 5: Top causes supported – Network survey, National survey, Giving Australia 2016\*

Top Causes supported	Network Survey (She Gives)	National Survey (She Gives)	Giving Australia Survey**
<b>Social or public welfare</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>65%</b>
<b>Health</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>61%</b>
<b>Education</b>	45%	15%	21%
<b>Arts, culture and humanities</b>	31%	7%	-
<b>Environmental protection</b>	28%	8%	25%
<b>Human rights protection</b>	22%	8%	11%
<b>Animal welfare</b>	18%	34%	15%
<b>International aid</b>	16%	12%	-
<b>Reconciliation and mutual respect</b>	17%	2%	7%
<b>Religion</b>	8%	14%	24%

\*Causes were aligned with ACNC charity subtypes, - data not reported.

\*\* *Giving Australia 2016* results captures both men and women.

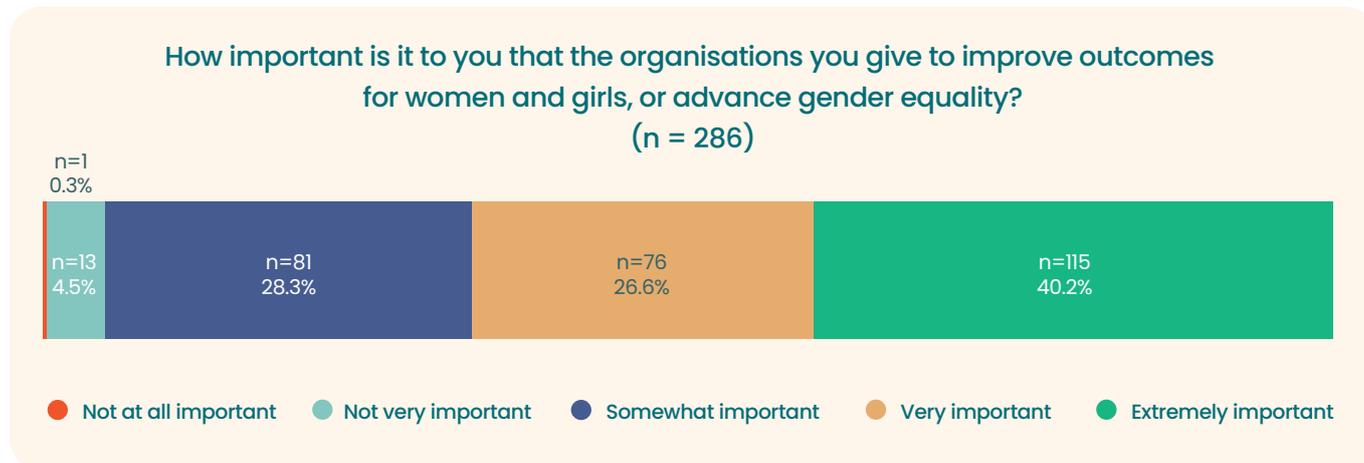
**Note:** Total > 100% as respondents could pick multiple causes.

### Advancing gender equity

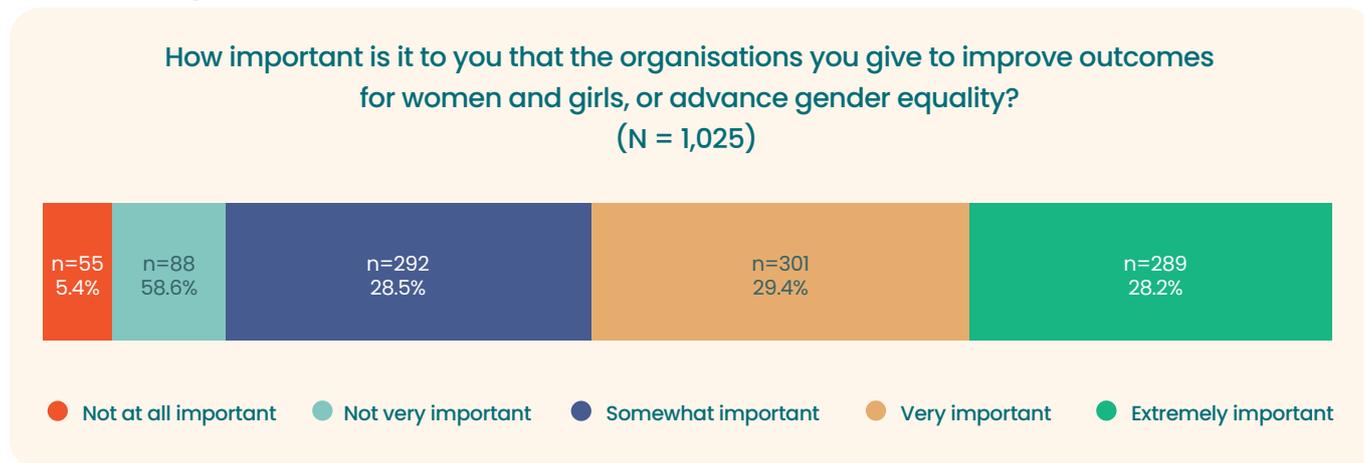
She Gives asked women how important it is that the organisations they give to advance gender equality or improve outcomes for women and girls. A majority of women across both groups rated this as very or extremely important (67% Network Group and 58% National Group) (Figure 7).<sup>59</sup>

Figure 7: Importance of giving to women and girls, and advancing gender equity – Network and National surveys

#### Network survey



#### National survey



### Where giving is directed

The majority of women give within their local community or Australia (Figure 8). This reflects the growing trend of place based giving that can be found in structured giving and the growth of community foundations in Australia.<sup>60</sup> Within the National Group, First Nations women were more likely to report giving within their local community, whereas women who speak English as a second language were more likely to give internationally.



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Figure 8: Where giving is directed – Network and National surveys



### Giving based on lived experience

Beyond the ACNC charity subtypes reflected in the quantitative data, a strong narrative emerged around women giving to causes that reflect their lived experiences (Table 6). Two causes that stand out as examples were women’s health and domestic and family violence.

In women’s health, women spoke to their own health journeys and those of loved ones and how experiences of under diagnosis, gaps in treatment and systems that don’t adequately recognise and support women’s needs inspired them into action. From a woman using her own late-stage breast cancer diagnosis as an opportunity to advocate for giving, to a daughter raising collective funding and awareness about ovarian cancer in honour of her mother – women are mobilising all the assets they have available to create change within the broader context of historic underfunding in women’s health research. During the She Gives campaign, we were also a part of the largest philanthropic donation to women’s health in Australia with a mother and daughter leading a \$50 million gift to endometriosis on behalf of their family, which also marked the most significant known philanthropic investment in endometriosis research globally.

Similarly, in domestic and family violence, women’s own experiences and exposure to those close to them has motivated women to give both individually and collectively at every spectrum of the scale in response to a national crisis. This includes women using their direct experience to fuel their leadership in this space, others building safe spaces to support systemic change and women contributing to a collective building crisis accommodation.

Table 6: Giving based on lived experience - Roundtables and Stories top themes

Themes	What women said
<p><b>Domestic and family violence</b></p>	<p><i>“I’ve always wanted to support homelessness, women and children, domestic violence.”</i>                      – <b>Individual story participant</b></p> <p><i>“It started with a conversation amongst four local people who were concerned about what we were hearing in the community about the lack of support for women who were both homeless and/or had experienced domestic violence.”</i>                      – <b>Collective giving story participant</b></p> <p><i>“My ex-husband used to tell me I was useless and that I would never manage without him. I set up the [my foundation], completely on my own and I’ve just blown it out of the water. I feel so privileged to give back at the level that I can.”</i>                      – <b>Individual story participant</b></p> <p><i>“I wanted to do something to help because of how much I’ve been exposed to the impact of domestic violence on women and girls and how important it is that we support people and listen to what they need.”</i>                      – <b>Individual story participant</b></p>
<p><b>Women’s health</b></p>	<p><i>“Because of my lived experience with breast cancer and the side effects of medications, I want to help people with chronic illness navigate one day at a time so they can find joy in something which is so dark.”</i>                      – <b>Individual story participant</b></p> <p><i>I have a scatter gun approach towards giving for causes and issues that matter to me. That includes breast cancer, because it affected a person close to me, a family member.</i>                      – <b>Roundtable participant</b></p> <p><i>“Earlier this year, I saw a line of little five-year old girls, who were just starting school, walking along the street with their mums’. They were so full of potential and excitement, and it hit me that one in seven of them will have to deal with endometriosis at some point in their lives. I will do anything I can to change that story, for them and for every little girl anywhere in the world.”</i>                      – <b>Individual story participant</b></p>

## KEY INSIGHTS

- ☑ On average, women in the Network Group supported three different cause areas, while women in the National Group supported two causes.
- ☑ Across both the Network and National Groups, the top two cause areas were consistent: social or public welfare and health.
- ☑ After the top two causes, the results diverged. Animal welfare was more prominent cause for National survey respondents; while education and arts, culture, humanities were more prominent among Network survey respondents.
- ☑ Whilst higher within the Network Group, lower rates of giving to First Nations causes and environment within the National Group reflect broader patterns in Australia and globally.
- ☑ A majority of women rated giving to women or girls as very or extremely important (67% Network Group and 58% National Group)
- ☑ A majority of women give within their local community or Australia.
- ☑ Women give to causes that reflect their lived experience; with women’s health and family and domestic violence being two key examples.

