



ABN: Therapeutic Horticulture  
AUSTRALIA

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### **Productivity Commission into Philanthropy in Australia**

I write on behalf of the national not-for-profit organisation Therapeutic Horticulture Australia which I represent.

THA is a member-based organisation providing social and therapeutic horticulture services to individuals and the community in hospitals, schools, aged care facilities, rehabilitation facilities, group homes, immigrant and refugee establishments, prisons, community gardens and private gardens.

A volunteer Board and 6 sub-committee run THA.. A typical volunteer will provide upto 10 hours a week to support THA's member services, whilst Board members typically provide 15 – 30 hours per week. Our purpose is to support our members in the professional delivery of their services to the community, noting that many of our members also work in a voluntary capacity to provide therapeutic horticulture services.

THA does not enjoy DGR status and struggles on a monthly basis to remain viable and liquid. We seek Sponsorship through other organizations, but this has dropped substantially in recent years and we are forced to forgo more support services as a result, whilst the burden on our volunteer committees grows further. This is unsustainable, and like our predecessor organisations in other States, eg Cultivate NSW, THA may also face wind up.

This would be a huge loss to the community. THA provides professional guidance and support to those involved in delivering critical social wellbeing and personal therapeutic services to a wide variety of recipients. THA provides *de facto* what government does not and as such is regarded by many in our Australian communities as a necessity.

Philanthropy as it stands in Australia does not support THA and our services, and therefore, the communities we support. We would ask the Commission to consider and recommend *all possible mechanisms* that would enhance the quantum and prevalence of benevolent funding as well as organisations' such as THAs access to such funding. Without this, our services, and the volunteers who make it all a reality, will cease to be able to do so.

Yours faithfully,

***Leigh McGaghey***

President  
Therapeutic Horticulture Australia