

# Focus on Generosity

- a discussion paper series -

## Cover-memo

*A growing awareness of giving, volunteering and acts of kindness in all their forms offers many opportunities to promote greater generosity throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. The philanthropic and voluntary sectors, the wider non-profit sector, central and local government, the business sector, and academia seem to be increasingly considering their role in civil society, where they fit and how they can contribute. How do we support this and build on it to encourage more New Zealanders to think about their giving – by this we mean giving of time, of money, in-kind and through acts of kindness?*

### Background

Interest in encouraging and supporting giving led to, and grew from, a review of tax incentives for giving and volunteering that began in 2006.

International experience showed that tax changes should be complimented by non-tax initiatives for giving behaviour to change and grow. Therefore, the Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector (OCVS), Philanthropy New Zealand (PNZ) and Volunteering New Zealand (VNZ) got together to see if there was energy to begin further non-tax work on promoting giving in all its forms.

A communities-of-interest meeting held in November 2007 showed there was extensive interest in taking this work forward, thus, a number of individuals from each of the sectors outlined above came together to form the 'Promoting Generosity Hub'. The Hub seeks to develop a sustainable, multi-sectoral approach to encourage and support giving at both national and local levels.

Although mostly government funded, financial contributions for this work have also come from PNZ and in-kind contributions have come from IHC, Origin Design and IBM.

### The Focus on Generosity Series

The Hub sits within a greater advisor and community-of-interest network, which is vital to the project as it offers a wide source of knowledge, experience and expertise. One way the Hub wants to connect with the various networks, groups and individuals working in the 'generosity' space, is through the *Focus on Generosity* series of papers or think pieces.

#### *What is the purpose of the series?*

The purpose of the series is to stimulate discussion between Hub members, advisors and others in order to guide the work of the Hub. We also encourage you to use the *Focus on Generosity* series in your own work, as we know that at times, conversations can in themselves be a catalyst for change.

In addition, once the series is complete we will invite you to a follow-up communities-of-interest meeting to explore where the *Promoting Generosity* project can go next.

### ***When will the series be available?***

Each of the following papers is scheduled to come out over the next nine months.

- *Paper 1: What do we mean by generosity?* This paper will seek to identify the parameters of generosity and to distinguish it from other human activities.

- *Paper 2: What value do we place on generosity?* This paper will draw from existing international and national research to examine the benefits that stem from generosity for both givers and receivers.

- *Paper 3: What do we know about generosity in New Zealand?* This paper will bring together the research and knowledge surrounding generosity and the practice of promoting generosity in New Zealand today, whilst identifying the gaps.

- *Paper 4: What can we do to promote generosity?* Having garnered a better understanding of generosity, this paper will respond to the questions: what can we do? How do we leverage off the strengths of each sector? What is possible now? What in the future?

### **How the series is compiled**

Although generosity is a concept deeply rooted in our beliefs and emotions, the *Focus on Generosity* series will be evidence-based. It will draw from formal research and the local knowledge of those who work in the field, as well as New Zealand's diverse range of cultural practices. The Hub will collate information from: national and international literatures, a scan of the 'generosity' arena in New Zealand and abroad, the November 2007 communities-of-interest meeting and conversations with Hub Advisors and wider communities of interest.

### ***What can I do to aid the process?***

The Hub has already gathered a substantive body of work relating to generosity that will feed into the series, but we would appreciate any information, research or examples you have that is relevant to the generosity of individuals and businesses in New Zealand.

The series is intended to facilitate the sharing of existing knowledge so we can all learn from, and build on it. We hope that it will create discussion, debate and response. Your feedback will be incorporated into an updated *Focus on Generosity* series that will be made available before the follow-up communities-of-interest meeting.

You can contact us at  
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