## 4.5 Barriers to giving

**With an understanding of how and why women give, we sought to understand the barriers that may hold women back from giving, giving more and giving more impactfully.**

Barriers to giving often arise from a mix of structural, cultural and perceptual factors that influence whether people feel confident and motivated to donate. Beyond questions of personal capacity or willingness, people routinely weigh issues such as trust in organisations, the clarity and accountability of their operations and privacy concerns. These factors shape not only how much people give, but also how giving is practised and governed across the sector.

She Gives asked women what they see as the biggest barriers to giving. Women from the Network survey

reported the main barriers to giving more were prioritising their financial security (85%), that they give in other ways (76%), feeling overwhelmed by requests (66%), or they don't have time to figure out where to give (58%) (Figure 9).

Women from the National Group reported the main barriers to giving as prioritising their financial security (73%), feeling overwhelmed by requests (58%) or they don't understand how charities use donations (44%) (Figure 9).



### Network Group

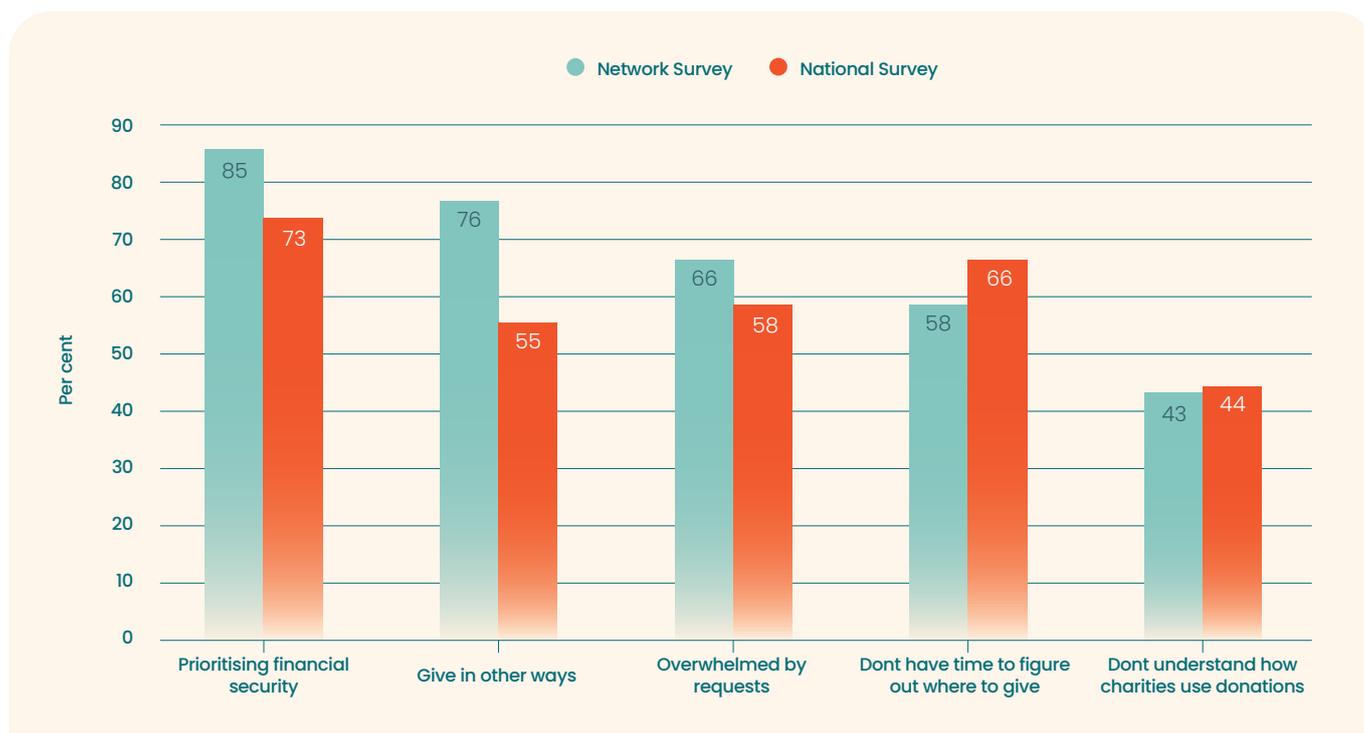
Women in or connected to the She Gives network.



### National Group

A broad sample of women who give.

Figure 9: Main barriers to giving – Network and National surveys



As a comparison, *Giving Australia 2016* found that respondents primarily cited financial constraints (56%), a preference to volunteer (28%), concerns that money would not reach those in need (32%) and high administrative costs (33%) as barriers.<sup>61</sup> Women's preference for contributing through non-monetary means, including volunteering, was substantially higher across both survey groups (76% in Network Group and 55% in National Group) than reported in previous surveys (*Giving Australia 2016*: 28%).

Consistent with the survey data, Roundtable discussions revealed a mix of structural, cultural and other factors as barriers to women's giving (see Table 7).

Table 7: What are the barriers to women’s giving? – Roundtable themes

Theme	Description
<b>Cultural norms and narratives</b>	Australian giving is shaped by broader cultural narratives around tall poppy syndrome, the definition of ‘philanthropy’ and suspicion regarding wealth and elitism that create visibility, inclusion and identity barriers.
<b>Gendered norms and structural constraints</b>	Barriers women face in giving reflect structural and gendered barriers women face more broadly, including limited financial literacy, constrained confidence, systemic inequities, time poverty and financial insecurity. At the same time, emerging enablers – such as visible role models, collective action and inclusive spaces – offer pathways to greater engagement and empowerment.
<b>Lack of representation and visible pathways</b>	Lack of visibility and culturally appropriate pathways restrict access for CALD, First Nations and other marginalised groups.
<b>Overwhelm and confidence</b>	Overwhelm by requests, fear of risk, and lack of connection to causes inhibit women’s confidence to give.
<b>Focus on future financial security</b>	Financial insecurity and cost-of-living pressures drive women to prioritise saving and family security, while misconceptions about wealth limit everyday giving.



She Gives Research Roundtable Canberra

## Cultural contexts constrain giving in Australia

Giving in Australia is constrained by broader cultural narratives surrounding the concept of philanthropy.

*We need to normalise giving as part of our culture.*

– Roundtable participant

*“I’d really like to see the culture of giving deepen in Australia. As an American, I have a very different sense of giving and it shocked me how less visible it was here.”*

– Collective story participant

### Tall poppy syndrome and cultural humility

Individual Stories of Giving revealed an interplay between tall poppy syndrome and cultural humility, highlighting the cultural tendency to silence or criticise people who display ambition and wealth. Tall poppy syndrome appears to be particularly salient for women: in a 2023 survey of 4,710 women, 87% said they had been a victim at some point in their career.<sup>62</sup>

Social ideals concerning humility encourages women to frame their giving in relational, modest and community-focused ways. Together, these forces can make women less likely to emphasise individual recognition and more likely to foreground time, expertise and collective contributions. Such norms reflect a broader political context in which women’s authority and visibility are often monitored in ways that are different from men’s.

*“Women... don’t talk about philanthropy. They’re quiet and humble, which is absolutely beautiful, but... this inhibits the growth of giving in Australia because if we don’t celebrate it, people sit back and say, ‘Oh, well, I can’t ever do anything like that.’”*

– Individual story participant

### Association with wealth, ego and elitism

Additionally, participants felt philanthropy is viewed with suspicion and associated with wealth, ego and elitism, rather than care and generosity. Many women felt this shaping of giving was linked to tall poppy syndrome, which reinforced a reluctance to openly celebrate giving, many drawing a comparison to the US (who are much more overt givers). Many reported that the word ‘philanthropy’ feels alienating and negative, reinforcing an ideology that giving is only for the wealthiest and modest contributions are insignificant.

*Class as a barrier – who gets to see themselves as a philanthropist?*

– Roundtable participant

*Perception...whether they think they’re worthy enough or whether they think someone in a higher position could do it better.*

– Roundtable participant

*Philanthropy the word itself... conjures up finance and great wealth. It’s nothing about money.*

– Roundtable participant

*Need to change the name philanthropy – too much shame attached to the word - damaged by the idea of ball gowns and champagne.*

– Roundtable participant

*The perception in Australia is that philanthropy requires large donations. Small giving is undervalued.*

– Roundtable participant

*Some of our female clients have this idea that they need to be super rich to be able to participate in philanthropy. They don’t know how much is enough money to donate. We had a client worth over \$10million, and she believed she didn’t have enough money to make an impact.*

– Roundtable participant

## Narrow definition of giving

Crucially, women, already less visible in dominant narratives of giving, find that their diverse and nuanced practices (such as volunteering and sharing knowledge) are under-recognised and under-valued within mainstream philanthropic ideals. More broadly, women's giving challenges the cultural assumptions that underpin philanthropy. Participants emphasised a deliberate shift towards inclusive, everyday forms of giving rooted in community and collective responsibility.

*The language of philanthropy is a cultural barrier – many don't call it that, they just see it as giving.*

*– Roundtable participant*

*Some people think we should change the word philanthropy. But I think we need to rebrand it. Giving should...be a thing we all do together, enjoy together, get competitive over (in a healthy way).*

*– Roundtable participant*

## Gendered norms and structural constraints

Patterns in Roundtable discussions suggest that the barriers women face in giving reflect the same structural and cultural inequities women encounter across society. Financial inequality, gender bias and differences in income and wealth shape women's capacity, confidence and visibility as givers. Yet despite these barriers, women continue to lead through their generosity and influence.

