

PRESS RELEASE

Tech Wealth Poised to Power Multi-Billion-Dollar Shift in Australian Philanthropy, New Research Reveals

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA – 1 July, 2025 – Australia's startup founders are poised to revolutionise the country's philanthropic landscape, with a new report showing the tech community is more likely to give, give more and give differently compared to people with inherited wealth.

The Australian Tech Giving Report by StartGiving and the Centre for Social Impact at the University of Western Australia (CSI UWA) provides the first comprehensive benchmark of philanthropy in Australia's rapidly growing tech sector, which is projected to contribute \$250 billion annually to the Australian GDP by 2030.

Daniel Petre AO, one of Australia's leading tech investors and Founder and Chair of StartGiving, says the tech sector is uniquely positioned to unlock a new era of giving. "Australia's growing tech sector has clear, untapped potential for more and greater giving, driven by a new generation of self-made tech founders. Impact-driven, comfortable with risk, people-oriented, and highly collaborative, tech givers' contemporary giving styles could revolutionise what it means to be a philanthropist in Australia."

Established in 2022, StartGiving is on a mission to create a culture of giving in Australia inspired by the philanthropy of US tech leaders, exemplified by Bill Gates. Gates also sits on StartGiving's advisory board.

The report notes positive trends in Australia's burgeoning tech giving culture, including Robin Khuda's gift of \$100m to the University of Sydney to fund STEM education for girls, Atlassian Co-CEO Scott Farquhar's decision to step down to focus on philanthropy through the Skip Foundation, and the Canva co-founders Melanie Perkins, Cliff Obrecht and Cameron Adams' (with wife Lisa Miller) pledge to give the majority of their multi-billion-dollar fortunes away.

"Tech givers are action oriented. Often with the means to give earlier in life, they're motivated to start their philanthropy earlier, not decades down the track. We hope this report will inspire and encourage more tech founders with the means to start giving now," said Antonia Ruffell, CEO of StartGiving.

Key findings:

- **Growing impact:** In just a few years, tech founders' contribution to major philanthropy has grown from 1% to 21% of total grants made by Australia's Top 50 givers.
- **Higher giving rates:** 67.8% of survey respondents said they donate their money, compared to 27.5% of Australian taxpayers.
- **Significant untapped potential:** The 30 wealthiest people in Australian tech could easily contribute well over \$25 billion to philanthropy, with nearly \$19 billion already committed by a handful of this group.

A distinctive approach to giving

The research found that tech founders exhibit a different relationship with wealth than those in traditional sectors. Many interviewees cited luck as a significant factor in their success and expressed discomfort with their wealth compared to equally hardworking peers.

"I sold my business for a lot of money, and I felt almost guilt for the amount of money that it was. I mean, I worked hard, obviously, but it wasn't commensurate with the amount of work I did...there's people who work a lot harder than I do. So, I felt it was a duty of mine to give back to the community," shared one anonymous tech founder.

Tech givers tend to apply entrepreneurial principles to philanthropy, embracing a "fail fast, learn faster" approach with optimism and experimentation. Rather than focusing on specific projects, they prioritise backing talented individuals and effective teams reflecting venture capital strategies.

Future outlook

Over half (57.7%) of Australian Tech Giving Survey respondents expect to increase their giving next year, with about one-fifth planning to establish foundations. The report suggests that tech philanthropy will continue growing in both scale and sophistication, potentially transforming not just how much is given, but how it's distributed.

"Tech founders are bringing an entrepreneurial mindset to philanthropy—backing people over projects, offering flexible multi-year funding, and prioritising impact over recognition," said Arminé Nalbandian, CEO of the Centre for Social Impact. "This shift in approach has the potential to fundamentally rebalance the power dynamics of giving."

The full report is available at www.startgiving.com

About StartGiving

StartGiving is a not-for-profit organisation inspiring a new culture of giving in the Australian tech startup community. Founded and funded by Daniel Petre AO, it's on a mission to make giving by successful tech founders the expectation and the norm.

About the Centre for Social Impact UWA

The Centre for Social Impact UWA (CSI UWA) ignites positive, lasting social change for people and communities through education, research and engagement with not-for-profits, business, philanthropy and government. It is part of a collaboration between the business schools of four leading Australian universities, working together to reduce social inequities and create a future where everyone can thrive.

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