

Dr Alex Robson
Deputy Chair
Philanthropy inquiry
Productivity Commission

By email: philanthropy@pc.gov.au

RE: Submission Future Foundations for Giving – Draft Report

Dear Dr Robson and colleagues

Congratulations on the Productivity Commission's inquiry into philanthropy: draft report and findings. This report is an important and timely review of the philanthropic landscape in Australia, a sector which has critical intersections with the tertiary sphere and our university's mission to make a difference for Tasmania and from Tasmania to the world.

The University of Tasmania recognise the need to expand the sources of funding for research, and philanthropy is providing an increasingly important source of funds for our work. Through the generosity of our benefactors, the University now manages a portfolio of philanthropic funds worth \$120M, which continue to provide income that enables us to deliver this mission in tangible ways. This includes the funding of scholarships and prizes to support our students and ensure the widest possible access to quality higher education, alongside high-impact research projects, and the infrastructure that underpins them.

We agree with the government's ambition to double philanthropic giving by 2030 but note that to achieve this, a clear road-map will need to be articulated. We were pleased to note the recommendation to establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Foundation alongside the advice to improve public information on charities and giving. In a small state like Tasmania, where philanthropy is nascent, there is a role for the University to take leadership in this space, to articulate the impact of philanthropy and educate the community about the contribution this important funding source can play in, for example, assisting access to study and funding early-career research.

Within the University context, there being mixed sources of funding for research is common and our university has seen an increased interest from our donor community in accessing matched funding. We would suggest that the Productivity Commission consider this as a proposal worth exploring. Similarly,

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our bequest program, which has received a notable uplift in the past few years informs us that for the age group actively considering the transfer of their wealth (>65), simplifying the process for Australians to leave part of their superannuation to a charity would be of significant benefit to tertiary institutions.

We were pleased that the draft report signaled the lack of a nationally aggregated data-set on philanthropy. We note that creating this opportunity would assist in guiding policy, creating transparency of philanthropic activities both at our institution and more broadly, in setting national bench-marks and improving visibility of impact.

In the past few years, international philanthropic support for some of our key research ambitions has increased measurably and we would encourage the Productivity Commission to explore avenues to increase the opportunity for international fundraising.

We are strongly encouraged by aspects of the draft report and would urge the Productivity Commission to be bold in articulating tangible opportunities for Australia to meaningfully increase individual participation in philanthropy.

Yours sincerely

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Vice-Chancellor

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