*All foundations named after men – 10 largest foundations looked after at Perpetual, 5 were started by women but all 10 are named after men*

*– Roundtable participant*

*Historically, men control the purse and power. We've got to shift this towards more women.*

*– Roundtable participant*

*Need to empower women in financial literacy and own it/step into it with authority.*

*– Roundtable participant*

*"There are quite a few barriers. However, I don't think these are necessarily sector specific barriers, as much as all the usual forms of sexism and misogyny that exist are also in this sector. I think women can find it harder to be taken seriously when they approach organisations. When people look at families who have the resources to be substantial donors, there's still a tendency to assume that if there's a man in the family, he's the principal decision maker."* – the Hon. Julia Gillard AC, 27th Prime Minister of Australia

*She Gives Story of Giving*



## Financial power, authority and literacy

Women are generally granted less access to finances, have fewer opportunities to build financial knowledge, and receive less recognition of their power and success compared to men. Participants particularly called out financial literacy as a key barrier for women. The Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey estimates indicate that just over half of all adult Australians (55%) are financially literate, but there is a significant and substantial gender gap when disaggregating by sex. While approximately two-thirds of men (63%) are financially literate, fewer than half of women (48%) meet the same threshold.<sup>63</sup> Financial literacy and professional advice can be powerful tools to grow giving but women indicated challenges they face when engaging with professional advisers.

*Women sometimes don't have the decision making over finances in the house.*

– Roundtable participant

*Women are generally underestimated in their willingness to give, or they're not seen as being in control of their finances or giving decisions.*

– Roundtable participant

*“Financial literacy is the foundation of economic participation. We see First Nations people with incredible jobs and earning more money than ever before, and yet they still aren't thriving. Essentially, it's because they're missing that key component of how money works - how it can work for them and how to set healthy boundaries. Financial literacy is a huge passion of mine and its one of the reasons I sat on the board of the First Nations Foundation.”*

– Individual story participant

*Financial literacy is a barrier. In the past, many women never had to make these decisions in their overall finances.*

– Roundtable participant

## Caregiving commitments and time poverty

The unequal distribution of labour and responsibilities commonly placed upon women frequently creates 'time poverty' and can stifle their capacity to give. Roundtable discussions were centred around women being time poor, often due to caregiving commitments, including raising children, caring for relatives and managing households – all alongside their paid work. These pressures mirror much broader gendered expectations and socialisation where women disproportionately bear unpaid and relational work, leaving less time for other activities including engaging with giving. Time poverty was experienced viscerally, with one participant expressing the 'mental load' of such labour and its corresponding cognitive and emotional burden.

*Time is a barrier. It differs depending on your phase of life. When you've got young children, less time and resources to give. I've seen from the outside in, other barriers in terms of control of finances, people who aren't able to even if they want to which reflects broader issues around family money management*

– Roundtable participant

*I don't feel like I have capacity given my care-giving duties and the sheer mental load of that.*

– Roundtable participant

*Women are time poor, they already make so many decisions, giving is another one.*

– Roundtable participant

*Women are expected to give of ourselves, not to question, to accept that as the norm. And sometimes that makes me want to push back. In challenging the establishment. Like why don't the men give?*

– Roundtable participant

## Lack of representation and visible pathways

Women also reflected on the importance of seeing themselves represented within the philanthropic landscape. Many CALD and First Nations women described a longing for role models, networks and stories that reflect their own experiences, values and contributions as women who give in Australia. Without visibility, feelings of disconnection and exclusion grow; and diverse approaches to giving remain under-recognised.

*You can't be what you can't see.*

– Roundtable participant

*Craving representation - struggled to find people from the same background.*

– Roundtable participant

*Diversity. I don't see enough people of my colour and my background giving or even talking about it.*

– Roundtable participant

*As new Australians, we're not connected as a cohort. Need to understand the landscape. Role modelling isn't there. Need people that look like us to show the pathways.*

– Roundtable participant

*I'm often on the panel, I'm often at the front of the room being clearly identified as someone who's supporting this work. And so few people are interested in engaging me. And I wonder if that's because I'm not perceived as someone who is of their class. And I think that's a real problem. And I think that's one of the problems with the word philanthropy, that it does give off this impression that you have to be this high net worth individual or from a very upper-class cultural environment. And if you're not, then you are a recipient.*

– Roundtable participant



Sarah Langley, Melissa Smith, Shona Reid, Melanie Cooper AM, Rebecca Cooper-Webster – She Gives Research Roundtable Adelaide



Melissa Smith, Nayomi Kannangara, Kerry Gardner AM, Cathy Scalzo, Christine Christian AO – She Gives Research Roundtable Cranland Melbourne

## Overwhelm and confidence

Some women expressed discomfort with unsolicited requests for donations. These unsolicited requests reflect a preference for more intentional, quiet or relational giving. This tension shows how some philanthropic practices, which are often transactional or high-profile, can conflict with the ways women prefer to engage, reinforcing distrust and disengagement.

*Women are worried if they are visible in their giving, they will be bombarded by requests.*

– Roundtable participant

Relatedly, many women also described overwhelm in deciding where to give, reflecting the sheer number of charities and causes. This decision overload can amplify feelings of uncertainty and self-doubt, directly intersecting with confidence in their giving. Even women who generally feel capable may hesitate or postpone giving when they cannot easily assess the impact or alignment of their contributions.

*Even amongst UHNWI [Ultra High Net Wealth Individuals] there is a fear of doing the wrong thing, giving to the wrong thing.*

– Roundtable participant

Some women expressed concerns about giving to the wrong cause. Lacking confidence in their choices, and ability to give effectively, also contributed to some hesitation.

*An 'I'm powerless to affect change' mentality.*

– Roundtable participant

*Risk appetite, and a fear of failure.*

– Roundtable participant

*One of the barriers to philanthropy is that people get to the point of I want to give but they always start out big and want to do it in a grand way and then if they can't solve it or it becomes too much, they give up.*

– Roundtable participant

Women also noted that many fundraising campaigns do not 'speak' to them, often failing to reflect their values, priorities or ways of giving, which further reinforces disengagement. This disconnect is important because women tend to give in relational, connected ways, caring deeply about the impact and positive change their contributions make. When campaigns clearly communicate how giving achieves meaningful outcomes, women may be more likely to overcome hesitation and engage confidently.

*My sons go to an all-boys school and all of the fundraising is targeted at men. I don't want my name on a brick, I want to give money to the single Mum who can't send her son to school. I feel like a barrier is that the fundraising campaigns are not targeted at me, don't speak to me.*

– Roundtable participant

*We need to get better at providing the evidence, the impact being tangible, to bring people in.*

– Roundtable participant

## Focus on future financial security

Women's giving is often shaped by a focus on future security, for themselves but more so for their loved ones. Many described feeling a need to protect and provide for family, prioritising saving and building intergenerational wealth before committing resources to charitable causes. This is influenced not just by material considerations, but by a sense of responsibility and foresight, often considering the 'what if' when deciding to give and preparing for potential uncertainty.

*I do think a bad barrier is that there is a lot of financial fear around it now and people are scared about financial stability and housing.*

– Roundtable participant

*Giving money seems like a not sensible thing to do. A lot of fear about financial insecurity in women.*

– Roundtable participant

*I find women are reluctant to give because of the 'what if' thinking - the disaster planning for the worst. I need to really secure my own finances and for every bad scenario to eventuate.*

– Roundtable participant

*I want my money to go to my kids, I feel they need it in this economy.*

– Roundtable participant

### KEY INSIGHTS

- ☑ Across both groups, financial security and feeling overwhelmed by the number of requests featured among top barriers to giving.
- ☑ Giving is constrained by broader cultural narratives:
  - ◇ Tall poppy norms limit discussion of giving, creating a visibility barrier.
  - ◇ Narrow definitions of philanthropy limit who counts as a 'legitimate giver', creating an identity barrier.
  - ◇ Suspicion around wealth and elitism makes giving feel inaccessible, creating an inclusion barrier.
- ☑ The barriers women face in giving reflect the same structural and cultural inequities women encounter across society, including financial literacy and caregiving commitments.
- ☑ Cultural and structural barriers create a lack of representation and access, particularly for CALD and First Nations women.
- ☑ How charities engage with women donors is a barrier because they feel overwhelmed by the number of requests, information can be opaque and campaigns don't speak to their values.

## 4.6 Women’s ambitions for giving

Asking women about their ambitions for giving reveals where appetite for growth exists and the likelihood for action. It challenges gender norms and social expectations by inviting women to talk more openly about their giving and offers a glimpse of what philanthropy in Australia could look like if women’s giving was better supported.

### Women want to give more

Most women in the Network Group (83%) and National Group (64%) said they want to give more. Many women in the Network Group (58%) and National Group (27%) also reported they will increase their giving within the next financial year (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Future giving – Network and National surveys



## Women want an expanded concept of giving recognised and legitimised

The way we think about giving needs to expand to recognise the different ways women give and the breadth of their contributions. Women felt giving should be open to everyone and understood as including gifts of time, skills and knowledge. There was also a desire for all financial giving to be seen as valid, regardless of the size of the contribution.

*“My ambition is for anyone and everyone to know they can give – whether it’s time, expertise, or whatever amount of money they can afford.”*

– Individual story participant

*“I want us to democratise and celebrate all forms of giving because there are so many people who give in Australia with very limited means.”*

– Individual story participant

*“Right now, we have so many young people who are passionate about social change... we need to make sure there are always opportunities to practice giving, so there’s never a question around whether you should give. That’s what I want to see – giving celebrated in all its forms, whether it’s time, talent, testimony or treasure.”*

– Collective story participant

*I love the idea of micro-giving – like the five-dollar story. There’s huge potential in that because it can engage all age groups and feels more accessible for people.*

– Roundtable participant

For many women, philanthropy is defined less by money and more by varied efforts to contribute to change and social justice. These under-recognised forms of giving remain under-reported and under-explored, meaning many women’s contributions are invisible, in both research and practice. In-kind giving was highlighted as especially important in rural, regional and remote areas, where access to resources may be limited.

