



Foreword

Philanthropy to universities in Australia and New Zealand is coming of age. Hardly a week goes by without an article in the media highlighting a new and impressive gift to education and research. There are many reasons for this change in profile – but a key factor is the increasing professionalism of university advancement offices. It gives me great satisfaction therefore to introduce the third iteration of a survey capturing trends in giving, this year reporting results for 14 Australian universities and five from New Zealand, a total of 19, expanded from 11 institutions last year. The survey is an important tool for Institutional leaders, development and alumni staff, allowing institutions to be more rigorous in benchmarking, more confident in accountability and more persuasive in our relationships with alumni and other donors.

In 2012-14, the period under review, some highly visible and ambitious university campaigns have raised the sights of donors and universities alike. The University of Auckland concluded its “Leading the Way” Campaign, having reached \$203m in gifts. The University of Sydney launched its \$600m “Inspired” Campaign; UWA embarked on its “New Century” Campaign with a \$400m goal; and the University of Melbourne unfurled its “BELIEVE” Campaign with a \$500m target. Other universities are getting into training, planning for the next step up in their own philanthropic trajectory.

The fact that we have entered an era of “mega gifts” at the same time is no coincidence. Not so long ago, gifts to education of \$10m, \$20m and \$50m seemed to belong only in North America. We now have evidence both that education (following the experience of the US and the UK) is the good cause that attracts most of the very largest gifts and also that people of wealth are positively encouraging each other to increase their generosity and to be more public in their giving. So when Graham and Louise Tuckwell, following their \$50m gift for scholarships to ANU, openly congratulate Andrew and Nicola Forrest on their \$65m gift for postgraduate education in Western Australia, they are helping to turn a tide that will lift many boats.

The timing of those Campaigns and the magnificent gifts announced at the time of their public launches helps to explain some of the headline figures in this year’s survey, with New Funds Raised reaching a historic high of \$495m in 2013, while total cash received has peaked in 2014 at \$310m, driven in part by payments being made against the big pledges of last year.

One of the most encouraging indicators in the survey is the number of donors. This acceleration in philanthropy in our part of the world is not all about the Tuckwells and the Berghofers and the Forrests and the Glens. The fact that the 19 universities surveyed recorded 51,357 donors (62 percent of them alumni donors) means that universities are seeing real progress in making this normal: giving to your alma mater or to your local university is a satisfying practice not just for the wealthy but for all of us. As we



start from a low baseline of just one percent of contactable alumni making gifts, there is plenty of room for further improvement.

And that will take hard and dogged work, make no mistake. It's a truism that fundraising is a marathon, not a sprint. But part of the definition of a university is that we are here for the long haul – one of the reasons why education is a compelling destination for bequests (an area in which New Zealand universities have been notably successful). In the early years of building up advancement capacity, institutions have focused investment in fundraising staff. We now have evidence that it is working. We have an invigorating sense of momentum in the sector. As university advancement offices mature, we now need to see a slight rebalancing in favour of investment in alumni relations. This is partly to do with securing a pipeline for future gifts. But it is more profoundly to do with engaging with our alumni communities as advocates and supporters and allies for all that their university is and makes possible.

In engaging with their alumni and with building relationships with donors it has to be recognised that not all universities start from the same place. The figures in this report show, not surprisingly, greater homogeneity between the five New Zealand universities represented here than among the 14 Australian institutions. Of course it is an advantage to be an older foundation, with older and wealthier alumni. We should expect to see differences, therefore, in the return on investment between different kinds of institution.

The Australian Group of Eight research-intensive universities (who initiated this survey exercise three years ago) were relatively early to invest in advancement, driven by an urgent sense of global competition. They can take courage and conviction from the comparisons in the report, not only with each other but also with their Russell Group peers in the UK. Clearly, there is nothing un-Australian about giving to universities – if everyone concerned puts in the work. That “everyone” includes governments and institutional leaders as well as donors and advancement staff. It is healthy for the sector as a whole to see a wider group of universities able to take up the invitation to complete the survey – in itself a badge of their seriousness as philanthropy-ready organisations. Looking to the future, it will be a further measure of maturity for the emerging profession of advancement if we steadily increase the number of universities in both Australia and New Zealand fit enough, in fundraising and alumni terms, to go through the rigours of this benchmarking exercise.

We are most appreciative of the support of our friends at CASE who have made the production of this analysis possible and the use of the Ross-CASE survey tool. We congratulate and thank all the universities who have participated in this exercise for the greater good.

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and Chair of the Committee of Chief Advancement Officers of the Group of Eight, Deakin, RMIT and
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