



Submission to the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into Philanthropy

The William Buckland Foundation

When businessman and pastoralist William Buckland left the bulk of his estate in 1964 to set up a foundation in his name, he directed through his Will that half the income be divided each year among public hospitals, public benevolent institutions or public benevolent societies in Victoria', with favourable consideration to be given to charities for children. The other half of the income should be applied to 'public scientific or public educational purposes in Victoria'.

The Will provided for the Foundation to be managed by a trustee company and four independent trustees and since its inception in 1965, the William Buckland Foundation has distributed in excess of \$135m and in 2023 holds a corpus of approximately \$150m.

The current Trustees of the William Buckland Foundation are proud of what the Foundation has achieved over almost 60 years, and of their record of responsible governance of the funds held in trust and strategic philanthropic support for the charitable sector in Victoria.

As an active member of Philanthropy Australia, we have contributed to the submission Philanthropy Australia has prepared, *A Strategy to Double Giving by 2030* and support the various strategies proposed in this submission.

We draw attention in particular to two of these strategies, which, based on our own experience working in the sector, if implemented, would benefit the growth and effectiveness of giving in Australia.

Unleashing the power of community-led social change:

Our experience of working with charitable organisations around Victoria has highlighted the importance of place-based solutions delivered by place-based organisations. Facilitating the establishment of local community foundations would not only make it easier for people to give locally, but it would also help build a culture of giving, support and engagement. This has been demonstrated by the work of The Benalla Foundation, which The William Buckland Foundation has supported for the past ten years; its Education Tomorrow Today program has delivered significant social capital outcomes as individuals, families, organisations and businesses across the community have become involved.

DGR status for all charities:

This would facilitate the work of foundations where they wish to support an initiative of a specific charitable organisation but are not able to do so because of its DGR status. The William Buckland Foundation has access to legal advice through its corporate trustee.



However, for smaller foundations, this could be a more significant barrier to them fulfilling their philanthropic purpose to provide positive public benefit.

Concluding comments:

The Trustees of The William Buckland Foundation commend the strategies proposed by Philanthropy Australia to the Productivity Commission for their consideration. A thriving charitable sector supported by a growth in giving can transform Australian society, making it more equitable, fairer and more innovative. Working in partnership with government and the charitable sector, Foundations have demonstrated their capacity to support long-term catalytic change in the delivery of innovative programs, building capacity in the charitable sector and helping to address entrenched disadvantage.