*Giving isn’t just about money—it’s also time, energy, emotional labour, and care. Women give in so many invisible ways.*

– Roundtable participant

*Rural families would donate a beast that if they were sending in a whole lot of cattle to be sold, it was one way that they didn’t have to pay cash. They could put one beast would go towards a community or to the school or to a charity that they wanted and therefore there’s no DGR, nothing.*

– Roundtable participant

Participants of the Roundtables and Stories stated that recognising and acknowledging volunteering as valid and legitimate forms of giving would foster a more inclusive and accessible model of philanthropy:

*I’ve long felt that volunteering time should be tax deductible – there should be a sliding scale of getting a tax deduction depending on your involvement with charities. There is huge value in people’s time and contribution.*

– Roundtable participant

Recognising these various forms of giving legitimises and makes more accessible a variety of pathways for more women to engage in giving and now into the future.



Alicia Curtis, Jahna Cedar OAM, Kristen Stevenson, Melissa Smith, Annie Fogarty AM – She Gives Research Roundtable Perth

## Women want giving to be embedded into national culture

Women want giving to be more visible, spoken about and embedded in Australia's culture now, and for future generations. Many women spoke of educating the next generation, facilitating wealth transfer and normalising giving among families. These women linked philanthropy to intergenerational care and continuity, and their giving as an enduring legacy that will shape future social and community landscapes through familial and cultural norms.

*We need to keep the younger generations engaged, to get involved in what they're passionate about.*

– Roundtable participant

*In terms of opportunities, we hear about the intergenerational wealth transfer, estates managed by women – so there will be new women capable of making gifts who may not have been in that space before – storytelling and networks – those women can be encouraged to give in other ways.*

– Roundtable participant

*“Right now, we have so many young people who are passionate about social change. My greatest optimism is watching them fundraise and how much they want to make a difference. I believe our ability to nurture that passion, is our biggest opportunity.”*

– Collective story participant

*“We see our future as a larger giving circle with multiple generations at different funding levels bringing mothers and daughters, sisters, grandmothers, nieces and friends together through giving.”*

– Collective story participant

*“In terms of ambitions for giving in Australia, I would like ‘giving’ to become as natural as sport, to the fabric of who we are as a country.”*

– Individual story participant

## Women want giving to be strategic, collaborative and have long-term impact

There is a growing call for philanthropy to become more strategic, collaborative and focused on long-term change. There is also a growing understanding of the potential to use capital more broadly for impact and many women advocated for moving beyond short-term charity towards longer-term sustainability. This involves investing in organisational capacity, infrastructure, people and operational needs so that not-for-profits and social enterprises can thrive. This will require giving to be more trust-based, collaborative, long-term, focused on systems change; and open and flexible in its approach both amongst donors and charitable organisations. At its core, this strategic mindset aligns personal values with collective purpose and seeks to strengthen systems and shared priorities.

*“Impact investing makes sense for foundations and philanthropists... we can use all our resources – our time, our connections, our donations and our investments – to create social change.”*

– Individual stories

*“I’m keen for us to organise ourselves around more strategic philanthropy and to inspire more people to consider scaling their giving now... prevention is better than cure.”*

– Collective stories

*“A big motivator for us is ‘what can we do right now?’ Where can we inject resources into projects on the ground that are catalytic and invest in the people who are doing the advocacy work?”*

– Collective stories

## Women want a diversity of voices and experiences in the room

Many women advocated for making giving networks more diverse and inclusive of CALD women, rural, regional and remote women, and young women. One participant noted that networking events often create environments that feel intimidating or exclusionary for marginalised women. Expanding the composition and culture of giving networks can diversify participation and enrich collective understanding of what giving means and looks like – ensuring that women with lived experience of marginalisation are both included and have the opportunity to shape the future of philanthropy in Australia.

A more intentional, systemic approach to philanthropy must move beyond a singular, universal notion of ‘women’ to recognise that gender is always experienced in relation to other social identities, such as race, class, culture, disability, age and geography. Without this, women’s giving initiatives risk reproducing the very inequalities they seek to challenge.

*There’s so many women in business groups who are doing networking events within council nationally, within state, but you see very white centric. And I think for someone who would be from a migrant group, it’s intimidating something to break through that barrier to expand the network outside of our own circle, I guess.*

– Roundtable participant

*Going to regional areas – involving all ages/stages of women. How do we create the infrastructure that ensures that that happens?*

– Roundtable participant

*Bringing young women into the conversation in the organisations and Foundations.*

– Roundtable participant

*“I want to see giving become more intersectional. When we view diversity in this country, it’s often viewed through the prism of gender... I want to expand that because the intersections are there - gender, ability, class and so many more things. At the heart of intersectionality is centring the voice and experience of the most marginalised. And I want to see this in philanthropy too.”*

– Individual story participant

*“I’d love to see the rise of more First Nations people working in philanthropy so they can experience the joy of giving from a multifaceted point of view; from a funder point of view, a personal point of view, but also through the time and generosity that we often give anyway, unpaid.”*

– Individual story participant



Anna Ainsworth, Kirsha Kaechele and guest – She Gives Research Roundtable Hobart

## Women want to give collectively

Women hope for a future where giving is deeply relational, grounded in connection, care and collective strength. Collective models, such as giving circles, matched giving, or grassroots trust-based approaches, were described as vehicles for inspiration, impact and inclusivity. These principles can be read as more circular – providing both practical and emotional support, helping women to feel more confident and connected in their giving, and in turn, inspiring other women.

*Collective giving, connectedness. That’s what women want. There is also a safety in numbers in that – you know, others are doing it.*

– Roundtable participant

*Women have always been good collaborators.*

– Roundtable participant

*Networking and relationships are vitally important to grow giving.*

– Roundtable participant

*“It’s about trusting the organisation or person that you’re giving to and the relationship you build around that over time.”*

– Individual story participant

In this sense, women’s philanthropy embodies politics of care: it is about making meaningful contributions that ripple outward, connecting individual acts of generosity to broader visions of justice and transformation.



She Gives, Philanthropy Together and Groundswell Event Sydney



She Gives Research Launch, Government House, Canberra

## Women want to have greater knowledge, confidence and storytelling

For many women, developing knowledge and confidence is essential to seeing themselves as givers. Financial literacy, often shaped by a social context where financial knowledge is traditionally associated with men, was identified as a facilitator to change, with some participants emphasising the importance of conversations, education and early engagement to overcome knowledge gaps. Some participants noted that financial advisors or professional advice can be influential and helpful in shaping future giving practices. Women saw this as an under-valued resource in the giving landscape; and that financial advisors can be influential in embedding philanthropy into wealth planning, encouraging clients to consider giving as part of their financial futures.

*Good, informed advice, encouraging connection, education, conversation starts within schools.*

– Roundtable participant

*Future advisors matter – the transition of funds will mean that a whole lot of women will give, but there are complexities to that giving – money will be tied up in businesses etc so need to think about how we advise women to give.*

– Roundtable participant

*Need more female financial advisors to encourage giving.*

– Roundtable participant

For many women, a key driver of giving was attributed to access to role models and mentorship. Sharing diverse stories and experiences, amplifying women's experiences and making giving more visible were described as critical for normalising both small- and large-scale philanthropy. These practices build confidence and capability and foster connection. Women support other women, inspire participation and create ripple effects that strengthen networks and collective impact.

*Mentorship – I feel the collectives can be overwhelming, mentorship is needed to grow confidence, in a gentler way then diving right into a collective. It's a new thing, for many women, so we need to build confidence.*

– Roundtable participant

*We need more diverse role models – women need to see it, to be it.*

– Roundtable participant

*They haven't realised that how telling their story can have a ripple effect.*

– Roundtable participant

Participants felt that when women openly share their giving practices, this normalises giving and may spark discussions or even inspire others to give.

*Women are not as overt in their giving... we need to fine-tune the conversation around women's philanthropy by normalising it.*

*– Roundtable participant*

*We need to create more role models to empower women.*

*– Roundtable participant*

At the same time, women exercise choice and autonomy in how they position their giving. Some prefer anonymity, others consciously emphasise collective over individual impact, and many move between visibility and invisibility depending on context.

*I feel reluctant to be a giver when it is all about me - about how amazing we - the givers - are. That is a barrier. I want to be anonymous, and it want it to be about the causes.*

*– Roundtable participant*

Storytelling and knowledge sharing function as both practical tools and relational habits, all enabling women to give safely, with confidence, and in ways that are meaningful to them and their communities.

## KEY INSIGHTS

- ☑ The majority of women say they want to give more.
- ☑ The majority of women in the Network Group and over 25% women in the National Group say they will increase their giving in the next financial year.
- ☑ Women want philanthropy to recognise the different ways women give through talent, time and treasure, and the breadth of their contributions.
- ☑ Women want giving to be embedded into the national culture now and for future generations.
- ☑ Women want philanthropy to be strategic, collaborative and have long term impact.
- ☑ Women want a greater diversity of voices and experiences in the room to enrich participation and collective understanding of what giving means and looks like.
- ☑ Women want to give collectively to feel more confident and connected in their giving decisions.
- ☑ Women want to have greater knowledge and confidence; financial literacy, role modelling and storytelling were identified as enablers.

