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# Asian-Australian Diaspora Philanthropy

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The Centre for Social Impact (CSI) Swinburne is a university research Centre located within the Faculty of Business and Law at Swinburne University of Technology (SUT). We seek to grow social impact by advancing the systems that support progressive social change. Established in early 2014, CSI Swinburne forms part of the national CSI network, which is an unincorporated partnership between the Universities of New South Wales, Western Australia and SUT.

CSI Swinburne integrates research, learning and engagement that thinks big – and delivers – on programs that contribute to social change. We produce high quality outputs that are dynamic, accessible and useful. CSI Swinburne has specialist expertise in social innovation; social enterprise; social investment and philanthropy; and measuring and communicating social impacts. We have methodological expertise in qualitative and quantitative social and business research; big data analytics; and social network analysis.

1.0

# Background

## 1.0 Background

**Increasing population mobility and growing wealth have brought diaspora philanthropy into focus in recent years.**

**Internationally, this growing interest is reflected in research publications on diaspora philanthropy (Geithner et al. 2004; Johnson 2007; Sidel 2008; Newland et al. 2010). Concern for Asian-Australian diaspora philanthropy is reflected in increasing levels of interest within communities themselves on the subject of Asian-Australian diaspora giving and, increasingly, among social investment and philanthropy organisations, researchers and consultants (Scaife et al. 2016a; Australian Government 2017).**

Diaspora philanthropy is often associated with related giving practices among diaspora communities such as cross-border remittances. According to the World Bank, remittances from overseas to developing countries in 2016 totalled \$429 billion (World Bank Group 2017). Asian countries account for the largest share of remittances globally, approximately 55% of the total, including \$125.8 billion to East Asia and \$110.1 billion to South Asia (World Bank Group 2017).

The top three remittance inflows are to Asian countries, with remittance to India totalling \$62.7 billion, followed by China with \$61 billion, and the Philippines with \$29.9 billion (World Bank Group 2017). Although remittance funds are primarily transferred for immediate family use, a portion customarily goes toward charitable purposes and investments for the public good in destination countries. The value of these charitable contributions is difficult to quantify. Were they to total no more than one per cent of annual remittance flows, charitable donations would contribute between three and four billion dollars for charitable purposes to Asian countries alone.

According to the Diversity Council of Australia's *Cracking the Cultural Ceiling* report (O'Leary & Tilly 2014), 9.3% of people living and working in Australia consider themselves to be of Asian origin. A recent report by the Australian Council for Learned Academies outlined the unique and crucial role Australia's Asian Diasporas play, and should play, especially in "innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurialism" (Rizvi et al. 2016: 3). Evidence suggests that Asian Diasporas form a dynamic part of the Australian community, including the philanthropy and social investment sectors (Fitzgerald & Chau 2014).

In view of the growth of Asian diaspora communities generally, and the growing prominence of Asian-Australians in Australia's social, business and public life, a review of giving practices among Asian-Australians is timely if not overdue. To date little attention has been paid to how Asian-Australian philanthropists give, why they give, where they give, and what kinds of causes they support (Barth 2016). A deeper understanding of the nature of Asian-Australian giving is essential for understanding and realising the opportunities for Australia's mainstream philanthropy sector to engage more closely with Asian Australian donors and potential donors for their mutual benefit. Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation has commissioned the present report as a first step towards meeting this goal.

2.0

# Literature Review

## 2.1 Diaspora Philanthropy

**Diaspora philanthropy refers to a wide range of charitable practices among internationally-dispersed communities that trace descent to a common homeland.**

**The term diaspora originally referred to Jewish communities living in exile but has been applied more recently to a wider range of communities (Rizvi 2017).**

It refers to the 'diffusion of people outside their homeland and generally connotes the communities formed by migrants and the continuation of links between members of the diaspora and their home countries' (Geithner et al. 2004: xiii). In academic studies, Diasporas are often classified through complex taxonomies relating to historical causes or émigré motivations (Cohen 1997). In consular affairs and public diplomacy, Diasporas are generally classified according to citizenship (expat diasporas) and heritage ties to homelands (ethnic diasporas). In this study we move freely between ethnic diasporas (e.g. Chinese-Australians) and Diasporas defined by country of citizenship (e.g. Malaysian Australians irrespective of ethnicity).

In immigrant countries such as Australia, every citizen apart from Indigenous Australians may be considered or consider themselves members of an ethnic diaspora. Further, members of an ethnic diaspora can bond to several countries, 'both the original and more recent home countries,' through an iterative social process that is 'transnational and intercultural, ever-changing with one's personal development and social connections, as well as with transnational socioeconomic and political changes' (Trent 2012: 9–10). Maintaining connections among multiple countries is a feature of ethnic Diasporas. Australians of Chinese heritage from Malaysia, or Indian heritage from Fiji, may be no less active members of their ethnic Chinese and Indian diaspora communities than direct migrants or descendants from China or India.

In this study, philanthropy refers broadly to voluntary financial contributions for a public benefit, ranging from charitable donations by individuals, to collective and community giving practices, to institutional philanthropy and social investments. For the limited purpose of the study we exclude giving of time and talent which are often included in wider studies of philanthropic practice (Scaife et al. 2016b, Give2Asia 2011).

Experts often distinguish between charity and philanthropy on the understanding that charity refers to 'private resources donated out of an altruistic interest to advance human welfare', primarily to relieve immediate suffering, while philanthropy refers to institutionalised, systemic, and strategic giving directed at addressing the causes of human suffering (Newland et al. 2010).

While mindful of this distinction, we would draw attention to equally important differences arising from specific cultural practices among communities involved in this study. Typically in Australia and other western countries such as the U.S., philanthropy is associated with grants to non-profit organisations in return for tax benefits. Donations that attract tax concessions are not to be used directly for the donor's family or friends, nor are they intended to generate other benefits for donors (Newland et al. 2010). Favourable tax concessions are granted on the strict condition that there should be no 'self dealing' in philanthropic grantmaking.

**Distinctions of this kind do not always apply to charitable donors in diaspora communities. Asian diaspora donors are not always aware of the tax benefits that apply to giving from one jurisdiction to another, nor do they generally seek tax advantages through their giving. Further, charitable donors may seek to benefit people who are related by kin or hometown ties. Among diaspora communities, kinship and hometown ties are paramount. Hence charitable giving among diaspora communities often involves contributions to families, lineages, clans, and village communities that are organised along clan and family lines. From a diaspora donor perspective, this is considered a legitimate form of charitable giving rather than an illegitimate form of ‘self-dealing’.**

For these and other reasons, researchers exploring diaspora philanthropy have argued for a broadening of definitions to allow for a range of voluntary and charitable giving practices specific to diaspora communities (Johnson 2007; Sidel 2008; Newland et al. 2010). Some diasporas give formally through institutions while others give informally through and to family members (Anon 2011; Chao 1999). A survey exploring giving dynamics in Pakistan revealed that more than 50% of the giving by 21% of respondents was passed to family and friends for worthy causes (Najam 2005). Similarly, Yin & Lan (2004) suggest that Chinese Americans contribute funds to worthy causes, such as the building of schools in their hometown or village of origin, through family and friends. Informal giving by diaspora communities needs to be acknowledged as a distinctive category of charitable practice which involves legitimate contributions for charitable purposes dispersed through the agency of family members and close friends (Johnson 2007).

Generational differences also feature in this analysis. A 2011 Give2Asia report noted that earlier generation Asian migrants in America were more likely to participate in American forms of philanthropy, whereas more recent immigrants tended to give to traditional charitable causes in their countries of origin (Give2Asia 2011). Phases of migrant settlement also impact on where and how diasporas give in Australia (Baker et al 2011). Baker (2011) further argues that narrow definitions of philanthropy fail to capture the full range of causes to which Asian-Australians contribute, such as supporting cultural visits from countries of origin. And where donating for political purposes is considered off-limits in most Western definitions of philanthropy, Sidel (2008) points out that in some countries such as those in the Middle East, diasporic charitable donations can be politically motivated.

Historically this is true for Asian Diasporas as well. When China was invaded by imperial Japanese forces in the 1930s and 1940s, Chinese communities overseas rallied to contribute significant sums to support refugees and to aid the broader national resistance effort (Yin & Lan 2004). Flanigan (2006) notes that diaspora giving can take the form of political resistance, addressing questions of exclusion and grievance. Low (2017) has observed that generations of Malaysian diaspora communities have contributed to political activism with the aim of reforming the country’s democratic system. While these forms of political philanthropy fall outside the scope of the present project, we consider it important to concede that diaspora philanthropy can and does take many forms. As Sidel (2008) has observed, motivations for giving among Asian diaspora communities are many and varied.

The rise of ‘impact investment’ presents new challenges for diaspora giving. Impact investment refers to the mobilisation of money to generate a measurable, beneficial social or environmental impact alongside a financial return (Australian Government 2017). Central to the social investment is the attempt to reconcile social, economic and financial goals. The Australian Government (2017) categorises social investment into three types: (i) social enterprises and businesses with the aim to achieve both financial and social or environmental outcomes; (ii) social impact bonds, which are contracts between the government, investors and service providers to trial innovative interventions (e.g. payment-by-results contracts, where service providers are paid when results are achieved); and (iii) social impact investment funds, which are larger-scale funds that pool investor funds to invest in several social or environmental impact investments. The provision of microfinance to entrepreneurs in developing countries by philanthropists is an example of impact investment (Ly & Mason 2012) as is the investment in loans by Foundations to not for profits to support affordable housing.

This study asks how well-known and applicable impact investment happens to be among Asian Diaspora communities in Australia. Chinese and Indian Diasporas have invested in roads, bridges, schools, medical facilities and other infrastructure in their home-town communities for generations. Investors have not however sought a return for themselves on their investments, over and above the benefits enjoyed by the communities served by their investments. Chinese-American investment into China, for example, frequently targets ‘creating economic opportunity for the local population’ as a way of giving back to communities of origin (Johnson 2007: 7). As the return benefits the community, not the donor, this is not strictly speaking impact investment but a variant of strategic philanthropy.

Research has yet to establish an appetite among Asian diaspora philanthropists for impact investing involving a return on investment to the investor in addition to the beneficiaries.

The term ‘diaspora philanthropy’ is often assumed to refer to charitable donations to countries of origin (Geithner et al. 2004). There are however many variations of diaspora philanthropy including ‘homeland philanthropy, migrant philanthropy, and transnational giving’ (Johnson 2007: 5). Recent research has highlighted trends of diaspora migrants giving to local communities in their countries of residence (Kapur et al. 2004; Najam 2005; Bernstein 2007; Ho 2008; Chao 1999). As noted in Giving Australia 2016, however, little research has explored cultural diversity in Australian philanthropy.

The present report aims to help fill this gap. Although the term diaspora philanthropy has historically excluded migrant communities giving to causes in their places of residence, in the present project diaspora philanthropy refers to giving by migrant communities to their countries of origin, to other countries, and within Australia as their place of residence.

