

CHARITY Georgina Byron is a face of the new national She Gives campaign

Future of philanthropy 'up to women'

Megan Doherty

CANBERRA'S own Georgina Byron is playing a major role in a new national campaign that encourages Australian women to not be shy about their role in philanthropy and be more open to giving, as a companion report also questions whether Australia is a truly generous country.

The She Gives campaign, launched nationally today, is about creating a stronger philanthropic culture in Australia, focusing on women, not least because they are poised to come into greater economic power in coming decades, inheriting up to \$3.4 trillion or two-thirds of the intergenerational wealth being transferred over the next 20 years.

The campaign shares the stories of women who do give, whether it's in money or time or talent, and the enormous sense of wellbeing it gives them to make a difference. And, in doing so, seeks to encourage other women to do the same.

Ms Byron, who is a founder and advisor of the national campaign, has been chief executive officer of the Snow Foundation for almost 20 years, during which time more than \$80 million has been distributed to organisations and individuals in need.

"Once you start in the giving game, you can't stop - it's so joyful and rewarding," she said.

Ms Byron credited her parents, Ginnette and Terry Snow, for encouraging their children to give wherever they could and be part of the philanthropic space in Australia.

"My mum was a pharmacist so was always showing us compassion and empathy and my dad always told

us that if you see someone struggling, you give them a hand and always treat them with kindness and respect," she said.

The *Behind She Gives* report being released today as part of the campaign says there are plenty of practical reasons women-focused philanthropy should be encouraged including that women outlive men and eldest daughters are 50 per cent more likely to control family inheritances than the eldest son.

There was also a desire to "redress the perception that philanthropy is male dominated because all too often women's contributions remain in the shadows".

She Gives founder Melissa Smith said women would

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Behind She Gives report

play a critical role in driving philanthropy forward.

"After consulting with philanthropic leaders, it was clear that women don't see themselves sufficiently in public conversations around philanthropy," Ms Smith said.

"Right now, we're missing an immense opportunity to reach and inspire others - She Gives is here to

change that."

Ms Smith said the campaign was about celebrating female philanthropy rather than trying to funnel money into one cause or another. It was also not about how much someone gave, but that they gave at all. That was especially relevant during a cost-of-living crisis.

"The cost-of-living crisis is hard for many but there is

also significant wealth in this country," Ms Smith said.

The *Behind She Gives* report questions the generosity of Australia as a nation, with the country's 159 billionaires continuing to amass wealth while 3.3 million Australians live in poverty.

"Evidence suggests that the combination of extraordinary wealth and increasing need does not translate to generosity," the report said.

"Tax data reveals that only 53 per cent of Australians with a taxable income over \$1 million give to charity and receive a tax deduction, compared to 90 per cent in the US. In addition, almost half of the top 1 per cent and top 5 per cent income

earners [in Australia] did not report any donations in 2018-19 at all.

"And further, only 1 per cent of Australian inheritances are left to charities as bequests, as compared with 3.7 per cent in the UK."

The new campaign will share 100 stories - including that of Ms Byron's - via the She Gives website and social media, showcasing the power of "giving to all causes, at all levels, that deliver positive social change".

"By sharing these inspiring stories and celebrating their contributions, we hope to encourage other women to see themselves in the same light and ultimately inspire more to give, give more and give more impactfully," Ms Smith said.



The Snow Foundation CEO Georgina Byron says she gets a lot of joy from making a difference. Picture by Gary Ramage

ANU hits childcare providers with \$240,000 annual rent

Dana Daniel

THE Australian National University has put a deal on the table for the operators of two soon-to-be-closed childcare centres on campus to move into demountables.

University Preschool Child Care Centre and Heritage Early Childhood Centre have until Monday to decide whether to sign leases on two demountable buildings the ANU has commissioned to replace the existing four heritage-listed centres.

Should negotiations fall

through, providers have been warned the university will put the leases out to tender. It is understood that the ANU is offering five-year leases on each of the demountables, one with annual rent of \$132,000 for 110 places and the other with \$108,000 rent for 90 places, starting from January 2025.

Providers of the existing community-run childcare centres have been on peppercorn leases for decades, meaning they pay the university only nominal rent.

Families have been told

the university is unwilling to offer leases for longer than five years.

Parents have raised concerns that the demountable buildings, one that is already built and a second that the ANU says will be finished by mid-December, are poorly designed for younger toddlers and infants.

The university last week revealed that parents not currently employed by, or studying at, the university could not be guaranteed a place when the existing four centres close at the end of the

year. This would mean about one in eight children could be turned away.

But families are concerned this figure could be doubled if infants and toddlers aged under three years are not adequately catered for, meaning a quarter of the current cohort - around 60 children - would not have a spot.

"This is the hardest age group to find childcare places for," one parent told *The Canberra Times*.

It is understood that the university is not offering to contribute to the costs of

each of two existing providers moving and establishing an expanded service in a larger building.

The ANU released a heritage report earlier this month, which found that the existing buildings, which contain lead paint and asbestos, cannot be made suitable for ongoing use as childcare centres if hail remediation is undertaken without ministerial intervention.

In a joint statement on Tuesday, the ANU along with UPCCC and Heritage said they would enter "ex-

clusive conversations about the ongoing provision of high-quality childcare on the ANU Acton campus".

Talks were still underway about continuity of care for the existing centres' 230 children, the statement said. It said the ANU "will defer any tender process ... while discussions progress".

Proposals by Cubby House on Campus and Acton Early Childhood Centre to continue operating in their existing buildings were rejected as "not feasible from the university's perspective".