# **5.** **RECOMMENDATIONS** TO GROW WOMEN'S GIVING IN AUSTRALIA

# STORIES OF GIVING

100 STORIES OF GIVING  
LEAH BENNETT

I want to show people who are in a position to give, how to **give well** to First Nations organisations; how to walk alongside us on the journey and be our allies.



STORIES OF GIVING  
LIBBY PRELL

I want to bring to life my belief in Alice Springs, as an **extraordinary intercultural community** in the heart of Australia.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
LIZ ABRAHAMS

I have stage four breast cancer. It's really honed my understanding that I want to **leave a legacy** that's about the impact I've had on other people.



STORIES OF GIVING  
LOUISE WALSH

**Doing things with purpose** is what drives me. I don't see my personal life and professional career as separate; it's all interwoven and always will be.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
LYN BEAZLEY

Giving doesn't always have to mean a large amount of money. If you have lots, give lots, but you can give a small amount and leverage it. I call it the dollar on a string. You put it out there and you get a matching dollar and you just **keep building** like that.



COLLECTIVE GIVING  
MANNIFERA

By funding collectively we can do so much more than we could as individuals. It's exciting to be part of an emerging democracy sector in Australia, and our civil society partners tell us that it means a lot to know there's a community of funders backing them.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
SARAH LANGLEY

From the people inside the organisations doing the work to the people who are benefiting. **Connecting with people** is the best part of giving.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
MAREE SIDNEY

I believe people are looking to **be more involved** in the issues they're giving to. Whether that shows up as volunteering, joining a board or fundraising - giving in community is both powerful and accessible.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
MARGIE SEALE

I'm driven by the need to support creative people in Australia who have such a tough time ... They entertain us, delight us, challenge us, educate us, transport us, and they add a **whole dimension** to our lives which we couldn't do without.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
MARYAM ZAHID

When women are **educated and empowered** and given confidence through the right knowledge and the right support, they start to lead in their families as well.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
MAVERICK COLLECTIVE

A lot of our work is around nurturing a **generation of donors** who understand what it means to drive equity and justice, not only in what they fund, but in how they fund.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
MELANIE COOPER

We need to create more role models to **empower women**.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
MELBOURNE WOMEN'S FOUNDATION

I want to see women's giving and philanthropy grow, and I will continue to do what I can to **influence more** Australian women to give.



STORIES OF GIVING  
MELISSA DOYLE AM

I'm not interested in being a token name on a list; I'm a **'boots in'** kind of person



STORIES OF GIVING  
DR WENDY SCAIFE

My rock-solid knowledge that generosity brings change. It's one of those ancient, enduring facts of life: **Generosity brings change.**



# RECOMMENDATIONS TO GROW WOMEN'S GIVING IN AUSTRALIA

**Based on our experiences from the campaign and the insights presented in this report, this section sets out recommendations to grow women's giving in Australia and offers key actions to take forward. These actions recognise both the significant work still required to unlock women's giving at scale and practical ways forward.**

We also take this opportunity to note that while this research provides significant insights into the character of women's giving and a benchmark against which to measure its future growth, the research is not exhaustive and there is much that we still want and need to know. For example, more research is needed to better understand the size and scale of women's giving to specific areas and explore

nuance behind the broad ACNC sub-groups. More research is needed to explore diverse perspectives of First Nations women, CALD women and women from rural, regional and remote communities. And more research is needed to truly quantify the scale of women's giving within a more holistic recognition of the diversity and impact of women's giving beyond tax-deductible donation claims.

## 5.1 Recognise women's crucial role in giving

**Women across this country are giving in myriad ways and having impact. When women can see other women giving, they are more likely to engage, contribute and lead. Normalising conversations about women's influence and leadership, and formally recognising that leadership, helps counter the tall poppy effect ingrained in Australian culture and build new social norms where generosity is celebrated as a shared force for good.**

Philanthropy is often perceived and experienced as insular and exclusive, associated only with high wealth or social status. Perceptions create barriers for women who want to give, or give more, but are unsure if their giving will have an impact. Expanding the conversation around giving, including celebrating giving at any scale and recognising women's motivations, values and preferred methods of giving (eg collective giving) could reduce overwhelm, build confidence and enable broader participation. Media will play a critical role in shaping the narrative by telling more diverse, representative and relatable stories of giving.

There is also a clear opportunity to recognise and celebrate cultural differences and diverse experiences as a pathway to grow and better support giving among First Nations, CALD and rural, regional and remote women. Together we must work to support women to express their culture and values through giving in ways that strengthen both their agency and connection to giving.



Melissa Smith, Carol Schwartz AO, Tania Austin, Tanya Hosch AM – She Gives Melbourne Launch



She Gives Research Launch, Government House, Canberra

Women consistently told us giving is often learned, practised and reinforced within families. This presents a powerful opportunity to build on family-centred motivations and extend them beyond the household. By fostering open, intergenerational conversations about giving, we can strengthen confidence, encourage agency and connect family values to broader community impact.

Recognition and visibility shapes cultural norms. Each year, the Governor-General of Australia recognises the outstanding service and contributions of Australians whose work strengthens Australian society more broadly – and including contributions to philanthropy, volunteering and community leadership. In 2026, 680 Australians were recognised in the Order of Australia Honours List. Only 27 per cent of all recipients were women. Among recipients from CALD backgrounds, only 22 per cent were women.<sup>84</sup> The opportunity ahead is to build on what She Gives has already demonstrated: embedding recognition, celebration and visibility more deliberately across communities to strengthen participation, grow women's giving and accelerate social impact at scale. While there are many other measures of recognition we could look to (eg at state and community levels), recognising women's contributions at the highest levels of public honour is both symbolic and practical. It signals what we value as a society and it can be counted, providing a measurable marker to track progress.

She Gives has demonstrated that recognising and celebrating women's giving – in all its forms – can drive meaningful change. By supporting women to talk about their giving, sharing stories that reflect the diversity of women's generosity in Australia and making the invisible visible, She Gives has enabled thousands of women to see themselves represented in philanthropy, often for the first time. Bringing women into shared spaces, amplifying lived experience and creating space for connection has increased women's confidence and created momentum that now extends well beyond the campaign itself.

## Actions

### Parity in representation and diversity of stories

- 1.1 Encourage parity in media coverage of philanthropy representing women's leadership and stories of giving alongside men.
- 1.2 Introduce an independent annual count of female-led stories of giving amongst mainstream media to support accountability and track progress.
- 1.3 Invest in media training for women at different stages of giving to build confidence and public leadership.
- 1.4 Support role-modelling and storytelling by sector bodies and charities to strive towards parity and diversity so women can see themselves represented in stories of giving.

### Parity in formal public recognition of women's giving

- 1.5 Seek gender parity and increased diversity in national honours (both in number and level of award) by increasing the number of nominations recognising women's contributions to philanthropy, volunteering and community leadership.
- 1.6 Fund a resource to champion and support the nomination of more women who represent diverse contributions across cultures, regions, causes and life stages.
- 1.7 Encourage regular pulse checks of national honours to track progress toward gender parity and increased diversity recognising women's contributions to philanthropy, volunteering and community leadership.



She Gives Brisbane Launch

## 5.2 Grow the capacity of the ecosystem to enable women's giving at scale

**A more accessible, transparent, and values-aligned philanthropic ecosystem can empower women with the knowledge and confidence to give, give more and give more impactfully. Women have told us they want to give more; and are hungry for more knowledge, confidence and connection to do so. In addition to building the capacity of women, we need to grow the capacity of the ecosystem to enable women's giving at scale.**

The sector could work more effectively and collaboratively to build the capacity of women, intermediaries, and other support systems and structures. This includes making existing resources easier to find, more engaging and more closely aligned with women's motivations, confidence and desire for impact, particularly for women who are new to philanthropy. It also includes making resources more broadly accessible. As we heard, resources and guidance being predominantly in English, can make it difficult for women for whom English is a second language to access and engage with giving. It could also include deeper collaboration between funders, intermediaries, professional advisers and community organisations, as well as learning from global models that have successfully engaged women at scale. There is also scope to develop new models and capabilities that attract, support and equip more women to lead change, ensuring pathways resonate with women from diverse backgrounds and at different stages of their giving journey.

Who gets invited into rooms, given a voice and supported to build their capability matters. Sector leaders (eg peak bodies, intermediaries, community foundations, private foundations and major

institutions) are called on to ensure their leadership and decision-making structures reflect the diversity of women in Australia. This requires representation of women at every level of participation, from boards and executive roles to convenings and public platforms. Specifically, the sector must work to increase representation of First Nations and CALD women, not rely on single perspectives, and invest in developing women's skills, experience, confidence and networks across all areas of giving including capital investment, leadership and decision-making. This is an opportunity to build on and recognise the principles of reciprocity, care, resource sharing and collective responsibility that have been part of Australia's history from the beginning.

Women are motivated by making a difference, yet many women surveyed have limited exposure to structured vehicles. There is an opportunity to introduce more women to structured giving to help them feel more strategic, organised and impactful in their giving. Communications should reinforce that structured giving is accessible and not limited to high-net-worth donors.

Women noted that financial advisors or professional advice can be influential and helpful in shaping future giving practices by embedding philanthropy into wealth planning. However, this was framed as an under-valued resource in the giving landscape, with many women noting they aren't currently influenced by professional advisers. Research predicts that between \$7 billion to \$12 billion in extra donations to charity could be unlocked by 2030 if Australians had access to greater support on charitable giving from financial advisers, accountants, lawyers and fundraisers. Equipping them with the right tools, and removing barriers, could lift donations by almost 50 per cent compared to today's level.<sup>65</sup>

Women's experiences in particular can be hampered by sexism and the under-representation of women in financial services, which in turn affects giving.<sup>66</sup> Only 22 per cent of financial advisers in Australia are women.<sup>67</sup> Women need advisers who can confidently raise conversations about giving, connect them to high-quality, accessible resources and guide decision-making in ways that normalise and support generosity in ways women have told us they like to give. This is particularly significant in the context of the \$5.4 trillion intergenerational wealth transfer underway.