A strategic unified approach addressing issues of cultural diversity in the philanthropy sector is lacking. Such an approach needs to recognise the variety of forms through which culturally diverse communities make charitable donations (Scaife et al. 2016a; Wang 2017) including the why, the how and the what; the motivations, the structures they employ, the causes they support, and the extent of their support.

## 2.2 Types of philanthropic giving

**Newland et al. (2010) have developed a matrix grouping different types of philanthropic giving. Philanthropic giving is classified along two dimensions: whether a donation is channelled directly to the beneficiary or via an intermediary (horizontal); and size of donation (vertical).**

		DONOR AGGREGATION	
		INDIVIDUAL DONOR	MULTIPLE DONOR
DONATION SIZE	SMALL	Some remittances, individual donation	Hometown associations, online platforms, small foundations
	LARGE	Direct donations from magnates, celebrities, sports stars, large foundations established by individuals	Professional associations, family foundations, venture philanthropy funds

Figure 1: Dimensions of philanthropic giving (Newland et al. 2010).

### Individual Donors – individual giving

**Donations of this type can be large donations by high net-worth individuals or smaller amounts.**

Traditionally, larger rather than smaller donors have been perceived as philanthropists, and recognised as such by the research and broader communities (FR&C 2017). Many of these individuals and families are wealthy and well-established patrons in their communities with the capacity to give large amounts of money to different causes. Individual donors do not, however, need to be wealthy. Many individuals give modestly to common causes

for greater effect, consistent with their capacity to give. One example would be small individual donors contributing to the Rootvij Kadakia Foundation, which was set up by family and friends of Rootvij Kadakia who drowned in 2009 in Australian waters at the age of 26 while trying to save a drowning friend (Life Saving Victoria 2014). The Foundation’s key mission is to promote beach safety, and the small sums donated by family and friends are able to sustain a beach-safety program for international students and culturally diverse communities.

### Multiple Donors – collective giving

Some migrants and diaspora members cannot pursue philanthropic activities due to lack of resources, time and expertise, but remain committed to contributing to charitable causes, usually through large or small donations. For this reason, philanthropic intermediaries collect donations from members of the migrant community to channel into philanthropic projects and causes. Intermediaries can take many forms including hometown associations, online-giving platforms, crowd-funding, faith-based organizations, professional associations, diaspora foundations, even foreign governments (Newland et al. 2010).

In one example, the Chinese community in Australia donated money to assist with the efforts of the Sichuan earthquake in 2008. The effort was coordinated through the Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in Melbourne and the list of donors was publicly posted on the website, highlighting the many donors who contributed to the cause (Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in Melbourne 2008). As cited on the list, gifts came in diverse forms: some through collective efforts in community organisations, others as large donations by businesses or individuals, others again as smaller individual donations.

Diaspora foundations and philanthropic intermediaries aim to encourage and facilitate philanthropic investment to communities from a multiple donors. An example is the Asian Australian Foundation, a community foundation that connects and brings together

the resources of Asian-Australians to shape a dynamic Asian philanthropic presence in Australia. This foundation has established giving circles to encourage more philanthropic giving by the Asian-Australian community and to practise leadership in giving for younger generations (Michael 2017). This type of philanthropic giving appears to be the most common among diaspora communities globally. However, large multi-donor diaspora giving communities are still under development in Australia.

This study confirms the findings of pioneering research into contemporary Asian philanthropy which has established that collective giving practices, in which individuals pool their resources and jointly select causes, institutions and beneficiaries, is common among Asian communities globally (John, 2017, 2018).

The United States is also experiencing an increasing number of giving circles involving middle class Asian-American communities. While giving circles are similar to community groups involving one particular ethnic community, some giving circles are attracting second and third generation Asian Americans to 'give back' to more recent migrant communities (Ho 2008).

According to the 2016 census data, in Australia there are 645,885 people who were born in Greater China (including Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan), 468,800 born in India, 246,400 born in the Philippines and 166,200 born in Malaysia – together comprising around 1,499,870 or 6.4% of the Australian population (profile.id 2017b). Approximately 1,214,438 (5.2%) of the Australian population has Chinese ancestry, an estimated 619,163 (2.6%) have Indian ancestry, 304,027 (1.3%) claim Filipino ancestry and 46,074 (0.2%) Malay ancestry. On these estimates, 9.3% of Australia's population is drawn from these four targeted communities (profile.id 2017a). If all Asian-Australian communities were included in calculations, the proportion of the Australian population with Asian backgrounds would exceed the 9.3% drawn from the four countries that are the focus of this study.

The correlation between ethnicity and country of origin is far from identical. In the case of people born in Malaysia for example there are three primary ethnicities, namely Chinese, Indian and Malay. Although the census data suggests that 166,200 of Australia's population were born in Malaysia, only 46,074 claim Malay ancestry. This suggests that 120,126 of Australians born in Malaysia, or 72.3% of Malaysian-born Australians, have Chinese or Indian ancestry. Australians born in any of the four targeted countries, or having one or more of their parents born in any of the targeted countries, fall within the scope of this study.

At the time of writing there is no known research into the number of Australians with Asian backgrounds who are involved in philanthropy, either in Australia or in their countries of origin. What is known is that 84.5% of the respondents to the Giving Australia 2016 survey were born in Australia and 31.3% had one or both parents born outside of Australia (Baker et al. 2016). This rate of response does not reflect Australia's multicultural population, of which 67% are born in Australia, and nearly half (49%) of Australians have one or both parents born overseas. This study and report are therefore intended to supplement some of the findings from Giving Australia 2016, providing a small-scale but more granular exploration of Asian-Australian philanthropic communities and why they give, how they give, the causes they support and the extent of their support.

### Chinese-Australians

The history of Chinese in Australia dates back to the 1800s, when a small number of Chinese arrived in Australia to satisfy labour shortages in the 1820s. A larger number of Chinese migrants came to Australia in the 1850s, during the gold rushes, and by 1881 the number of Chinese immigrants in Australia had reached over 38,000. At Federation in 1901, immigration legislation was passed to exclude people of colour from entering Australia, including Chinese, Indians and Malays. The Australian Bureau of Statistics feature article on Chinese in Australia (ABS 1925) shows that from 1881 to 1921, the number of Chinese resident in Australia fell by more than half from 38,000 in 1861 to just over 17,000 in 1921. Immigrations restrictions were gradually lifted in the 1960s and fully abolished in 1973.

The next wave of ethnic Chinese immigrants arrived among Indo-Chinese refugees fleeing from the war in Vietnam in 1975. Between the 1960s and 1980s Chinese-Australian communities grew through immigration from different parts of the world including Cambodia, Hong Kong, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore and Taiwan. In wake of the Beijing Massacre of 1989, Australia granted permanent residency to a large cohort of Chinese students in Australia. From that time there has been a steady flow of immigrants from mainland China (Fitzgerald et al. 2017). In 2001, the number of Australian people born in Greater China (including Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan) was 234,243. By 2016, this number reached 645,885 (profile.id 2017b).

### Indian-Australians

The arrival of Indians in Australia dates to the 1800s when workers were employed from India for domestic service, transportation and manual labour. A number also worked in the goldfields. This trend continued until the introduction of federal immigration restrictions in 1901. During the early period, the Indian-born in Australia were primarily Sikhs and Muslims from the Punjab region in India (Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2009a). Following India's independence in 1947, there was growth in the number of Anglo-Indians and Indian-born British citizens migrating to Australia. It was only after the abolition of the White Australia policy that Australia saw an increase in non-European Indians migrating to Australia. In 1981, the Australian India-born population reached 41,657 consisting chiefly of professionals such as doctors, teachers, computer programmers and engineers (Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2009a). Today, 468,800 of the Australian population was born in India (profile.id 2017b). The community is religiously diverse – mostly Hindu and Sikh but also Muslim, Christian, Buddhist and Jewish. Today India is among Australia's top three source countries of migration (Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2009a).

## 2.3 Who makes up the Asian-Australian diaspora?

### For historical and political reasons, precise definitions of the Asian Diaspora and Asian-Australian Diaspora are hard to pin down.

**As Rizvi (2017) points out in his research on Asian Diasporas in Australia, there are two ways in which Australians of Asian backgrounds may be categorised: (i) by ethnicity which focuses on the identity and cultural backgrounds of the Asian-Australia; or (ii) by migration which centres around country of origin. There are issues with each category. Defining Asian-Australians solely by their source-country of migration is limiting because it does not take into account second-generation Australians and those of mixed ethnic heritage.**

Second, there are issues with defining Diasporas based on ethnicity alone because in countries such as Malaysia, Singapore and Fiji, many people claim Chinese and Indian ethnicity.

This study draws on census data for Asian-Australians covering four migration countries (Greater China, including Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau; India; Malaysia; and the Philippines). Given that the data on foreign-born migrants excludes Australian-born Asians, ancestral data is also introduced into the analysis.

## Filipino-Australians

Compared with other Asian communities, the settlement of Philippine-born migrants in Australia is relatively recent. In 1901, there were no more than 700 Philippines-born people living in Australia. It was not until 1950s that this population began to increase due to the arrival of Filipino students under the Colombo Plan, many of whom stayed after graduation (ABS 2008). Between the 1970s and 1980s, many Filipino women migrated as spouses of Australian residents. This peaked in 1986, at around 2,000, followed by a dip in the early 1990s (ABS 2000). The 2001 Census recorded 103,990 Philippine-born people living in Australia. The community grew to 246,400 Philippine-born Australians in 2016 (profile.id 2017b) and to 304,027 including Australians of Filipino ancestry (profile.id 2017a).

## Malaysian-Australians

Indigenous Australians have a long history of engagements with the peoples of what is now Malaysia. This pattern extended into colonial times. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Malays were involved in the pearling industry and the collection of trepang (sea slugs) off Australia's northern

coast (Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2009b). However, it was not until well after Federation and the introduction of the Colombo Plan in the 1950s that Australia saw an intake of 17,000 Malaysian overseas students. Many stayed beyond graduation and later sponsored parents and/or siblings to Australia (Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2009b). In the 1960s, the Malaysian Government introduced local affirmative policies that favoured indigenous Malays. This impacted on Chinese-Malaysians and other minority groups, and as a result many Malaysians migrated abroad to countries such as Australia. As a country Malaysia is made up of three primary ethnicities – Malay (67.4%), Chinese (24.6%) and Indian (7.3%) (Department of Statistics Malaysia 2011) – but the majority who have migrated to Australia are Chinese-Malaysian Australians (62.1%) (Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2009b). Hence migration from Malaysia to Australia is not reflective of the cultural diversity in Malaysia but skewed towards ethnic Chinese.

2003). For this reason, earlier giving and first generation migrants are more likely to give to causes related to their kin groups and hometowns than to wider causes (Yin & Lan 2004). Given this deeply-rooted culture of family and community, philanthropic giving also tends to be informal and personal, with a community focus (Deeney 2002).

