

11 June 2025

Tax deduction not most important factor for Australian donors

It might be tax time, but a deduction for charitable giving is not top of mind for Australians who donate, according to research¹ commissioned by Equity Trustees underpinning an ambitious new campaign to redefine giving and grow the national spirit of philanthropy.

- Australians who donate to charity are driven by a desire to make a difference more than a tax deduction
- 96% of Australians give to charity, even though 52% face their own financial challenges
- Income is not an indicator of whether people will give or not, with those under or over \$150,000 annual income equally likely to donate around \$5,000 a year
- Age is not a factor – with younger Australians (18-24 years) more committed to giving than older age groups.

Tax time is a traditional fundraising period for charitable organisations, and while Australians are a generous bunch, with research from Australia's leading source of trustee-managed philanthropic funding, Equity Trustees, indicating that of 96% of Australians who gave to charity over the past 12 months, only 20% said the tax benefit was a key motivation.

National Manager of Active Philanthropy, Denise Cheng, said with every dollar donated to charity offsetting taxable income, an increasing number of taxpayers prefer to direct their money to charities of their choice.

"Tax deductions are an attractive benefit of donating to charity, but our research found that the main motivators for Australians to give to charity are around personal alignment to a cause, a desire to make a difference, and trust in the charity," Ms Cheng said.

"General Manager, Philanthropy and Community Trustee Services, Jodi Kennedy, added: We know that Australians are keen to make a difference in the world through charitable giving, regardless of how much wealth they have at their disposal. That's why we think now is the time to redefine giving – we want to provide a smarter way to make lasting change that's more accessible to more people."

Of Australians surveyed who have donated time, money or goods to charity over the past 12 months, 52% had donated despite facing barriers in managing other financial priorities. In fact, 3 in 20 said they'd give \$1,000 or more in the next 12 months and 1 in 20 said they'd give more than \$5,000. This sentiment was higher in young age groups.

Equity Trustees' research also shows that while higher income generally increases the capacity to donate, people who earn \$60,000-\$100,000 were just as likely to say they'd be willing to donate more than \$5,000 in the next 12 months as people who earn \$150,000 or more.

"Like many in the for-purpose sector, Equity Trustees is committed to doubling structured giving in Australia by 2030, and these findings show we're taking promising steps towards achieving that goal," Ms Kennedy said.

"Equity Trustees is helping everyday Australians to participate in structured giving by offering a new way to set up their own sub account in the Equity Trustees Charitable Foundation (ECF), a public ancillary fund. The ECF is powered by the Equity Trustees Philanthropy Portal, enabling people to become a philanthropist with just \$5,000. What's more, they can even give their account a name that resonates with them – perhaps after someone they care about, or something aspirational to them," said Ms Cheng.



“Structured giving is a strategic way to give that goes beyond one-off donations. It’s about the creation of a tax-effective giving structure, that leverages the power of investments to create greater impact over a longer period. It’s a way people can start now – and see their contribution continue to make a difference over time.”

Equity Trustees manages more than 1,200 charitable trusts and foundations and distributes more than \$120 million of philanthropic granting to charitable causes annually.

The online Equity Trustees Philanthropy Portal enhances the new (and existing) philanthropist’s donation experience, providing transparency and easy access to their giving account, while Equity Trustees deploys its 145+ years of experience to take care of the investment, compliance, governance and administration.

“The goal of the portal is to make philanthropy accessible, affordable, self-directed and tech-enabled so more Australians can give sustainably to change tomorrow,” said Ms Cheng.

How to make the most of the charitable giving tax deduction

- Keeping accurate and timely records and receipts is important
- Consider structured giving with Equity Trustees, which:
 - allows you to receive a tax deduction
 - amplifies your giving through smart, responsible investment
 - lets you choose which registered charities to give to – and automates your giving if you prefer
 - leverages a technology platform to keep track of donations, and security that your donation goes to registered charities
 - provides sustainable ongoing income to the charitable sector.

****Redefining Giving** is Equity Trustees new national campaign, focussed on social media to get the conversation going, spotlight structured giving and what it can mean, and ultimately give everyone an opportunity to be a part of redefining how Australians give. More at www.redefininggiving.com.au.*

Media inquiries

Alicia Kokocinski

General Manager – Marketing & Communications
+61 03 8623 5396 / +61 403 172 024
akokocinski@eqt.com.au

Equity Trustees was established in 1888 for the purpose of providing independent and impartial Trustee and Executor services to help families throughout Australia protect their wealth. As Australia’s leading specialist trustee company, we offer a diverse range of services to individuals, families and corporate clients including asset management, estate planning, philanthropic services and Responsible Entity (RE) services for external Fund Managers. Philanthropy services are provided through Equity Trustees Wealth Services Limited (ABN 33 006 132 332) AFSL 234528 and Australian Executor Trustees Limited (ABN 84 007 869 794) AFSL 240023 which are both part of the EQT Holdings Limited (ABN 22 607 797 615) group of companies, listed on the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX:EQT). Equity Trustees is the brand name of EQT Holdings Limited and its subsidiary companies with offices in Melbourne, Adelaide, Sydney, Brisbane, Perth.

ⁱ Research commissioned by Equity Trustees to inform the development of the Redefining Giving campaign in December 2024. Sample was statistically significant sample of the Australian population (1011 people).