Similarly, charities need to communicate and engage with women more effectively and transparently, focusing on fostering a connection to the cause, demonstrating impact and building a relationship based on trust for the long term.

By working collaboratively with our sector partners, She Gives demonstrated how to mobilise women by engaging with them in authentic, values-aligned ways and using language, formats and communication channels that reflect women's diverse experiences, motivations, backgrounds and stages of giving. We know women want to give more and want more support. It is up to the sector, professional advisers and charities to ensure that they are engaging with women in meaningful ways to enable women's giving at scale.

The sector has an opportunity to deepen collaboration between networks and across organisations, doubling down on progress made during the She Gives campaign. Through shared learning, coordinated referrals and aligned engagement pathways, we can build capacity, maximise reach and collective impact across the philanthropic ecosystem. However, this type of cultural and systemic change requires ongoing, considered and concerted investment.

## Actions

### Invest in infrastructure and capacity building to support women's giving at scale

- 2.1 Philanthropy to commit sustained funding to develop infrastructure that supports, elevates and empowers women's giving over the long term.
- 2.2 Organisations (eg charities, intermediaries and sector bodies) to strengthen their capacity to engage women more effectively (eg make resources about giving more accessible in both language and representation, and ensure communications support women's experiences and a more expansive framing of philanthropy).
- 2.3 This includes dedicating capacity within relevant organisations to champion women's giving across the ecosystem.

### Increase representation and diversity of women across the sector

- 2.4 Increase levels of genuine and authentic representation for First Nations women and CALD women in peak bodies, intermediaries and philanthropic organisations.
- 2.5 Commit to including multiple, diverse perspectives on boards, at events and in forums (ie not rely on 'one voice').
- 2.6 Develop the capacity of the sector and provide opportunities to ensure greater diversity of women's leadership.

### Build advisory capability to better support women's giving

- 2.7 Support adviser membership organisations to embed practical information and training on how to effectively support women with their giving within adviser professional development.
- 2.8 Develop tailored capability training for advisory professionals (all professions, emerging and established, men and women) to better support women with their giving.



She Gives Research Roundtable Alice Springs

## 5.3 Build more collaboration around women's giving to mobilise impact

**Building more collaboration around women's giving is an important growth strategy. By nurturing networks and platforms that connect women and enable them to mobilise around specific interests, for example women's health, family and domestic violence, climate or gender equity, we can translate collective momentum into accelerated social impact. With sustained infrastructure, funding and capability to convene more effectively, the sector can turn momentum and shared purpose into more giving, enabling positive social change at the scale women around Australia have told us they are ready to lead.**

Community foundations and collective giving networks played a crucial role in this research. Their contributions – in sharing their networks, contributing stories and as proud advocates for the campaign – significantly enriched the outcomes of this research. Their involvement demonstrates the power of inclusive and collaborative approaches to philanthropy that prioritise collective impact over individual goals.

Women told us they like to give together. Therefore, the opportunity to strengthen networks and structures that bring women together (eg formal giving circles and informal group giving) as accelerators to grow giving is significant. She Gives data shows women embedded in giving networks perceive far greater collective influence and women in networks show far higher intention to give more. Peer environments, role models and community-based giving can be used to build confidence, normalise generosity and convert desire into action. By investing more in convening

and coordination as core infrastructure, the sector can help strengthen women's confidence in giving and unlock growth at this critical moment in time. Charities, peak bodies and community foundations are encouraged to grow and normalise collective giving models by making them more accessible to women. This may mean increasing visibility of existing giving opportunities, providing clearer pathways and tools, or supporting new models of collective giving such as giving circles and community foundations.

She Gives demonstrated the power of collaboration and community and highlighted the joy women experience when they come together in service of something bigger. The momentum generated through She Gives replicated what many women's movements before us have shown. This is how women organise, lead and create progress – by working together.

She Gives built on these fundamentals, providing access, visibility and legitimacy to women's giving, and in doing so demonstrated that women can be mobilised around a collective purpose even when the impact is not tied to a single cause or outcome. In doing so, the campaign proved that women's giving is powerful, scalable and far from fully realised.

## Actions

### Elevate and strengthen collective giving pathways

- 3.1 Increase awareness of collective giving opportunities and tap into existing community groups that sit outside of established giving networks to mobilise engagement more quickly.
- 3.2 Grow investment in and capacity of community foundations, women's funds and Indigenous-led funds across Australia to accelerate local impact at a national scale.

### Mobilise women around shared priorities

- 3.3 Explore opportunities for collaborative campaigns to mobilise women, intermediaries and infrastructure around critical issues (eg women's health and family and domestic violence) to significantly increase both the scale of funding and number of women participating.



Melissa Smith, Larissa Behrendt AO, Camilla Freeman-Topper, Georgina Byron AM, She Gives Sydney Launch

# 6. WHAT'S NEXT FOR SHE GIVES?

# STORIES OF GIVING

100 STORIES OF GIVING  
MICHELLE LIN

I think there's this very traditional idea of what philanthropy is, that it's wealthy people in their fifties, sixties, and seventies who want to give back. The **reality is very different.**



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
MICHELLE STEELE

Throughout my life, giving hasn't just been about funding and dollars but giving through **love and attention** and the gift of time. I've always loved the generosity of giving and how you can show it in so many ways.



STORIES OF GIVING  
MPARNTWE ALICE SPRINGS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

The community foundation was a way to bring the town together and to remind people of the **strength and positivity that was already here.**



COLLECTIVE GIVING  
MYRIAD AUSTRALIA

We want to make it easier for Australian donors to give internationally and to let local leaders abroad **drive the solutions** they need to tackle.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
NAYOMI KANNANGARA

Now is the time for Australia to **stand strong** on our commitment to gender equality.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
NATALIE EGLETON

The motivation behind giving in regional communities is connected to place. It's connected to a **collective desire** to make it the best place possible and create the most opportunities for people.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
PAULA MCLEAN

Empathy is an enabler, and you **take away** with you much, much more than you give.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
PEGGY FLANNERY

Starting Peggy's Place has been my greatest learning experience in giving. It's shown me how something can **grow from a small dream** into something substantial. I hope it will have a significant impact on the lives of many women and children.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
PENNY MAPP

I want my girls to know they can engage with the world and **make a difference.**



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
PIP SMITH & HAYLEY BALLIE

The bottom line is that if you do well in Australia, you have a **duty to give** back.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
POP IN

Personally, I've learned that the satisfaction I've gotten from what we have done **far outweighs** anything I ever did in my corporate career. Because our model is community-led, community-funded and community-supported, the team feels the significant impact they are having.



STORIES OF GIVING  
PRO PURPOSE

We have a saying "Stand & Shine" because a lot of businesses and donors like to keep it private, but if you can **share your impact story boldly but humbly**, that's what inspires others to do the same.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
PRUE PATERAS

Everything in our community is run off volunteers and I think it needs to be **celebrated** more because it often gets missed.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
GINA FAIRFAX AC

It is very important to talk and become involved with like-minded people to **share stories** and experiences to help others realise the benefits of giving.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
RABIA SIDDIQUE

My inspiration and motivation, until I draw my last breath, will be to do my part and add whatever small value I can, to ensure that **work gets done.**





Briefing the Governor-General on the She Gives Research Report, Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, Melissa Smith and Katy Phillips

## WHAT'S NEXT FOR SHE GIVES

**She Gives began as a single-year campaign to celebrate, share and inspire women's giving. It became a movement mobilising women's giving at scale. Together, we have achieved far more than we imagined, thanks to the thousands of women across Australia who stepped forward and became part of this collective effort.**

**Through She Gives, we have met women at every stage of life, in every corner of the country. Women who are already giving. Women who want to give more. Women who are navigating uncertainty, learning as they go and leading change. The future of women's giving we have glimpsed, shaped by women's ambitions, is incredibly exciting.**

There have been many moments that will stay with me. All the stories. The contagious energy. A final interview with The Honourable Dame Quentin Bryce AD CVO, who reminded us that, *"Bringing women together is a very powerful thing."* While I may have felt overwhelmed, humbled and surprised at times by the success of She Gives, many others were not. Women see the experiences and lessons from She Gives as part of a much longer history of women's movements for positive social change. Every woman who has participated in She Gives has become part of that bigger story.

Again, I would like to acknowledge all the women of She Gives, our Advisory Groups, our incredible Partners, and those who supported the team and me through both the inspiring and challenging moments. Thank you.

Thank you for the unwavering support from the Governor-General, Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC who was there from the very beginning.

Thank you to the extraordinary, indefatigable She Gives and Noble Ambition team: Katy Phillips, Nicole Freeman, Britt Melville, Brianna Kerr, Leah Armstrong, Amy Rose, Megan Freshwater, Nicole Byers and Celina Thickers and honorary members, Paula McLean and Tanya Hosch AM; the CSI UWA team led by Professor Leanne Lester; our media advisor, Shape Agency led by Pia Akerman and Amy Price; and our design team at Leading Hand, Brett Osmond and Luke Cleland.