In the absence of a clear connection between donor and cause, a rationale for giving can be difficult to establish.

As a matter of social practice, charitable giving contributes to a donor's status in Chinese communities. In this respect, the concept of 'face', which is widely discussed in business literature, has a place in discussion of philanthropy as a community activity. 'Face' carries expectations of social behaviour consistent with a particular position in a status hierarchy (Hofstede G, 1984). People of wealth and standing, for example, keep 'face' by meeting expectations to contribute to the common good and maintain their standing in their community. As noted, a predisposition to be charitable is considered a positive trait.

Taken together, community expectations placed on people of high status, along with positive moral attributes associated with charity, work to encourage people of wealth or fame to donate to good causes in order to secure peer recognition and public acclaim. This means that well-known celebrities in Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan regularly donate to charitable causes, and their contributions are widely reported and commented upon. Social expectations of this kind can be a powerful force motivating charitable giving. In some cases they can be a mixed blessing, if for example, celebrities and wealthy people make donations that generate social recognition for the donor, through association with well-placed connections or fashionable causes, but have little impact on people who are poor or disadvantaged (Ho 2004; Deeney 2002).

Although Chinese diaspora philanthropy can be traced to the earliest waves of Chinese migration overseas, it has only emerged as a field of research over the past decade or two. Sinn offers a comprehensive study of Chinese diaspora philanthropy networked through British Hong Kong (Sinn 2013). Yin & Lan (2004) provided a comprehensive account of the history of Chinese-American philanthropy to China, including patriotic wartime donations to support China's national resistance struggle. Chen notes the historical significance of charitable contributions towards the health and welfare of Chinese-American communities themselves (Chen 2000).

## Indians and philanthropy

The concept of philanthropy is deeply rooted in all of the traditions and religions that make up contemporary Indian culture. The act of gifting (or dana) is an important aspect of a number of Indian religions, including the Hindu faith (Wang 2017).

For Hindus, dana means any selfless service (sewa) to those in need, any form of giving that is not motivated by self-interest, the sharing of possessions with people who are less fortunate, and supporting temples, schools or other service organisations (Anand 2004). Dana is also linked to dharma, the order that makes life and the universe possible, and includes a range of duties similar to traditional Chinese culture, conduct and moral expectations.

As in traditional China, charitable donations are expected to be directed initially to immediate family and only then to society and the wider world (Anand 2004).

Service and concern for others is also central to the teachings of the Sikh religion. 'Giving to the hungry is seen as giving to God – but only if it is genuine giving from the heart. The giving of alms as a way of gaining hoped-for reward in the hereafter carries no weight' (Singh 2001). The institution of '*langar*', a free communal eating area in every temple, illustrates the importance of giving and sharing in the Sikh faith. At the Golden Temple in Amritsar, 3,000 free meals are served to visitors every half hour. The concept of langar is also carried to other areas of social need, encouraging giving during emergencies or crises (Singh 2001). The practice of giving in Indian cultures is by no means limited to people of Hindu or Sikh faith but space limitations prevent further elaboration here.

In addition, Indians tend to focus their philanthropic activities in particular states or regions of India (Kapur et al. 2004). This reflects the personal and community connections enabled by proximity as well as the more autonomous state governance structure in India, under which people identify closely with their states of residence as well as their national homeland.

## Filipinos and philanthropy

Filipino culture is reported to have been influenced by Spanish and American cultures which may account for the reason that giving patterns tend to resemble those in Western cultures (Wang 2017).

Many Filipinos in Australia are of the Christian faith and make charitable contributions consistent with that faith. Smith (1999) observes nevertheless that Filipinos tend to give differently from Catholics in other countries, as

## 2.4 Asian-Australian Philanthropy

**Although the term Asian-American is widely used in a range of literatures, the term Asian-Australian is not in common use.**

**In Australia, Asian-Australian communities are generally referred to by country or ethnicity rather than by Asian region, for example Filipino-Australian or Indian-Australian. This study follows established Australian practice in referring to particular communities where appropriate and reserving the term Asian-Australian for limited general use.**

### Chinese and philanthropy

**The concept of charity has been embedded in Chinese traditions from ancient times. Language is an expression of culture and many words within the Chinese language refer to charity and philanthropy, shedding light on the concept of charity and the practice of caring for the less fortunate.**

A number of Chinese terms relate to charity, including *cishan*, a term derived from Buddhist teachings which corresponds most closely to the English word charity (Yang, 2011). The second part of this word shan, also appears stand-alone to mean goodness, virtue, good

deeds, charitable, benevolent, well-disposed, nice, pleasant, kind, or simply 'good' (Yang, 2011). Other terms such as *renyi*, meaning benevolence and righteousness, are central to the teachings of Confucianism (Young & Shih 2004). Charity is a topic that Confucius discussed with his disciples, from the perspective that people should care for their fellows and pay alms for the disadvantaged and less fortunate. To this day the term *renyi* refers to a person of good character who is charitable, giving, wise and honest (Yang, 2011). Charitable activities are recorded in the annals of the Song Dynasty (960–1279 AD), where rulers sponsored welfare activities with the support of local elites. From the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) social elites played an increasingly important role in charitable support for widows, orphans and the indigent (Handlin Smith J, 1988).

In Chinese communities, giving generally begins with the family, then extends to a village or national community, and in the final instance to wider humanitarian causes (Young & Shih

the Church in the Philippines is a missionary church, which historically draws funding from outside of the Philippines to support its charitable activities. Further, it is reported that Filipinos give smaller amounts of funds compared to other countries, creating the impression that they do not contribute as much or as regularly (Smith 1999).

In the Filipino diaspora, first-generation Filipinos are likely to give to causes related to their families or based in the Philippines while second and third generations generally give to causes similar to mainstream donors in their countries of residence (Smith 1999).

### Malaysians and philanthropy

Many Malaysians living in Australia are of Chinese heritage, and some are of Indian heritage in addition to a minority of Malay background. Cultural influences bearing on the charitable giving of Chinese Malaysians and Indian Malaysians are largely covered in the respective sections above.

Given the limited size of the Malaysian-Australian sample we are unable to draw conclusions from the data on Malay customs and behaviours relating to philanthropy and the practice of charity.

There are, in addition, ethnically-based foundations which are similar to ethnically-based community groups but have a more focused purpose in their work (Sidel 2004; Chao 1999). Community groups tend to have a broader focus extending to volunteer work and social activities in addition to making financial donations. Informal networks, mainstream NGOs, giving circles, firms, religious groups and fashion/beauty pageants provide further channels similar to those of mainstream charitable activity in countries of residence.

give more to disaster relief or emergency funds than the other diaspora communities (Silva 2006; Alayon 2008; Licuanan et al. 2012). It should be noted however that cross-cultural comparisons of this kind are largely anecdotal. Robust comparisons among different diaspora groups are difficult to draw in the absence of large-scale quantitative and qualitative research.

**The major channel is the ethnic community group itself (e.g. Sidel 2004; Yin & Lan 2004; Garchitorena 2007; Ho 2008; Chao 1999) where people come together on ethnic lines and raise or contribute funds for causes in which their communities have a particular interest.**

Ethnic professional groups which aggregate by profession as well as ethnicity form another channel (e.g. Sidel 2004; Ho 2004; Opiniano 2005; Chao 1999).

## 2.6 Areas of contributions

**Published research suggests that education is the most common of the causes which Asian diaspora communities support throughout the world (Young & Shih 2003; Sidel 2008; Chao 1999).**

**Different preferences are however to be found among the four groups identified for this study.**

The Indian diaspora appears to give more to religious causes than do the other three communities (Kumar et al. 2003; Kapur et al. 2004; Anand 2004; Spevacek 2010; Singh et al. 2012), while the Filipino diaspora appears to

## 2.7 Motivations

**The Giving Australia Report 2016 introduced a number of existing typologies that help explain how high net worth individuals select a charity for donation (McDonald 2016).**

**Some experts including Cermak et al. (1994) cluster donors into four groups:**

**(i) affiliators (motivated to donate by a combination of social ties and humanitarian factors); (ii) pragmatists (motivated by tax advantages); (iii) repayers (motivated to give by having been personally, or been personally close to, someone who has benefited at an earlier time); and (iv) dynasts (motivated by a sense of family tradition in giving). Prince & File (1994) categorise donors into seven types based on their motivations, benefits derived, and needs supported. Other authors distinguish donors as passionate (triggered by an event or encounter) or rational (where the donor identifies a societal issue and selects an organisation accordingly) (McDonald 2016).**

A comprehensive literature review by Bekkers & Wiepking (2007) outlined eight reasons why people give. These are (i) awareness of need (the awareness that there is a community need); (ii) solicitation (that active solicitation rather than passively presenting an opportunity to give increases the likelihood people donate); (iii) costs and benefits (people are likely to give more if the cost of giving is lowered); (iv) altruism (people are likely to give if the donor care about the cause or organisation outputs); (v) reputation (people are more likely give if the charitable causes are held in high regard by their peers and receive recognition and approval); (vi) psychological benefits (people are likely to give if their self-image is an altruistic, empathic, socially responsible, agreeable, or influential person); (vii) values (people are more likely to give if the organisation share the same values as the donor); and (viii) efficacy (donors are likely to give if they perceive their contributions make a difference, hence excessive overhead expenditures may demotivate people from giving).

Research on Australian philanthropy practice by Scaife et al. (2012) has highlighted three primary motivations for giving among donors who structure their giving. These are reaching a life turning point, feeling an obligation to give, and having capacity to give. The majority of donors in Scaife's survey did not mention religious or cultural influences but among those who did so these factors were counted crucial reasons for giving (Scaife et al. 2012).

The report by Scaife et al., does not provide a breakdown of cultural diversity among donors consulted, so it is not possible to gauge whether religious or cultural motivations were related to cultural heritage. As noted above, charitable giving is often rooted in a religious and cultural heritage (Bekkers & Wiepking 2007). It is also driven by forms of human compassion shared across cultures. Researching the Pakistani diaspora, Najam (2005) suggests that 'the single most important giving impulse is the desire to directly help individuals in need' (Najam 2005: vii). Generally speaking, the relationship between religion and giving is minimal in Australia. A survey by Lyons and Nivison-Smith (2006) indicated that people who are religious are only marginally more likely to give (88.9%) than those who do not consider themselves motivated by religious sentiment or belief (83.6%).

Drawing on established literature on motivations, and based on interview conversations, we have categorised motivations among respondents across nine fields: (i). Alignment with (personal) values or experience, (ii). Religious and cultural reasons iii. Environment and circumstances, (iv). Help others, (v). Stage of life, (vi). Develop leadership capacity, (vii). Support for friends, (viii). Community recognition, (ix). Tax considerations. The literature review has highlighted a gap relating to Asian-Australian philanthropists, specifically where they give, how they give and why they give. This project aims to fill this gap in the literature.

