

MEDIA RELEASE

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SOCIAL TRADERS WELCOMES PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION'S REPORT ON THE NOT FOR PROFIT SECTOR

Social Traders supports a number of recommendations recently made by the Productivity Commission in relation to the Not for Profit Sector.

The Commission's draft report measures the contribution that the Not for Profit (NFP) makes to the Australian economy. It examines the efficiency and effectiveness of the sector and how it could be improved; the nature of relationships between government, business and the NFP sector, and considers the issues associated with tax concessions available to NFPs. The report provides a number of recommendations that the Commission believes can improve the NFPs role and value in Australia.

Social Traders and a number of partner organisations have recently made a submission responding to the Commission's Draft Research Report due to the strong interrelationship between the NFP and Social Enterprise Sectors. In fact, the NFP sector is considered one of the primary drivers in the development of social enterprise across the country.

David Brookes Managing Director of Social Traders said, "We see the Social Enterprise Sector as a component part of the broader NFP Sector here in Australia, similar to the UK where social enterprises are part of the Social Economy. A number of the Commission's recommendations can assist the Not for Profit Sector make an even bigger impact on the economy and we believe this can only help the growth of social enterprises"

"Establishing an Office for Not for Profit Sector Engagement within the Prime Minister's portfolio as proposed by the Commission would provide dedicated resources that can work through a number of the commission's recommendations, if accepted. We also think that this proposed office should be tasked with developing and establishing a strategic framework for the sector that clearly articulates the priorities over the medium to long term: involves the key stakeholders from all sectors, and sets down a timeframe on outcomes"

The joint submission proposes that a Social Enterprise Action Plan is developed by the new Office for Not for Profit Engagement as part of its work with the NFP Sector.

David said, "Social enterprises are alive and well. There's plenty of ingenuity and enthusiasm out there to get new ideas off the ground. We just need to get the support and assistance to people when they need it. We believe a Social Enterprise Action Plan can help everyone involved with the sector to identify and address critical needs."

The submission suggests a number of priority areas including how enterprises can access capital investment, what start-up support should be in place for individuals and communities coming up with good ideas, and what sort of measurement framework should be establishing to capture social enterprises' broader community benefit. Bringing the resources, skills and expertise together from the public, private and community sectors is the best way forward for social enterprise development in Australia.

The joint submission was made on behalf of Jobs Australia, Social Ventures Australia (SVA), Social Firms Australia, School for Social Entrepreneurs (SSE), Wise Employment, National Employment Services Association (NESA) and Adult Multicultural Education Service (AMES).

The Social Trader's response to the Productivity Commission's draft report can be accessed at www.socialtraders.com.au

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