She Gives Brisbane Launch

We have been asked many times, what's next? This is the same question that sparked the initial idea for She Gives in 2022. The answer is simple. We will do what we have always done. We will dream big, ask questions and listen. We will engage with women, the sector, and partners in Australia and globally. We will seek out extraordinary people doing extraordinary things to support our three recommendations:

1. Recognise women's crucial role in giving
2. Grow the capacity of the ecosystem to enable women's giving at scale
3. Build more collaboration around women's giving to mobilise impact

Because, as I have signed off to thousands of women across Australia in these past two years, never has the need been more urgent. Never has there been greater potential. And because ultimately, at the end of the day, we all share the same hope to be able to say that we did the best that we could with the opportunities we were given to leave our country and the world a better place.

**Melissa Smith,  
Founder, She Gives**

# APPENDICES

# STORIES OF GIVING

STORIES OF GIVING  
RACHEL ENGLISH

I've learned to accept the paradox of how **simple and complicated** giving is.



COLLECTIVE GIVING  
RAINBOW GIVING AUSTRALIA

Once you have a **solid commitment** from one organisation or a person in philanthropy, it makes it a lot easier for other people to join in.



COLLECTIVE GIVING  
AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS  
SOCIETY OF WOMEN LEADERS

Having a shared passion for a common cause builds a **strong connection** amongst members and brings diverse perspectives, which makes us more effective with our giving.



COLLECTIVE GIVING  
RESOURCEFULL COLLECTIVE

The issues that confront us in this moment are not singular; they're **collective and connected** and so our responses need to be connected and collective.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
ROBYN LEONARD OAM

If you have a simple idea and follow it through, it can be **transformational**. Even if you're not an expert and the odds feel impossible, persistence makes things possible.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
SAMI GLASTONBURY

The question at the forefront of every decision needs to be, is this going to make someone else's journey better? Is this going to **empower someone's** life?



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
SARAH DAVIES AM

You can't open your front door and expect the kind of **world you want** to live in to be there - you've got to go out and build it.



STORIES OF GIVING  
SHONA REID

Giving shapes a future for our children that is grounded in reciprocity, responsibility and the **privilege of looking after one another**.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
ALEX DIMOS

The reason we created this foundation, was primarily to make sure our kids learn from us that not everything is about yourself. We want them to know that you have to work with the community around you: support it, witness it and **feel the impact**.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
SOLAI VALLIAPPAN

I've learned that you don't have to retire to do this kind of work. I can **grow my giving** whilst my career is in motion.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
LUCY & KRISTIE STEGGLES

For us, in terms of intergenerational philanthropy... It's a balance between **honouring the legacy** and causes that our family has supported, while bringing in new areas to support.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
SHWETA KHAN

I think it's all about a **collective impact**, because if everyone gives a little bit, then there is a lot more available to help those people in need.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
SUSAN GIN

My drive to create **inclusion and belonging** comes from my own migrant journey and the barriers and hurdles I experienced - if I can help clear some of these obstacles for other people, I will.



COLLECTIVE GIVING  
SYDNEY WOMEN'S FUND

Giving isn't just for the ultra-wealthy. It's **for all of us**. And when people give - especially when they give together - the impact is exponential.



100 STORIES OF GIVING  
TANYA HOSCH

To me, it's about being aware of the ongoing responsibility to give and participate in experiences and opportunities to ensure that others benefit, not as recipients of charity, but as **empowered people** who can pass on that generosity when they are in a position to do so.



# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1: Demographic data

This section summarises the demographic profile of participants and highlights how the surveys compare with national benchmarks from the 2021 ABS Census.<sup>68</sup> For readability, figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

**Age Distribution:** The age profile of respondents differed across the two She Gives surveys with the majority of National survey respondents aged 25–34 and the majority of Network survey respondents aged 45–54 (Table 8). Further, 41% of the She Gives Stories of Giving sample was women under the age of 50. 59% over the age of 50.

Table 8: Age distribution of She Gives National and Network Survey participants

	Benchmark: ABS Census 2021 % of Women Across Age Brackets*	She Gives National Survey Participants %	She Gives Network Survey Participants %
<b>18–24</b>	9%	14%	2%
<b>25–34</b>	15%	17%	9%
<b>35–44</b>	14%	16%	20%
<b>45–54</b>	12%	16%	34%
<b>55–64</b>	11%	14%	24%
<b>65–74</b>	10%	12%	9%
<b>75+</b>	9%	11%	2%

**Note:** ABS Census 2021 percentages are calculated as a share of the total female population (all ages). As age brackets begin at 18, total does not sum to 100%.

**Geographic Distribution:** The geographic spread of respondents broadly reflects where Australians live (Table 9).<sup>69</sup> Most participants were based in major cities, with regional and remote areas represented at similar or slightly higher levels than the population average (Table 10).

Table 9: State and territory location of She Gives National and Network Survey participants and Story contributors

Location	Benchmark: ABS Census 2021 % of female population across Australia	She Gives National Survey participants %	She Gives Network Survey participants %	She Gives Story contributor %
<b>ACT</b>	2%	2%	6%	4%
<b>NSW</b>	32%	31%	33%	36%
<b>NT</b>	1%	1%	3%	1%
<b>QLD</b>	20%	21%	12%	10%
<b>SA</b>	7%	7%	5%	3%
<b>TAS</b>	2%	2%	5%	3%
<b>VIC</b>	26%	26%	27%	35%
<b>WA</b>	10%	10%	9%	8%

**Note:** % calculated from sample of 107 Stories of Giving analysed by CSA UWA. .

Table 10: Geographic remoteness of She Gives National and Network Survey participants and Story contributors

Location	Benchmark: ABS Census 2021 % of Total Population in Different Locations (Non Gendered)	She Gives National Survey Participants %	She Gives Network Survey Participants %	She Gives Story contributor %
Major City	72%	64%	80%	83%
Inner Regional	18%	19%	10%	14% (captured as 'Regional')
Outer Regional	8%	16%	7%	
Remote and/or Very Remote	2%	2%	3%	3%

**Note:** % calculated from sample of 107 Stories of Giving analysed by CSA UWA.

### Income Profiles:

The She Gives National Survey captured a broad spread of income levels, including many women in middle- and lower-income brackets:

- Individual income: 75% earned less than \$100,000, 15% earned \$100,000–\$149,000, and 10% earned more than \$150,000.
- Household income: 36% earned less than \$100,000, 59% earned \$100,000–\$249,000, and 6% earned more than \$250,000.

### In contrast, respondents to the She Gives Network Survey reported notably higher incomes:

- Individual income: 27% earned less than \$100,000, 29% earned \$100,000–\$149,000, and 44% earned more than \$150,000.
- Household income: 1% earned less than \$100,000, 35% earned \$100,000–\$249,000, 40% earned \$250,000–\$499,000, and 21% earned more than \$500,000.

### First Nations

In the 2021 ABS Census, 3.8% of the Australian population identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.<sup>70</sup> In comparison, 2% of respondents in both the She Gives Network and She Gives National surveys identified as First Nations. This indicates that First Nations women were slightly under-represented in both samples relative to their share of the population. To address this, we conducted a focus First Nations roundtable and oversampled interviewing First Nations women for individual and collective Stories of Giving (9% of the total story sample).

### Women from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Backgrounds

According to the 2021 ABS Census, 27.6% of Australians were born overseas, and around 22.8% spoke a language other than English at home.<sup>71</sup> In the She Gives surveys:

- National Group: 22% were born overseas and 13% spoke a language other than English at home;
- Network Group: 26% were born overseas and 10% spoke a language other than English at home;

While these measures are not perfect proxies for CALD status, they capture meaningful aspects of cultural and linguistic diversity. The She Gives surveys reflect women born overseas at roughly national levels, though language diversity at home is somewhat under-represented. To better understand and amplify the perspectives of women from diverse backgrounds, She Gives partnered with Women of Colour Australia to convene a targeted focus roundtable. 12% of the total story sample was also from CALD women.

## Appendix 2: Data sources

This research is grounded in a mixed-methods evidence base: the largest mixed-methods study of women’s giving in Australia to date and the second-largest Australian study into giving overall, after *Giving Australia 2016*.

Table 11 outlines each data source, including sample size, data collection period, a brief description of the data collection method and the key questions each source aimed to explore.