## 2.8 Trust and charitable giving in Asian-Australian communities

**Among key concerns emerging from the present study is the role of trust in charitable giving. This was not part of the original study design.**

**The role of trust arose more or less spontaneously in conversation with respondents from each of the targeted communities. Respondents indicated that trust was an important consideration in their charitable activities. The literature helps to explain why this is the case.**

Cultures of giving in each of the selected diaspora communities are shaped in part by the norms of their distinctive homelands (India, China, Malaysia, Philippines) and partly by the dynamics of diasporic life itself. A common norm in all four communities is trust or trustworthiness. Trust plays an important role in each of the homeland cultures and also in what we might call the 'diaspora dynamics' of the communities themselves.

The emphasis placed on trust in diaspora networks appears to be related to the distrust that sometimes characterizes or assails them. Distrust, it emerges, is a healthy instinct among diaspora communities. Historian Ina Baghdianz McCabe maintains that distrust is a common feature among those diaspora networks that manage to survive and prosper across unfamiliar and occasionally hostile boundaries separating cultures, societies and continents over lengthy periods. The intertwined history of trust and mistrust is well established in histories of Greek, Jewish, Armenian and other dispersed European diaspora networks. Although similar research has not been conducted among Asian diaspora communities, the underlying dynamics are likely to be comparable (McCabe 2013).

Distrust may be a healthy instinct among successful diaspora networks but neither individuals nor societies can function effectively without trust – that is, the 'regular, honest, and cooperative behaviour, based on commonly shared norms' that characterises trust (Fukuyama 1995: 26). From the perspective of social capital, trust enhances the efficiency of interpersonal, social and economic relationships. It follows that the everyday conduct of business and social interactions

within dispersed diaspora communities and between these communities and their host societies depends on trust (Yamagishi 2011: ix).

Distrustful diaspora communities build trust through networks, or *guanxi* in Chinese. The survival of diaspora communities can be attributed to the practice of building trust through personal and community networks bound by kinship, language, and hometown and religious affiliations that reach across multiple states and markets.

The most successful networks are adept at building trust not just within their communities but also across ethnic and cultural boundaries, and with other diaspora networks. Successful trust-building strategies help to manage distrust not just within diaspora networks but also in relations with host societies at different sites of settlement (Fitzgerald 2018).

The place of trust and distrust in diaspora life helps to explain why charitable activity is considered important among diaspora communities. Charity implicitly involves trust whether in raising funds, donating funds, or distributing them. Conversely, charity is important for building trust. Handing over assets to a stranger for a charitable purpose, without thought of financial advantage, builds trust in personal relationships and social communities. For donors, it builds trust through conspicuous demonstration of a personal sacrifice that looks beyond a donor's personal interests to the common good. For a charitable organisation, charity builds trust among strangers through interpersonal contact and joint action to a common purpose, and more broadly by extending the ethics and practices of charitable collaboration among the families, groups and communities that make up a community or a society. Charity also reinforces trust at the transactional level. Donors have an interest in the trustworthiness of recipients in ensuring that funds are well spent and in claiming attribution for a community benefit, and recipients have an interest in maintaining their reputations for trustworthiness so that

donors continue to contribute. In each of these senses, it could be said that charitable giving matters for building trust no less than trust matters for effective charity.

Trust is grounded not only in diaspora dynamics but also in the homeland cultures of each of the Asian-Australian communities consulted for this report. While trust may mean the same thing across different societies it can carry a different weight from one society or culture to another. In a number of Asian societies, trust bears a moral weight not found in Anglo-American societies of the Pacific rim such as Australia.

Trust certainly plays an important role in Western and Asian philanthropic traditions but it looms larger as a personal or moral issue in Asian and Asian diaspora communities than it does in mainstream charitable giving and philanthropy in Australia. The question of trust rarely arises as a stand-alone issue in Australia because charitable giving enjoys implicit public trust by virtue of the trust placed in the underlying institutions of legal, political and associative life. Charitable giving and receiving are assumed to be deserving of trust, or trustworthy activities, because they rest on reasonably solid foundations of impersonal institutional trust.

This is not generally the case in the states and societies of Asia. In China, for example, trust is understood less as a feature of institutions than a personal moral virtue.

Whereas in the West, the actions and transactions of persons are regulated by law, in China, business and social transactions are conducted through 'networks of people whose actions are oriented by normative social relationships' (Hamilton 2006). Customarily, peoples behaviour is governed by the roles they are assigned and by the norms governing these roles in an ordered set of relationships. These normative social relations rest in turn on personal qualities, such as trust, which are valued for ensuring that correct role play is preserved in personal relations and social networks. Hence trust is counted a 'virtue', and a 'virtue' that matters in business and charitable practice. It follows that considerable effort needs to be invested in building and maintaining trust, not least through disinterested charitable activity, in order to build and maintain relationships and networks.

In networked societies, trust is high within networks but low outside them. Trust can nevertheless be built through charitable activity: through conspicuous demonstrations of personal contributions that reach beyond a donor's personal (network) interests to a higher vision of the public good. Working for the public good reflects favourably on the public spirit of the donor, and enhances donor standing within and beyond a particular network community. Charitable giving then builds and attracts public trust in communities that do not assume, or cannot afford to assume, that trust is a given feature of public life.

3.0

# Project Scope and Methodology

## 3.1 Scope

**The project offers insights into Asian diaspora giving practices in Australia with a particular focus on social investment and philanthropy, drawing upon published literature and on a series of semi-structured interviews with selected respondents from each of the countries and regions under review.**

**For the purpose of this study, philanthropists and social investors are defined as people who give money (individual donors) or give and raise money (multiple or collective donors) to donate or invest for a charitable cause. Consistency of giving is regarded as no less important than the size of particular contributions.**

The project is agnostic about the destination sites of donations and investments. Diaspora philanthropy customarily refers to donations from abroad to countries of origin. This project also covers contributions to countries of residence and to sites elsewhere from four diaspora communities (Chinese, Indian, Filipino and Malaysian).

Specifically, we examine the *extent* to which members of these diasporas are committed to giving to their communities in Australia and overseas, the *scale and types of contributions and investments* they make, the *thematic fields* they contribute toward, and the *intended beneficiaries* of their efforts. We also seek to assess how members of the Asian diaspora are connected with their communities in Asia and the extent to which they are supporting these communities or other communities in the region. The ultimate intention is to launch a conversation to increase engagement of the Asian diaspora philanthropic communities in Australia.

## 3.2 Methodology

**Original research for this study employs qualitative research methodology based on semi-structured in-depth interviews.**

**Each interview was between 30 minutes and 90 minutes in length, either face-to-face or over the telephone, and digitally recorded and transcribed for analytical purposes. A sample interview schedule is included in appendix A.**

Individuals from the targeted diaspora communities who are actively engaged in philanthropic activity were identified through desktop research and community networks. Potential participants were contacted by email or telephone to partake in the study. Of the 36 philanthropists approached, 27 agreed to be involved in the research. Information was collected through a semi-structured face-to-face or telephone interview with individuals. The information-gathering period began mid-October 2017 and finished in February 2018, with limited access to potential participants across the Christmas and Chinese New Year period.

## Findings

## 4.1 Profile of respondents

**Respondents to the Asian-Australian Diaspora Philanthropy interviews included both individuals and representatives of philanthropic foundations within the Asian-Australian diaspora.**

**Of the 27 respondents, 21 are located in Victoria and six are located in NSW; 17 are female and ten are male.**

In terms of cultural diversity, ten are of Chinese origin (Mainland China/Hong Kong/Taiwan); six of Indian origin; seven are from the Philippines; and three are from Malaysia. Among Malaysian respondents, all are of Chinese-Malaysian heritage.

During the search for potential respondents, it was found that many of the identified philanthropists did not promote their giving, but rather spoke of their voluntary work. Through interviews, respondents shared information on their philanthropic giving but remained interested in discussing their voluntary contributions, particularly when it came to discussing the networking opportunities they offered or the impacts they thought they had achieved. Many respondents suggested that their voluntary contributions should be more highly valued, while acknowledging that it is difficult to 'monetise' or place a measurable value upon it.

*But the other side of my philanthropy is the fact that I do so much voluntary work and I consider that a philanthropic action on my part -<sup>015</sup>*

*I mean how much is it worth for them to be introduced to the Chinese consulate and to be invited to the National Day celebration? I think it's really hard to put a dollar value on it as well. -<sup>001</sup>*

Humility is considered a positive value among respondents, a number of whom were disinclined to speak publicly about their financial contributions to charities.

Reflecting on this, however, some respondents felt that it may be time to speak up and share their efforts in order to raise awareness of the impact of giving and encourage more people to give.

*When you donate you must be humble and being humble means you should not post it. It's part of the culture, it's part of the culture to be humble... [to do otherwise] is against the basics of our culture. -<sup>018</sup>*

*I think we as Asian-Australians, culturally we donate... I won't say anything because culturally we are humble, but other times, I think we need to speak up a little more, [and show] the impact we're making to society -<sup>017</sup>*

A handful of respondents (5) give smaller amounts under \$10,000 annually, the majority of the respondents (18) give between \$10,000 and \$200,000 annually, and a small number (4) give over \$200,000, although less frequently. The stated amounts cover only personal cash contributions, and exclude the wider fundraising activities in which some are involved. When personal contributions are combined with voluntary efforts to raise funds, total amounts can reach millions of dollars in funding over many years.

## 4.2 Why give

### Respondents provided a number of reasons why they give, including:

1. Alignment with (personal values or experience)
2. Religious cultural reasons
3. Environment and circumstances
4. Help others
5. Stage of life
6. Develop leadership capacity
7. Support friends
8. Community recognition
9. Tax considerations

#### 4.2.1 Alignment with (personal) values or experience

Respondents consistently discussed the importance of the cause they supported aligning with their values, having relevance to their lives, and relating to their beliefs. Many respondents articulated that their charitable values were instilled through their family environment, especially from parents.

*Relevance to me, what is relevant to me, things that I believe that can make a difference.* - 002

*We are not rich, but we are not poor. We are in the middle class. My parents brought us up [to help] people.* - 019

#### 4.2.2 Religious and cultural reasons

A significant number of respondents across three of the communities – Filipino, Indian and Chinese – stated that religion or culture were a reason for giving.

*Just my faith, nothing else not recognition not glory* - 010

*I am Catholic, I have a strong faith and belief in blessings so you give back it comes back ten thousand times and I have witnessed that several times personally, so it's just genuine* - 011

*Serving the poor because it's our just our way of thanking God* - 021

Cultural reasons are closely related to religious beliefs. Some respondents speak of cultural values as religious values, suggesting that in some cases it is difficult to separate the two.

*...it's also part of religion, so I'm of Sikh faith and in Sikhism one of the three primary principles is sharing. You could call these principles Commandments. So these three Commandments, one of them is just about sharing. I don't know whether any other religion has three equally strong principles and one of them means just giving back, so both reasons are part of culture. So I didn't start anything I just followed what we had been doing anyways.* - 017

Other respondents simply speak of their cultures.

