

AUSTRALIA



REDINESS LEVEL

HIGH

Compared to the US and Western Europe, institutional philanthropy in Australia is relatively young, beginning with the introduction of the private ancillary fund in 2001 that reshaped philanthropy in the country,¹ giving businesses, families, and individuals greater flexibility to start philanthropic trusts and structure their giving. Despite a big push from the government for more home-grown development and the strong domestic focus among many donors, there is growing desire to foster an outward giving culture among individuals and diaspora donor groups.²



CROSS BORDER GIVING INDEX

SCORE

3.75

Australia has a relatively high level of cross-border giving in Asia. Philanthropic outflows in 2018 reached \$741 million, accounting for 0.05% of the country's GNI. About 21% of charities distributed grants and donations overseas.³ Donors are interested in giving to Asia to support healthcare, education, climate, and rural development.⁴ Top receiving countries include China, India, Indonesia, and Nepal. Private outbound donations have stagnated. Interest in international engagement remains within a small network of seasoned philanthropists. The government does not actively encourage overseas donations.⁵ Following the bushfires and COVID-19 pandemic, Australians indicated increased intentions to support local organisations.

Interest in cross-border giving is growing among young donors. Young entrepreneurs are interested in exploring innovative ways of giving, including through blockchain and cryptocurrency.

Cross-border giving among Asian-Australian diaspora donors remains untapped. According to 2016 census data, 6.4% of the Australian population were born outside of Australia. Australians with Asian backgrounds commonly

give back to their countries of origin through remittances.⁶ More studies are needed on this donor group's appetite and practices to encourage impactful and strategic giving.



REGULATORY INDEX

SCORE

3.70

Favourable reforms allow Australians to make tax-deductible donations that benefit overseas charities. Before 2017, only organizations registered with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade for Overseas Aid Fund could facilitate private donations outside of Australia. After much lobbying, the deductible gift recipient (DGR) framework reform has broadened the definition for public benevolent institutions (PBIs) to operate and send funds to partners and projects overseas while being eligible to provide donors tax benefits.⁷

Under these reforms, PBIs with Deductible Gift Recipients (DGR) Item 1⁸ status, are required to report to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commissions (ACNC) and comply with the ACNC's External Conduct Standards. Charities must also adhere to obligations under the Financial Action Task Force

Recommendations and international treaties.⁹
 Overseas funding must be aligned with poverty alleviation activities as defined by government.

Recent legislative changes have removed some barriers to overseas giving, including lightening the administrative burden on donors and charities to send funds overseas. Giving through PBIs has become more prevalent as there is an increasing number of PBIs in the country.¹⁰



INFRASTRUCTURE INDEX

SCORE
3.25

Australia has a growing suite of infrastructure enablers for cross-border philanthropy, particularly to advocate for an enabling regulatory environment. In 2020, the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) advocated for higher tax deductibility for donations for COVID-19 response, though the government emphasised local needs during the pandemic. The Australian International

Development Network (AIDN) represents a new infusion of multi-sectoral advocates for cross-border efforts that includes corporates, private philanthropists, investors, capacity builders, and government agencies. Since 2019, AIDN members have led the Cross-Sector Partnerships Initiative for strategic leadership on cross-border work.¹¹ A recent AIDN publication provides comprehensive guidance on pathways to global giving for Australian donors wanting to invest internationally.¹² Still, the support system to ensure accountability and the effectiveness of cross-border giving remains limited. Legal experts and donors who participated in this study believe that giving mechanisms and compliance requirements are not yet well understood by the general public, which hinders donors' awareness of opportunities to give abroad. In addition, most lawyers have limited knowledge in this field and there are few practicing charity lawyers. Accessible information on relevant philanthropic trends and practices is needed to broaden the scope and scale of cross-border donations among Australian donors.

ECOSYSTEM SUPPORT ROLE	ORGANIZATIONS	
Academic institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre for Social Impact • Queensland University of Technology - Australian Centre for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies 	
Philanthropy advisory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Filantropia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think Impact
Grantmaking intermediaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity Trustees • Give2Asia Australia • Partners for Equity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Executor Trustees • Perpetual Trustees
Ecosystem promoter/ advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian International Development Network • Philanthropy Australia • Australian Council for International Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundraising Institute Australia • The Development Circle
Funders of infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian International Development Network 	
Philanthropy media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundraising and Philanthropy Australasia Magazine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pro Bono Australia • Third Sector