

Australia's charity reputation in decline; annual research report

Sydney December 22, 2014: The reputation of Australia's leading charities is declining, with most Australians viewing the not for profit sector less favourably in 2014 than in previous years, according to the 2014 Charity Reputation Index.

Released this week and developed by research consultants AMR, part of STW, the annual index also shows that some of the country's most recognisable charities have seen the largest decline in reputation rankings, including The Salvation Army, which fell 17 places to rank 27th overall this year. Other charities to fall in overall reputation include the Heart Foundation, Autism Spectrum Australia and Wesley Mission.

The Charity Reputation Index surveys Australians¹ to measure the overall reputation of the country's 40 largest charities and ranks them accordingly using a scoring system. The measurement also includes a range of dimensions such as Service, Innovation, Workplace, Citizenship, Governance, Leadership and Cost Management.

AMR's Managing Director Oliver Freedman said the raw scores used to measure and rank Charity reputation indicate that the entire sector has suffered a decline in trust in the eyes of Australians.

"The fact that we've seen a drop in the reputation scores that determine overall rankings across the sector demonstrates that Australians are feeling less of an emotional attachment to our charities than ever before," he said.

"It also shows that Australians have less faith in financial management, leadership and the sector's ability to deal with reputational damage."

However, Freedman said despite the overall decline, Australians still view several charities favourably, including Royal Flying Doctor Service which ranked 1st overall for the fourth year running. Guide Dogs rose two places to rank 2nd overall, with St John's Ambulance ranking third for the second year running.

Royal Flying Doctor Service and Guide Dogs also ranked highly across the individual dimensions measured (Innovation, Workplace, Citizenship, Governance, Leadership and Cost Management). Both ranked in the top three on all the individual measurements.

Oxfam also saw a sharp increase in overall reputation, rising from 34th in 2013 to 17th in 2014, and Surf Life Saving Australia increased its ranking by 10 places to rank 7th overall this year, showing its strongest improvement on the individual measures of Leadership, Cost Management and Governance.

By contrast, the Salvation Army ranked poorly across individual dimension measurements, ranking 29th for Leadership, and 31st for Governance. This was a sharp drop from the 2013 measurements, where the Salvation Army ranked 7th for Leadership and 10th for Governance.

¹ N=4066. Data was collected in October 2014.

About the Charity Reputation Index:

The Charity Reputation Index is produced each year by research consultants AMR, which also produces the annual Corporate Reputation Index, Country Reputation Index and City Reputation Index.

The Charity Reputation Index collates insight directly from consumers, and does not rely on any information provided by the organisations being studied.

The list of the Top 40 Australian charities studied in the Charity Reputation Index is compiled by AMR. Organisations are excluded if they are not national, or only have a regional presence.

In addition to collating overall reputation, the Charity Reputation Index also measures how Australians feel about each of the 40 charities according to seven parameters; Services, Innovation, Workplace, Citizenship, Governance, Leadership and Cost Management.

Adults aged 18-64 are surveyed as part of the Charity Reputation Index in Australia, with results weighted to ensure they represent appropriate gender and age groups. For the 2014 index, N=4066. Data was collected in October 2014.

Ends.

A full list of 2014 Charity Reputation Rankings follows.

For more information contact:

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Charity Reputation Index 2013-2014 results		
Charity name	Rank	
	2013	2014
Royal Flying Doctor Service	1	1
Guide Dogs	4	2
St John Ambulance	3	3
National Breast Cancer Foundation	5	4
The Fred Hollows Foundation	6	5
Camp Quality	12	6
Surf Life Saving Foundation	17	7
McGrath Foundation	2	8
Beyond Blue	8	9
Cancer Council	13	10
Australian Red Cross Society	19	11
Starlight Childrens Foundation	7	12
Lifeline Australia	15	13
Leukaemia Foundation of Australia	18	14
RSPCA	9	15
Diabetes Australia	21	16
Oxfam Australia	34	17
St Vincent de Paul Society	16	18
Cerebral Palsy Alliance	23	19
National Heart Foundation of Australia	11	20
Autism Spectrum Australia	14	21
Vision Australia	27	22
Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF)	25	23
The Smith Family	20	24
Multiple Sclerosis Society	24	25
UNICEF Australia	26	26
The Salvation Army	10	27
Wesley Mission	22	28
Barnardos Australia	33	29
World Vision Australia	29	30
Australian Conservation Foundation	36	31
Amnesty International Australia	30	32
Compassion Australia	28	33
CARE Australia	37	34
The Wilderness Society	31	35
Save the Children Australia	38	36
Mission Australia	35	37
ChildFund Australia	32	38
BoysTown	39	39
Greenpeace Australia Pacific	40	40