*I want this to be a way for Chinese community people, the Chinese people to come together and give back to the community.* - 004

*It's part of my culture, the Indian culture. I think because, in India such a large proportion of the population is quite poor. So it has become part and parcel of social culture over last many centuries that it is expected from people who have better resources than many, that they give back* - 018

This finding is very different from the Giving Australia 2016 report, which reported less than 20% of respondents citing religious beliefs or cultural heritage as an important reason for giving.

#### 4.2.3 Environment and circumstances

Two types of environment and circumstances that led to philanthropic giving were identified by the respondents. One was family tragedies and the other related to personal experience, or observation, of poverty.

*So what happened was my younger brother passed away from lung cancer at 40, so that sort of motivated me and my friends to do something for cancer* - 012

*With the foundation it's actually in my son's name, and my son's name is [name], I lost him in 2014 in an accident* - 027

In other cases someone close to them needed help. This raised awareness of a general need to the point where respondents become keen to help other people with related issues.

*It's usually because I feel something for that charity because of my personal experience. For example my grandmother had very poor eyesight. And so you know I often donate to... an eyesight charity that I donate to.* - 001

*The reason why I am keen to do more, or be involved in this, to help others is, number one, my mother went through depression, and I saw a need for someone to...[find] a way to help people like my mum who cannot speak English* - 017

Respondents who came from countries where poverty is common say that they feel they have an obligation to help those who are less fortunate.

*I've seen poverty when I was growing up* - 013

*I think growing up in India, the circumstance was you just didn't have to go far to find thousands and hundreds of thousands more very poor deprived circumstances. So you grew up in an atmosphere where there is enormous disparity, a lot of poverty, malnutrition, suffering, illness any number of things.* - 014

#### 4.2.4 Help others

Some respondents indicated they gave out of a humanitarian impulse to help others, which gave them a sense of purpose related to their personal values.

*I don't call myself a philanthropist, I just give. When I see somebody suffering I cannot stand it, kids that suffer, I cannot stand [it], especially kids* - 009

*I always wanted to do something for others and to help others. And in doing so it makes me feel that my life is lived in a more worthwhile way, meaningful way.* - 001

*I think there's a need for it and something that I've always been interested in so I just got involved.* - 007

*I believe that one should be grateful to the causes of your success.* - 035

#### 4.2.5 Stage of life

Another reason people tendered for giving was the life stages they were passing through. Some were not in a position to donate early in adulthood because their focus was on caring for their young families.

*Probably [over the] last five years, and maybe partly it's family related, when you have younger children you focus your energy. I know it's a lousy excuse, but you tend to be caught up in the day to day run of life, but once you have a little bit more settling [down] you have time to reflect, and then I think you come to a stage in your mind where you think career wise, I have achieved most of what I would like to, what is it that I can do, you want to give back in many ways, you want to contribute you want to leave a legacy of some sort* - 002

*I never thought of philanthropy until I came here actually in 1989... So it was only here when I started working on Filipino women and mail order brides, and I needed to seek funding for our activities, I started realizing that there's a whole world [out] there of philanthropists* - 015

Whilst many respondents did not get involved in philanthropy work earlier, due to young families, some expressed the wish that they had started earlier, to make a bigger difference and set an example for their children.

*I probably would have started before I retired, before I became semi-retired, so I probably would have started earlier... But I think it would have been so much better had I started earlier and got the kids involved as well, because I would have loved to have them ... involved with my charity work.* -001

#### 4.2.6 Develop leadership capacity

**Some respondents see philanthropy as a platform to develop leadership skills and capacity for Asian-Australians because philanthropy involves many personal qualities associated with leadership.**

*I want it to promote leadership and if you think about philanthropy, it's got all the components of what real leadership should be and it surfaces up the core skills and attributes of real leadership, which is about giving, it's about self-sacrifice, it's about giving, it's about commitment, it's about passion, it's about learning to lead by learning to inspire, so you have to think outside of what your day to day is.* -003

#### 4.2.7 Supporting friends

**Some respondents acknowledged that their own giving was inspired by others, and that this inspired them in turn to motivate others to give. With this intention in mind, they organise fundraisers to encourage more people to give towards causes they believe in.**

*I saw some needs and mostly I was influenced by people around me, I saw information on others who did it and thought it was quite meaningful, so mostly I was influenced by others* -005

*It just happened because you're working and people coming to you, more or less they come to you for assistance to the community* -010

#### 4.2.8 Recognition

**Recognition comes in many forms and is expected in many forms. Some respondents suggest that although recognition is not a primary motivation for giving, receiving recognition nevertheless encourages them to give even more, especially when appreciation and recognition are genuine.**

*You contribute in a significant way [so] that they do acknowledge your contribution, and they are quite appreciative. That is quite good, gives you a little bit of a good feeling that you are not here as just a sucker [on] society, but a contributor to the society* -002

While none of the respondents indicated that self-promotion featured among their own motives, several observed that some people in their own communities engage in philanthropy to build their reputations.

*They want to keep up that reputation because they've got everything that money can buy. So why not buy the best which is the good reputation. And by giving they can achieve that, so they're becoming more and more aware and educated in that as well.* -001

Others, especially those in Chinese communities, reported that they give money for 'face' and 'relationships' (guanxi). This needs to be taken into consideration when seeking donations or support from within such communities.

*some people are unfamiliar when they come here, and they want the opportunity [to do philanthropy so as] to get to know people, to do business, in charity this is the purpose for many people* -005

Another reason closely linked to recognition outlined by one respondent was acceptance by the broader Australian community, particularly to counter racism.

*that counters racism as well because if somebody says look in this area everyone knows me now. Yes, they attacked lots of other Indians... they don't attack me. All the Anglos don't attack me because I contribute* -018

#### 4.2.9 Tax considerations

**The majority of respondents do not report considering tax deduction opportunities in their giving. Only a small number indicated that tax considerations were important. A large number of respondents did not appear to understand the taxation system and deductions relating to charity.**

*I think sometimes I just give without thinking... I think I should be more sensible and actually record [that] stuff down, and not just give without thinking about it* -004

*I didn't even know I could get a tax exemption, I didn't know I don't think at that time, so when my accountant tells me of course I have more happiness, at that time that I do it I don't think about the consequences of tax.* -009

*I don't even look at it, honestly, I don't even report it.* -010

*from a selfish perspective it's tax deductible. Because you know, a lot of business owners, they're taxed quite high. So actually this is actually a great way to make an impact and change other people's lives, but also to benefit from a selfish point of view* -017

When asked if they understood the charity and tax regulation systems, many indicated that they did not and that they would be happy to leave that with their accountants. Some were keen to seek more information from financial institutions about charitable giving and tax deductions.

*I just leave it to the professionals, I wouldn't know, actually I must say very minimal, very little...if a financial institution could help us that would be amazing and we wouldn't even mind paying them because getting a tax exemption is so important because otherwise all our major sponsors, we tell them to write the cheque directly to* -012

A minority of respondents did understand the regulations and how it can have an impact at an organisational and personal level.

*I can honestly know more, but I think I have a good level of understanding, given my profession, here. How it works, my tax perspective, also being on the board of the foundation. I do have a good level of understanding, but I can always know more.* -017

*Yes, but that'd be because I'm actually actively involved in a sort of governance in all of that.* -037

When the potential for philanthropic or charity donations to be eligible for tax deductions was explained, a number of respondents indicated they thought more people from their communities could be encouraged to give if this information were more widely known. There appears to be an unmet need and opportunity for improving awareness and understanding of the Australian tax system as it relates to charities and philanthropy among the selected Asian-Australian diaspora communities.

*Yes it is important, everyone would want to save some tax if they could in relevant situations.* -005

*Yes it [tax exemption] plays a part but... it shouldn't be your main motive as an organisation* -011

*Yes, tax and sanction is actually crucial in any fundraising, because in Australia, taxation is an issue. People with a lot of income will try to find a means to minimize the income by donating.* -036

*I think it would be wrong to say no [that tax exemption doesn't play any part], it doesn't. I think it's a sort of side benefit.* -037

When asked about whether they would link personal finances with institutions that offer free advice on tax deduction, several indicated they would not.

*No, I think I know enough to know what I need to do for myself. I'm not in the big leagues where they have hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars, but what I give is substantial by my standards and good enough from my perspective.* -002

*No not yet because I don't understand it much, I have thought that a financial advisor is needed to guide us through but usually you would have a good understanding to do that, otherwise our decisions and actions are based on our own personal understanding* -005

## 4.3 How is giving done?

**Categorisation of philanthropic giving in the current study is based on the philanthropist matrix developed by Newland et al. (2010) with modifications.**

The initial matrix by Newland et al. (2010) focused on the structure of the giving platform (i.e. whether there are multiple donors or individual donors) and the amount they give.

In this study philanthropic giving is categorised first by individual or collective givers (similar to multiple donors or individual donors) and secondly by the structure or plan/focus of giving efforts.

- Structured individual giving (2 respondents)
- Unstructured individual giving (4 respondents)
- Structured collective giving (7 respondents)
- Unstructured collective giving (14 respondents)

### 4.3.1 Structured individual giving

**Only two of the respondents are involved in structured individual giving, giving directly to causes as individual donors. One of the respondents made a decision to give to one cause with a lump sum of money and explained that a larger amount is more strategic and impactful than smaller amounts.**

*So if you want to... get people to say thank you and let them every year, then you're making a lot of small ones but if you want to make a permanent contribution to something that will benefit many generations to come, then you try to find an area that you're passionate about an area where you feel that there are some benefits long term and that's what you want to do.*

- 035

### 4.3.2 Unstructured individual giving

Four respondents gave individually in an unstructured manner, commonly giving on the spur of the moment or when approached by others to give.

*He showed me he went around and then I went to the oncology and dialysis unit, it needs upgrading but we have no money, and I saw people waiting in the chair for them to help this oncology and dialysis and there were only four chairs and they have to go to Melbourne and when I saw, I cried, I couldn't help it I shed a tear. We went upstairs to do the meeting and we were talking about we will do this because the state government did not give us much money, out of the blue I said I will donate a block of land, everybody was shocked also me I was shocked too.* - 009

It should be noted that individual giving is a minority option within the Asian-Australian community. The majority of respondents give collectively. This may be due to the collective nature of Asian cultures although it should be noted that respondents did not refer to the collective aspects of their cultures or how this may have influenced their giving.

### 4.3.3 Structured collective giving

**Structured collective giving can take the form of a giving circle or community organisation. Many of these groups structure their giving by setting the areas the group decides on, for example education or health, and all the money raised is given to organisations that meet the criteria.**

### 4.3.4 Unstructured collective giving

Among the striking features of charitable activities undertaken by respondents is the degree to which they engage in informal and relatively unstructured collective giving. More than half of respondents report that they work in this way. This style of collective giving appears to reflect stated preferences for community activity, network building, and the exercise of leadership through group activities. It also helps build and maintain social status, and contributes to building trust within and between social networks.