Table 11: Summary and description of She Gives data sources

Data source	Sample size	Data collection period	Description of collection method	Questions explored
<b>Literature review</b>	146 pieces	N/A	Building on the review undertaken for the Behind She Gives report, CSI UWA conducted a targeted review of relevant academic and sector literature to better understand the nature and emerging trends in women’s giving. Given the limited volume of Australian research in this area, selected US literature was also examined to provide additional context and comparative insights.	
<b>Secondary data</b>	N/A	N/A	Recent publicly available datasets were analysed to estimate - where possible - the quantum, nature and scope of women’s giving in Australia. These sources included Australian Taxation Office (ATO) data, Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) data, media reporting, peak body publications, and commercial sector reports.	
<b>Campaign launch survey</b>	164	24 July 2024 to 23 March 2025	20 minute survey for early adopters of the campaign.	<input type="checkbox"/> Reasons for giving <input type="checkbox"/> Areas of giving <input type="checkbox"/> What needs to change to grow women’s giving? <input type="checkbox"/> What is the one thing the She Gives campaign should focus on to grow women’s giving?
<b>Network survey</b>	424	28 February 2025 to 22 September 2025	15 minute survey distributed through She Gives and Sector Partner channels.	<input type="checkbox"/> Demographic data <input type="checkbox"/> Culture of giving <input type="checkbox"/> Influence on giving <input type="checkbox"/> Motivations for giving <input type="checkbox"/> Cause areas <input type="checkbox"/> Methods for giving <input type="checkbox"/> Structured giving <input type="checkbox"/> Barriers to giving
<b>National survey</b>	1033	21 July 2025 to 25 July 2025	12 minute survey distributed through a national community panel. Targets were set using 2021 ABS Census data to ensure the sample was representative of Australia’s state and territory populations and key age demographics.	<input type="checkbox"/> Demographic data <input type="checkbox"/> Culture of giving <input type="checkbox"/> Influence on giving <input type="checkbox"/> Motivations for giving <input type="checkbox"/> Cause areas <input type="checkbox"/> Methods for giving <input type="checkbox"/> Barriers to giving

<b>State and Territory Roundtables</b>	11 Roundtables, 523 Participants	28 November 2024 to 17 September 2025	45 minute group interview (5-7 women per group) set within a 2 hour in person event. Conducted in every state and territory with host organisations in each location.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Why do you give?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> How do you give?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What are barriers to growing women's giving?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What are the opportunities for growing women's giving?</li> </ul>
<b>Focus Roundtables</b>	3 Roundtables, 55 Participants	28 July 2025 to 15 September 2025	45 minute group interview (3-5 women per group) set within a 1.5 hour online event. Conducted with First Nations women, Women of Colour and rural, regional and remote women.	
<b>Individual Stories</b>	86*	May 2024 to 22 September 2025	30-60 minute interviews with the majority undertaken by Melissa Smith (with support from Nicole Byer & Nicole Freeman) with individual women who give. Written up and approved by interviewees to be published as part of the 'She Gives 100 Stories'. Targets were set using 2021 ABS Census data to ensure the story sample was diverse and representative.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What are some of your earliest reflections on giving?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> How do you give?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What drives you to give?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What are your ambitions for giving in Australia?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What have you learned from your giving?</li> </ul>
<b>Collective Stories</b>	21*	May 2024 to 22 September 2025	30-60 minute interviews with women leaders of collective giving initiatives. Written up and approved by interviewees to be published as part of the 'She Gives 100 Stories'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Origin story</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Operating model</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What are your ambitions for giving in Australia?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Learnings around collective giving</li> </ul>

**Note:** The total raw sample included 2,306 participants. To allow for overlap in collection methods, the sample size has been rounded down to 2,000. While impossible to calculate beyond an estimate, the adjusted figure is intended to more accurately reflect the number of unique women engaged in the research. 107 Stories of Individual and Collective Giving were analysed by CSI UWA representing the number of Stories published on the She Gives website during the research period between July 2024 to September 2025.

## Appendix 3: National and focus roundtables

Table 12: She Gives national and focus Roundtables data

Location	Host partner/s	Venue	Speakers / Panellists	No. of groups	No. of attendees
<b>Canberra</b>	Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC	Government House, Canberra	Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, Carrie Bickmore OAM, Deborah Barlow and Sarah O'Brien	5	60
<b>Melbourne</b>	NEXUS Melbourne Women's Foundation Philanthropy Australia	NEXUS Conference, Melbourne	Michelle Lin and Sonia Lin	4	25
<b>Melbourne</b>	Kerry Gardner AM, The Myer Family Foundation	Cranlana, Melbourne	Kerry Gardner AM, Cathy Scalzo, Nayomi Kannangara and Christine Christian AO	5	35
<b>Brisbane</b>	Queensland Gives and Perpetual Limited	Perpetual, Brisbane	Caitriona Fay, Tara Castle, Shweta Khan and Prue Pateras	10	70
<b>Sydney</b>	Danny Gilbert AM, Gilbert & Tobin	Gilbert & Tobin, Sydney	Anne Cregan, Upenyu Mawande, Tracy Norman and Penny Mapp	8	55
<b>First Nations (Online)</b>	Leah Armstrong and Tanya Hosch AM	Online	Natasha Short and Carol Vale	2	10
<b>Melbourne</b>	Catriona Fay, Perpetual	Perpetual, Melbourne	Brenda Gaddi, Brianna Kerr and Jill Reichstein OAM	8	60
<b>Canberra</b>	Georgina Byron, Snow Foundation	Snow Foundation, Canberra	Georgina Byron AM, Deanne Weir, Amelia Telford and Georgie Harman AO	7	56
<b>Perth</b>	Minderoo Foundation	Minderoo, Perth	Kristen Stevenson, Alicia Curtis, Annie Fogarty AM and Jahna Cedar OAM	8	62
<b>Adelaide</b>	Melanie Cooper AM, Coopers Foundation	Coopers Brewery, Adelaide	Melanie Cooper AM, Rebecca Cooper-Webster, Sarah Langley and Shona Reid	5	40
<b>Regional, Rural, Remote (Online)</b>	Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal	Online	Natalie Egleton, Gina Fairfax AC and Natasha Short	5	25
<b>Hobart</b>	Kirsha Kaechele, Mona	Mona, Tasmania	Kirsha Kaechele, Janet Saunders, Anna Ainsworth and Pauline Cook	5	40
<b>Women of Colour (Online)</b>	Women of Colour Australia	Online	Brenda Gaddi, Dr Varina Michaels and Solai Valliappan	5	20
<b>Alice Springs</b>	Mparntwe Alice Springs Community Foundation	Alice Springs Turf Club	Libby Prell, Nicole Walsh, Donna Digby and Jennifer Howard	4	20

## Appendix 4: Individual story contributors

Table 13: She Gives Individual Stories of Giving contributors

Liz Abrahams	Kim Downes	Robyn Leonard OAM	Georgie Somerset AM
Lily Ainsworth	Melissa Doyle AM	Jenna Liang Farrell	Michelle Steele
Anna Ainsworth	Belinda Duarte AM	Michelle Lin	Lucy Steggles
Anna-Maria Arabia OAM	Hope Dyson	Penny Mapp	Kristie Steggles
Leah Armstrong	Natalie Egleton	Georgia Mathews	Wendy Stops
Tania Austin	Rachel English	Upenyu Mawande	Tessa Sullivan
Hayley Baillie	Jocelyn Evans	Paula McLean	Courtney Talbot
Diane Balnaves	Sue Evans	Fiona McLeay	Amelia Telford
Deborah Barlow	Audette Exel AO	Jess Mendoza-Roth	Solai Valliappan
Jemma Barsby	Gina Fairfax AC	Dr Varina Michaels	Carolyn Vincent
Prof. Lyn Beazley	Caitriona Fay	Amanda Miller OAM	Louise Walsh
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## Appendix 5: Collective story contributors

Table 14: She Gives Collective Stories of Giving contributors

Collective Giving Group	Name
100 Women	Alicia Curtis
AEGN	Claire O'Rourke
First Nations Futures	Rona Glynn-Mcdonald
Five Bucks	Brianna Kerr
GoFundMe	Nicola Britton
Groundswell	Arielle Gamble
Impact 100 Melbourne	Rikki Andrews
Impact 100 North Sydney	Tina Jackson
Indigenous Giving Circle	Raisera McCulloch
Kids in Philanthropy	Maya Marcus
Kimberley Jiyigas	Natasha Short
Mannifera	Harriet McCallum
Mecca M Power	Lisa Keenan
Melbourne Women's Foundation	Patricia Burke OAM
Mparntwe Alice Springs Community Foundation	Rayleen Brown
Mparntwe Alice Springs Community Foundation	Libby Prell
Myriad Australia	Anita Toy
NRCF Women's Giving Circle	Amy Colli
People for Purpose Foundation	Rachael McLennan
Pop In	Vicki Kelly
Pro Purpose	Alana Nicholls
Rainbow Giving Australia	Em Scott
ResourceFULL Collective	Virisila Buadromo
ResourceFULL Collective	Nayomi Kannangara
ResourceFULL Collective	Michelle Reddy
Society of Women's Leaders	Row McGilvray
Sydney Womens Fund	Loredana Fyffe
The Arise Fund	Nicola Blackburn
The Arise Fund	Kristina Stefanova
The Funding Network	Kristen Lark
WoCImpact1000	Brenda Gaddi
WoCImpact1000	Shazya Khan
Women & Change	Genevieve Fraser

## Appendix 6: Global Postcards series

Table 15: She Gives Global Postcards series celebrates giving campaigns and movements across the globe.

Global Postcards Series	Name
Co-Impact	Anna-Marie Harling
Equality Fund	Jessica Tomlin
Maverick Collective	Rena Greifinger
Philanthropy Together	Sara Lomelin
Women Moving Millions	Sarah Haacke Byrd
Women's Philanthropy Institute	Jacqueline Ackerman

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### **Sector Partners**

100 Women  
10x10  
AEGN  
Australians Investing in Women  
Australian Communities Foundation  
Australian International Development Network  
Australian Jewish Funders  
Australian Philanthropic Services  
Equity Trustees  
Evans & Partners  
Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal  
Fundraising Institute Australia  
Groundswell  
JBWere  
Kids in Philanthropy  
Koda Capital  
Melbourne Women's Foundation  
Morgan Stanley  
NEXUS  
Perpetual  
Philanthropy Australia  
Philanthropy Together  
Queensland Gives  
Snow Foundation  
Start Giving  
Sydney Community Foundation  
Sydney Women's Fund  
Tasmanian Community Fund  
The Funding Network  
Women's Philanthropy Institute

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*Thank you for sharing your stories and experiences so generously to inform this research and for inspiring other women to do the same.*

*And lastly, thank you for taking this work forward. We believe the collective power of She Gives will continue long after this moment – And the impact we can have together is infinite.*

**she gives.**

**to join the movement go to**  
[shegives.com.au](https://shegives.com.au)