These collective giving groups are relatively unstructured in the sense that they have underlying guiding principles but their giving tends to be subjective and opportunistic, and organised on an annual basis and hence dependent on the opportunities that arise each year through personal networks or (less commonly) application processes.

Decisions are taken on an 'as needs' basis drawing on the group's collective sense of where the need is greatest, or on a recommendation from the donor community.

*Well we have a funding grant, it's fairly ad hoc, I mean we just talk to different people. We also sort of decide on the scene. Say last year, it was domestic violence, this year we thought that we'd help with the suicide... Sometimes it's just that you have a contact, it's not scientific.* - 032

As a subset of unstructured collective giving, respondents include a number of individual fundraisers who perform distinctive roles within Asian-Australian diaspora communities. These individuals bear no official title within community groups but are known to organise fundraisers in partnership with not-for-profit organisations. These events are sometimes run in conjunction with other ethnic community organisations or corporations. This channel of giving is unstructured in the sense that it reflects a particular individual's interests and connections, such that the individual more or less decides on where the collective funds will be spent.

*I'm physically involved in fundraising for [named organisation]... the less established ones and also the ones that are I really care about as well.* - 001

*[For] 1 person, 150 dollars a year, to help him. Because apparently what happened is he was given a charity schooling, but accommodation, food and clothing are their own thing – but they are poor. So the [named organisation] asked [our group] if we could help.* - 019

*All of [named corporation] employees received an email that said, "Yes, we're allowing salary deductions for donations to the Philippines and then on top of that, the [company] will dollar match." And I think from that effort alone, we raised \$50,000.*

Some respondents also mentioned giving through their own business sponsorships, which also tends to be unstructured. The fields of work to which they contribute are not pre-determined but decided on the basis of who approaches them for assistance.

*Yes we do provide [in] different ways like sponsorship. Because we are a [company], so I offer a lot of... vouchers as raffle prizes for their charity raffles, member discounts, and these volunteers don't get paid so the most I can help them is I look after them, give them a discount or freebies in the workshop as a support to their organisation leaders* - 011

## 4.4 Where is giving focussed?

**A number of respondents focus their giving on organisations/causes that are relevant to their own ethnic communities or that target their own communities, in their country of origin and within Australia.**

They also tend to give more generously to such causes. Other respondents indicated that they give to organisations that focus on Asian communities more broadly, wanting to ensure that all relevant not for profit organisations have the resources to support Asian communities.

*When we moved to Australia we had this family business... and I used that as our medium to help various Filipino community organisations* - 011

*The money that I've donated through the foundation, to the societies, to those organisations, they can actually create a team focused on the Asian-Australian community, and that has never been done before. But without the proper funding, they would have no chance to create a team just to focus on their community.* - 017

### 4.4.1 Giving destinations

Asian-Australian diaspora philanthropists give along a continuum of locations. At one end are causes within countries or regions of origin, and at the other end are local causes in Australia. Many give to both. Respondents confirm a notable trend in giving destinations: the longer people are settled in Australia, the more likely they are to give to Australian causes.

*In the past they say 'let's help the Chinese,' because that's where we're from, that's who we are. But now that they've been here for a while, you know three years, five years, they're starting to feel more like an Australian themselves.* - 001

*They're more integrated and they feel more for the society that they live in. So they want to help the local people more.* - 001

*Because I live in Australia currently so around 80% will go to Australia and 20% will be overseas* - 005

Philanthropists who give to Australian causes express the belief that one should give or contribute to the place they now call home.

*Now you are in Australia, therefore you are Australians. Therefore you have to know what [it] means in this your local environment, and then you blend in and also you know what that means therefore contribute because you're Australians.* - 016

*Lots of migrants do lot of philanthropy back home, but I personally believe that if I live here in this country, if I earn here, if I raise funds here, they belong to this country. That's my belief.* - 018

Some respondents also give to causes located neither in Australia nor in their countries or regions of origin. This is sometimes done through large Australian not-for-profits such as World Vision, Oxfam, and established churches, and sometimes through personal connections.

*I want to broaden my horizon, not only helping the Filipinos. Actually I was involved in helping what we call the Cambodian [genocide]... Once I was involved in helping them, [but] since my girl friend died, I stopped seeing them anymore* - 019

## 4.5 Defining impact

**Respondents spoke of impact in a variety of ways. Some referred to tangible goods purchased by the organisation, others thought of impact in relation to inputs, such as how much effort was invested or goods were given.**

Some again raised issues of participation and empowerment in relation to impact. Thought was occasionally given to how giving practices could be structured to achieve desired impacts, but this was not common.

*if you see a plaque that says donated by [organisation], and every hospital has purchased equipment which they needed, [then] you can translate directly what you have donated and what you have bought. It's been translated directly so that was the biggest thing we could see in front of us, what we have bought [through donation]* - 012

*You know I can tell you that we have a thousand postcards sent. It is a few thousand trees planted... adds up to just over ten thousand* - 020

One respondent said he aims to achieve impact by giving a large sum in one go, rather than ad-hoc smaller amounts. People administering the funds can then plan how the money is used and ensure the longevity of the program.

*I give a big lump sum and that's it, because that's the essence of the program, in perpetuity.* - 035

Attention to grantees was also mentioned. Respondents indicated they sometimes discussed with recipient organisations what it was they most needed.

*we find out the wish list of the hospital and we work towards getting that* - 012

A number of respondents spoke of ways in which they seek to empower people in need.

*You don't improve the world by just handing out food to oppressed people. You improve the world by empowering those oppressed people, so that together you could all improve the world.* - 015

Additionally, several respondents thought of impact in relation to influencing decision makers of mainstream organisations, and ensuring that Asian-Australian communities benefit through their actions.

*You influence the outcome by saying that, look, in the Asian community, allergy is a big issue, maybe we can do it together with the Asian community. So that's what I'm trying to do, and in some of the cases I still do give to the mainstream just because of the impact it can have, but when I have an opportunity I will try to emphasise the integration of the community. That is my passion.* - 002

*Right now, to be honest, a lot of not for profits want money from the Asian community, they just want the money and, thank you, like political donations, but I think they miss the point. And to be honest the Asian community don't know how to... I give you the money can I ask for something, or can I participate, they are not so sure about that.* - 003

Encouraging wider inter-generational participation in giving is seen as a benefit in and of itself. In some circumstances, it is believed that the impact is not simply the impact towards people in need, but also on committee members who are involved in giving.

*it's been a long journey to generation 1.5 who don't identify with the attitudes, necessarily, of the previous generation that was more 'fresh off the boat.' They want to make their own mark and their identity. So this is giving them a platform, it's giving them ownership of their own community and the wider community, to make it what it is* - 003

Given the importance attached to collective participation in giving, and to recognition of donors and giving communities, some respondents do not feel comfortable dealing with mainstream philanthropy and NGO sectors in the belief that they are transactional in their approaches.

*they don't participate in a 'mainstream Australian philanthropy' or 'not-for-profit organisation' because they don't feel they belong, or they don't feel that what they might do would actually make an impact. It's like, it's a case of please give me your money, but that's about it, so there's nothing in it for them, there's no participatory contribution, if I can put it that way.* - 003

# 4.6 Fields of contribution

**The range of areas that Asian-Australian philanthropists give and contribute to are many and varied but education and health were most commonly reported among respondents.**

*Health and education are two areas that interest me because I feel that if you educate someone they will be able to stand on their own two feet, have a life skill, and things will improve mostly, not always, but for the vast majority.* - 007

Notably, the Filipino community give more often to natural disasters, in all likelihood due to the relative frequency and humanitarian impact of natural disasters in the Philippines. This preference extends more broadly to major natural disasters in other countries and in Australia, suggesting increased awareness of the needs/impact of natural disasters zones among Filipino diaspora communities:

*Many years ago there was a Tsunami in Asia. We started a campaign together with a Chinese Media and we raised \$400,000... The Victorian Bush Fire, that was many years ago now. I think we raised about \$250,000* - 032

Filipino respondents also raised the question of political donations and contributions to cultural diplomacy.

*Political donations, the biggest one would be in terms of that. But also lately because of my connection with the Filipino community, like last independence day, I was the one who gave the biggest amount actually for [that]* - 015

## 4.6.1 Selecting a cause

**When asked, respondents were prepared to list the fields of work to which they contributed. Asked how they arrived at decisions on this matter their responses fell into four categories:**

1. Personal connections
2. Passion
3. Board involvement
4. Upon request

### 4.6.1.1 Personal connections

Personal connections often play a primary role in identifying causes to support.

*We hit on mental health because it was actually quite personal for some of the committee members* - 003

*This year we organised a group of people to visit the Royal Children's Hospital and Children's Cancer Research Institute. Before we visited we had raised around \$9,000. The number of visitors were limited so we only had ten or eleven people participate, and after the visit, the group of people immediately donated more than \$10,000 altogether.* - 005

*They've always got to be a personal connection or resonance with it. So it is also because I've had a connection with the founder and the cause* - 037

### 4.6.1.2 Passion

A passion for a particular cause is also important. Through passion people tend to understand the need or objective better, feel more connected, and confirm that they are giving to a worthy cause.

*I'll have to believe in it first. I'll have to believe in what they are raising money for. I want to believe that the cause is worth [supporting].* - 004

Common causes about which respondents were passionate were those relating to bridging Asian community relationships with other Australian communities, and around Asian community heritage issues.

*I chose to do something to emphasise the Chinese heritage, the Chinese culture or the Asian culture. I chose around the issue of engagement with the Asian community, either raising money for the Asian community or engaging the community.* - 002

*Specifically I told them I want to focus on Asia because that was where my career blossomed, and so you'll want to give back in some ways to the people that helped in making it successful.* - 035

### 4.6.1.3 Board involvement

Some respondents give to a cause because they are involved on a related board. By becoming acquainted with where needs lie, and how donations are used, they are motivated to give in a particular field. With only a small number of Asians on not-for-profit boards, one method to encourage more giving could be through appointment of more Asian-Australians to boards.

*Mainly it is because you are involved in the board. It is important that you understand what they are doing and then you support selectively what their cause is.* - 002

### 4.6.1.4 Upon request

Some respondents prefer to remain open around fields of work, and to act on requests as they arise. They assess the merits of each case based on their own feelings, including their judgement of whether a request is genuine, and the person or institution making the request is trustworthy.

*I don't really select, with discernment, I don't think about it, when somebody approaches me and then I look at it...After this it's a matter of feelings because as I said there's so many around and you cannot really select.* - 010

# 4.7 Social investment

**The majority of respondents were not familiar with the term 'social investment.' Once the concept was explained some expressed an interest in learning more and possibly becoming involved.**

*No, I haven't made the decision to do anything along those lines. I probably would be interested if I was given that opportunity and someone explain it to me properly, where that money will go and how it would work. But I haven't come across that opportunity.* - 001

The one respondent who did indicate knowledge of social investment said that she was not currently involved but may become so in future.

A number of respondents said that their philosophy was to give and share, and that as social investment did not appear to align with this goal they would not consider it in future.

*They want some form of commercial arrangement, whereas I was just looking for 'no questions asked', do the right thing by the people, and the cause that you [support], so they have a slightly different agenda, and I'm not attracted to it personally.* - 002

*I share, I don't give... It's different between when you give, because you have extra, but when you share that means you have something and it's not really extra, you just share [what you have]... What you earn from that investment you give, so it's not really sharing, because you have invested the money and what you're sharing is the profit.* - 010

Only a small number are currently involved in supporting social entrepreneurs, including one who started a social enterprise to support people living in poverty through marketing their handcrafts.

*I do support an organisation [that] promotes social entrepreneurship... it's one of my major charities. They promote social entrepreneurship in the Philippines, and they bring products here I'm not a direct investor as yet, we're looking at doing something for these people next year* - 011

*It's a significant degree of our profit because [named company] is a consulting company. We also fund the innovation hub as well as [named organisation], so it's just one of the many activities that we do. Probably a quarter of our other activities and our profit goes toward that.* - 020

*I have established a social enterprise... [it] is my own business and its aim is to sell and market the products that our poor communities do in their livelihood programs.* - 021

Despite criticism of social investment, one respondent thought of it as a way to challenge the current system, as a new model, and she is looking for ways to do that.

*I can be critical of it all I like, but to really be able to prove that there's a different model... I [would] build the model.* - 020

# 4.8 Building trust and its role

## Among respondents from all four communities, trust was cited as extremely important in their thinking and practices around giving.

Trust matters in philanthropy in all societies. There are however differences around ways in which trust is established and maintained between mainstream philanthropists in Australia and Asian-Australian diaspora philanthropists. These differences can often shape their giving.

As there was little distinction on this question among respondents from each of the four communities consulted, in this section we treat them as a single 'Asian-Australian communities' cohort.

### 4.8.1 Trust in relationships

Relationships appear to be essential for building trust within the donor cohort. This is evident both in the ways respondents raise funds, and the ways they distribute them. Some respondents suggested that their own personal reputations as community-minded persons were important in building trust for fundraising in support of a cause. They attribute this in part to community scepticism towards people acting on 'ulterior motives.' People will not give unless they know and trust the champion of a worthwhile cause.

People give because they know I am working for the community. It is much harder if people are seen to have ulterior motives. -026

Community participation is no less important than community mindedness, perhaps for the same reason.

It makes more sense when the person is a part of a community and then they're making a contribution; large or small doesn't matter -037

The need to build trust with the people to whom a donation is given is important as well. One philanthropist said she does not trust people approaching her for funding, and prefers to build relationship and trust with people involved in areas she wishes to contribute toward.

We look for them, actually. We don't trust when people come to us -027

The need to build relationships based on trust is especially important for donations going towards countries of origin. Asian diasporas are very selective in terms of the causes they

give to overseas. One critical criteria is that the cause must be recommended by people they trust and have personal connections with.

When I meet the opportunity that I have, and I trust the people, I will give it to them, so it's not confined to Australia, but the amount that I give is much smaller relative to Australia. -002

Another way of building trust is through volunteering. Many of those who give to their country of origin are personally involved and often volunteer their time to ensure that the money they raise is given directly to people in need.

I think it does make a difference and I do check-up. It's not that I just give them money and don't bother, I do follow up, and you can see the difference in the children. -007

One reason for philanthropists to become personally involved when giving overseas is the potential for corrupt behaviour. Respondents were keen to ensure that their donations went to people in need.

I made sure, because the countries in Asia, a lot of them are corrupt. I made sure that... whatever help we do, or money, goes to the people that really need it, doesn't go to any other thing... I donated myself and when I was there I investigated where our donations went. -009

Judgements built on trust depend significantly on personal contacts, or networks, and on personal understanding of countries of origin.

In India I have contacts and I have family there, so I know, and I think being an Indian myself I can assess, myself, as well. There [are] some organisations that I support and I feel they are genuine because of the people running [them] -007

Given the scepticism around 'ulterior motives' among those giving and seeking funds, an important indicator for respondents is the presence/ absence of administrative expenses. There is a strong expectation that fundraising organisations or recipients should have little or no administrative costs, which are thought to be a form of self-dealing. An organisation's level of administrative overheads can then affect its ability to raise funds from diaspora communities. Among respondents, those

involved in fundraising as well as donating themselves were keen to impress on others that they bore all administrative costs themselves. It appears that there needs to be more education to the community and philanthropists about the importance of administrative costs.

The best part was there was no administrative costs, not one penny. If I stuck a stamp today on an envelope that's my expense, if she went and bought pens for someone that's her expense. And we never had even one penny of administrative costs -012

I'm even out-of-pocket like if I have to go to the Philippines every year that comes out of my own personal expense -021

For some, community expectations that administrative charges were a potential indicator of misuse of funds have taken their toll on fundraisers. For example, one group that ensured all money raised went to people in need, without taking administrative costs, suffered in the sense that volunteers handled all administration with no professional support. When volunteers began 'burning out' this group came to the realisation that its no-fee model was not sustainable. It has yet to find a solution to overcome this dilemma as the group remains concerned that if people in the community see a proportion of funds allocated to administration costs, they will lose trust in the organisation, and the organisation will lose capacity to fundraise.

We allow people to give directly to the cause and separately give to the organisation for administration. The majority of people give only the cause, so it is really hard on volunteers... We need to pay our own way to give to the people in need in China -029

And since 2003, all our volunteers are not paid and that's part of the charity work that we do. We call it sweat equity. You know you help, but you still pay out of your own pocket. -021

In the case of distributing funds to charities, respondents understand the need for administrative costs to operate a charity. Nevertheless they prefer to support charities with low administrative costs.

I would often try and look at the distribution of their funds... how much they spend on administration and management, for example. I mean if it's 50 per cent or something then of course you can forget about it. So, you know, the less the better. -001

If a lot of the money raised is spent on administration I worry about that -002

They spend too much money on their administration. That's why those I chose are all local, that I know, that I can see serve [the] local community. -016

Others said that higher administrative expenses could be balanced by greater transparency. Respondents suggested that transparency can be achieved through public reporting, enabling potential donors to compare levels of expenses with similar organisations. One suggested it would be helpful if philanthropy peak bodies or the Australian Charity and Non-Profit Commission established an industry standard for administrative fees to assist Asian-Australian communities understand the level of administrative fees considered acceptable.

I have no issue with an organisation having a percentage of admin fees... I think the issue is really around the percentage and the transparency... the adequate percentage I think is probably something the ACNC at some point will be able to do some research and analysis on. -003

So, with [organisation], definitely no problem... transparency's very high. So that's why [organisation] has been around since 1990, and it's still going very strong -036

### 4.8.2 Trust towards Australian organisations and causes

Respondents appear to place greater trust in established mainstream Australian charities than ones based in their countries of origin, and are less concerned about the potential misuse of money by hospitals, tertiary institutions and not-for-profit organisations in Australia.

I haven't fully investigated what my contribution has brought about. I guess I need to trust the organization that they're doing the right thing. -001

The reasons for the perception that mainstream organisations are more honest are due to historical reputations of organisations and the respected governance structures of organisations. This perception presents an opportunity for mainstream philanthropic organisations to capitalise on this trust to encourage giving.

### 4.8.3 Reporting and written evaluations

In Australia, formal acquittals, reports and evaluations are common tools for mainstream philanthropic organisations wishing to see and to demonstrate accountability and impact, and to build trust among donors and recipient organisations. Some Asian-Australian respondents preferred hands-on inspection. Some were also mindful of the burdens these formal practices placed on recipients in the Asian region and in Australia.

*they all have to do an acquittal. The only thing is, we're not as strict as the timing is concerned... we understand the staff are very busy and once they've got the money, they've got to get the project rolling and then for them to give us acquittal within two or three weeks after they finish a project is unrealistic.* - 036

Some felt these requirements were not only burdensome but culturally inappropriate. One respondent discontinued a project with a mainstream philanthropic partner because it required detailed reports and photos from one of the recipient organisations overseas. The philanthropist-respondent believed the requirement was culturally inappropriate and practically impossible for the recipients to manage. Although she attempted to find an alternative method of reporting, she was not successful in persuading the mainstream philanthropic partner to change its reporting requirement/methods.

*it's that the requirements already outweighs the benefits, then you know that the pain is way greater, and you know that, instead of making a positive impact. You're no longer making a positive impact because you're demanding these things from the partner... in some cases, Anglo-Australians would think that they know better how to execute... completely ignoring your local knowledge* - 012

## 4.9 The future of Asian-Australian diaspora philanthropy

**There are varying views on how respondents view the philanthropic sector within their own communities.**

**The majority are optimistic about the potential for future growth of the philanthropy sector within their communities, while others believe that on present trends it is unlikely to grow significantly.**

Possible drivers for future growth of Asian-Australian philanthropy were identified as follows:

1. Natural growth through Asian-Australian population growth

*As immigrants come through from other parts of Asia, the population, we actually have a lot more Asian-Australians now. So [philanthropy] would only grow, in particular, more the second or third generation children* - 017

2. Growth through local acclimatisation

*It will increase, as they live here longer, and more people come, more people will be influenced. I have noticed that the organisations for charity and public service is very active in Australia, so it will definitely increase.* - 005

3. Increased wealth within the Asian population in Australia

*I think it will expand as the population grows [and] as there is more prosperity in the community.* - 007

4. Asian-Australians becoming more educated about giving

*I think it's definitely likely to grow. As Chinese are becoming more and more affluent around the world, they are wealthier and they've got more ability to give. They're more and more educated in giving as well* - 001

5. Growth through inter-generational change

*It will grow big time because I think our children are all looking at it and learning and they want to do better and bigger* - 012

Others believe the only way for philanthropy to grow within the Asian-Australian diaspora it is to encourage young people to be more involved in philanthropy. Some respondents feel this is their responsibility and that they should set an example for family and friends.

*I think it's good to set an example for family and friends and because everyone has a degree of influence on those around them. So it's not just the ten dollars that they give, but in witnessing that, their friends might donate, so they can become a point of influence for others as well.* - 001

Other respondents are less optimistic about the potential growth of Asian-Australian philanthropy because they do not yet see other others taking up the challenge.

*I don't think it's going to grow or shrink, I think it'll be pretty much the same. Again, it all depends on the current people, the current people like us... whether we can find sufficient young people to take over any charity* - 036

Some respondents question whether growth in giving to Asia will come from Asian-Australian communities or from other Australian communities.

*It's strange thing but it not the Asian-Australians who give me money. Over twenty-five years, 95% of [donors] are Anglo-Saxon Australians. Only 5% of my donors are of South Asian-Australians or Asian Australia, so it's a surprisingly small percentage, but 95 per cent of my donors are not Asian.* - 014

*But unfortunately, that's the situation there. The hardest part is not asking money from [non-Asian] Australians because [they] are generally good-hearted in nature. The hardest part is talking to fellow Filipinos because every Filipino has a relative who is poor* - 021

While some respondents believe Anglo-Australians give more than those from their own communities, others felt that their communities were not presented with sufficient opportunities to give. This stems from people in their community not knowing who to give to, which organisations were trustworthy, and what standards applied to operating procedures and administrative costs among Australian charities. In the absence of trust, people prefer not to give. Currently there is a lack of information provided to them in a culturally sensitive manner.

*We realised that there were so many Indian businessmen who wanted to give, as well, but they didn't know where to go, how to [do it].* -012

Some respondents believe there are opportunities to encourage more giving within their own communities because giving is a part of their culture.

*Most of this money has come through the social nature of Indian community because making a donation for worthy cause is part of culture, so you just have to give people an opportunity* -018

#### 4.9.1 Barriers and challenges to diaspora philanthropic giving

The key barriers and challenges to giving identified by respondents include the following:

- The inability to navigate the philanthropy and charity sector from an organisational point of view.
 

*I don't know about structure... because I run a business, you would think I know all this business structure, I do know to some extent. But I think running a not-for-profit, it's a bit different.* -004
- Lack of knowledge and information about charities, and which ones are trustworthy. This requires people who can help potential philanthropists to find charities they can trust.
 

*You know we've always wanted to give and we love charities, but we don't know which ones to give to. So if you give it to this charity then it must be good.* -001
- Lack of media representation to encourage more participation. Although recognition is not the primary motivator for respondents, they acknowledge that increased recognition of donors and awareness of charitable activities could improve fundraising and donations. Greater dissemination of information would encourage more giving.
 

*If our local newspaper could report it then more Asians will participate or more westerners could also participate. But we are very lacking in this resource, when we approach them they might think that this is just an event for the Asian community so they would not report it or pay attention to it* -005
- In the Chinese community, language difficulties often arise. Many potential donors do not have sufficient language skills to understand the role of charitable organisations, and charities themselves do not have the language skills required to raise funds within Chinese communities.
 

*I think language is a big barrier. You know the calls that I get, had they got those calls, they would have just hung up straight away because they don't speak English.* -001

#### 4.9.2 How can giving be encouraged?

Some respondents see philanthropy as a way of improving integration with wider Australian society. People keen to integrate more closely could be encouraged to become involved in philanthropy.

*[for example] women who are here to look after their kids and don't have a great deal to do during the day. It may help them to improve their English as well, so see it as an as an activity like, you know, going to aerobics or you know going shopping... See it as a social activity.* -001

Another approach recommended by donors is to get more Asian-Australians involved in mainstream charity and community services, through public recognition and appointments on boards. This would assist understanding on their part of what charities do, how they do it, and where greatest needs lie, and would bring community networks and cultural intelligence onto mainstream boards. Inclusion of Asian-Australians on philanthropy and charity boards could also lead to more financial contributions to charities through the board members' personal and community networks.

*If local charities want more Asians to get involved, then they can invite Asians to participate in current charity work and community service. It doesn't matter how many people you start with, people will talk about it and promote it and more people will participate.* -005

A key message that surfaces in this research is that relationships play a strong part when it comes to building trust for fundraising and donations. Encouraging engagement by influential community-minded people, with contacts in the various Asian-Australian communities, is likely to be critical for enabling growth in the sector.

*Definitely [organisation] are our friends because we have seen them year after year, so many of them have changed but we have continued to keep that relationship.* -012

Another way to encourage more giving is to find ways to connect not-for-profits with Asian-Australian communities.

*I believe the governments can spend that money on real social inclusion [and] connect Asian and China-Australians to community-based projects with the philanthropy-based organizations... but you can't expect organizations to connect with Asians-Chinese, Indian – as they don't have resources.* -018

The project also highlights a need for further targeted research and community education around current and potential Asian-Australian contributions to the philanthropy sector. Respondents frequently pointed to limitations in their knowledge of laws, regulations, tax benefits, standards and so on, bearing on the philanthropy and charity sectors in Australia. Without such knowledge and understanding, potential donors are unable to make well-informed decisions to increase their giving, or to encourage others in their communities to do so.

*I don't think there is sufficient research, you are one of them doing it at the moment, sufficient research about this particular topic, that is one [point of note].* -002

Improved knowledge would also assist in the development of appropriate governance, structures and processes as the sector continues to grow.

The question of trust arose frequently in discussion. Concern with trust underlies others concerns, such as appropriate levels of legitimate administrative expenses. Questions of trust (and distrust) can be addressed in a number of ways but one concrete measure to remedy the particular issue of administrative expenses could be for an established foundation to fund operating costs exclusively and allow community fundraisers to focus their efforts on direct benefits to beneficiaries. At the same time, Asian-Australian community donors need to be made aware of the positive roles played by professional staff in effective philanthropy.

Some respondents expressed an interest in learning more about mainstream philanthropy and donor circles. They would welcome an active program of invitations to information sessions, program promotions, project launches and so on, which would provide learning and networking opportunities. They would also welcome targeted information and advice sessions about key issues for fundraising and donor organisations, including information on taxation, regulation and impact measurement.

*Support is always important, information would be good so we're more educated to be able to manage a business and help more and give back or not really a recognition but a stronger* -011

# 5.0 Summary Points

## 5.1 Key findings

**Some of the key findings highlighted by respondents or identified by researchers in the course of interviews and analysis include:**

- 01** Motives, methods, aspirations and destinations for giving among Asian-Australian diaspora communities are as varied as those in the general community but some of the issues that inform giving in these communities carry distinctive emphases
- 02** Philanthropy and charitable activity are often regarded as social activities and valued for helping to build trust and expand social networking opportunities
- 03** Cultural and religious factors appear to have strong bearing on Asian-Australian donors and fundraisers relative to many other Australian donors
- 04** Values, interests, passions and personal experience often drive selection of causes for donations and fundraising activities
- 05** Major causes or fields supported include health and education, with additional attention to natural disasters, cultural diplomacy and religious institutions
- 06** Charitable work is an important domain for demonstrating community leadership
- 07** Although public recognition is not a major driver, greater recognition and publicity of Asian-Australian diaspora charitable work would be welcomed

- 08** In discussing the role and future of philanthropy in their communities, respondents show a strong sense of life-cycle influences and inter-generational issues
- 09** Collective and community events are often favoured as informal structures for fundraising and charity work
- 10** Philanthropy donations and charity work are directed towards Australia no less than towards countries of origin. Some contributions are made to third countries.
- 11** Donations to causes in Australia often relate to Asian-Australian community interests, including efforts to limit perceived discrimination and expand opportunities for Asia-Australian engagement in public life
- 12** There has been little discussion to date among Asian-Australian donors on the strategic impact of their efforts
- 13** A relatively high value is placed on personal experience over formal reports and acquittals
- 14** A premium is placed on cultural sensitivity in philanthropy and charity transactions
- 15** Relatively high trust is placed in Australian institutions
- 16** Asian-Australian philanthropists recognize the limits of their knowledge of taxation, regulation, giving structures, social investment, and not-for-profits in Australia, and would like to improve their grasp of these issues
- 17** Asian-Australian philanthropists sense opportunities foregone in the philanthropy sector more generally due to limited knowledge and information among diaspora communities, and to limited outreach towards them by mainstream philanthropy and charity organisations
- 18** Barriers to wider philanthropy and charity cooperation need to be overcome in language, media and opportunities for mutual learning

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## Appendix A

### Questions to interviewees

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**To begin our conversation, why did you become involved in philanthropy activities? Can you describe your contribution to charitable causes?**

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**When did you start getting involved in this kind of charitable giving? How often do you give?**

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**Would you mind sharing the scale of your contributions?**

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**Where do you give? E.g. Australian charitable causes, overseas, home country? Do you also engage in social investment? If so where do you invest?**

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**How do you select the charitable cause or social investments for your contributions? In what areas do you donate or invest? e.g. education, health, community events. Why did you select the particular areas for your donations or investments?**

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**Do you believe that your contributions have made a difference? In what way?**

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**If you had an opportunity to start again with your giving, what would you do differently? What are your drivers – in seeing how other people give, what are their drivers to give?**

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**If you were advising other Asian-Australians about philanthropy or social investment, what would top your list of advice?**

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## Authors

**Wesa Chau**



Wesa Chau is the director of Cultural Intelligence, a consulting company specialised in raising the understanding of the power of cultural diversity through, research, training and consulting.

Her career experience ranges from working with migrants, international students and refugees, through media and communications for diverse audiences, advocacy for multiculturalism and research on diversity and leadership. She was the founder of Australian Federation of International Students in 2002 and grew the organisation to service 8000 students during her tenure. Her role was instrumental in helping to establish the International Student Care Service (predecessor to Study Melbourne). She has also held a senior manager position in the disability sector.

In research, she explores topics ranging from Asian diaspora in philanthropy, leadership, cultural diplomacy and business, cultural diversity and politics.

Wesa was a fellow of the inaugural Scanlon-Swinburne Intercultural Fellowship, travelling to India and Malaysia working with academics and government officials to better understand diversity and alumni networks in India and Malaysia. In 2017, Wesa was invited to participate on the Australia-China High Level Dialogue alongside Australian senior leaders and diplomats.

Wesa has received several awards for her contribution in the multicultural and international students areas. In 2016 she was awarded the prestigious Victorian International Education Internationalisation Award in recognition of her work with international students for more than a decade. In 2013 she was the Australian Leadership Awardee from ADC Forum and named Young Victorian of the Year in 2010. In 2006 she received the Victorian Multicultural Commission's Award for Excellence in Service Delivery to Multicultural Victoria.

Her tertiary education encompasses Engineering, Marketing, Law, Management and Governance. She is a current PhD candidate researching political skills and has a certificate IV in TAE.

**Professor John Fitzgerald**



John Fitzgerald is Professor Emeritus in the Centre for Social Impact at Swinburne University of Technology in Melbourne and Immediate Past President of the Australian Academy of the Humanities based in Canberra. He formerly served as Head of the School of Social Sciences at La Trobe University and as Director of the International Centre of Excellence in Asia-Pacific Studies at the Australian National University. From 2008 to 2013 he was China Representative of The Ford Foundation in Beijing where he directed the Foundation's China operations. His research focus on the history of nationalism, philanthropy and public administration in China, and on Chinese communities in Australia and the Asia-Pacific. His books include *Big White Lie: Chinese Australians in White Australia* (UNSW 2007), awarded the Ernest Scott Prize of the Australian Historical Association in 2008, and *Awakening China* (Stanford 1997), awarded the Joseph Levenson Prize of the U.S. Association for Asian Studies. He has a Ph.D. from ANU and held a Fulbright postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is a graduate of the University of Sydney.



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