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A Digital Inclusion Approach to Device Donation and Reuse **Release of the Australian Digital Inclusion Alliance's latest paper**

The Australian Digital Inclusion Alliance (ADIA)'s paper released today, *A Digital Inclusion Approach to Device Donation and Reuse*, highlights demand for affordable digital devices across Australia, challenges and opportunities in the role device donation can play in addressing this demand, and potential policy levers.

Digital inclusion is a multifaceted challenge impacting a considerable number of Australians, with the latest Australian Digital Inclusion Index data showing that around one in four people remain digitally excluded or highly digitally excluded.¹ Additionally, 10.5% of the population only has access to a mobile device, impacting their ability to participate online and develop broad digital skills.

Access to an appropriate and affordable device is a fundamental part of being digitally included. It is a precursor to being able to participate in a range of online activities that have become synonymous with everyday life, including access to government services, banking, telehealth, studying and finding or undertaking employment.

One avenue to meet the demand for devices is encouraging appropriate device donation and reuse. Through an increase in device donation, there is an opportunity to significantly increase the number of devices available to vulnerable Australians.

ADIA member and energy distributor, TasNetworks, is ahead of the curve on device donation in Tasmania. Their Executive Digital, Strategy & Customer, Andrew Davis, says:

“TasNetworks congratulates the ADIA on their continued effort to tackle digital inclusion, and we are proud to be included in this paper providing guidance to Australia on how best we can work together to donate and reuse digital devices to support vulnerable members of our community.”

“Here in Tasmania, TasNetworks donates our used laptops to Neighbourhood House for distribution into the community. We know that access to digital devices is a structural barrier for many Tasmanians, and we hope our efforts inspire other businesses to follow suit” (— Andrew Davis).

¹ Thomas, J., McCosker, A., Parkinson, S., Hegarty, K., Featherstone, D., Kennedy, J., Holcombe-James, I., Ormond-Parker, L., & Ganley, L. (2023). *Measuring Australia's Digital Divide: Australian Digital Inclusion Index: 2023*. Melbourne: ARC Centre of Excellence for Automated Decision-Making and Society, RMIT University, Swinburne University of Technology, and Telstra.

Looking at the impact that corporate device donation can have nationally, Westpac and WorkVentures are celebrating a decades-long partnership supporting vulnerable Australians, with Westpac's Head of Digital Workplace & Contact Centre Platforms, Paul McKenna, and WorkVentures CEO, Caroline McDaid, saying:

“Westpac and WorkVentures are proud to highlight the significant impact achieved through the donation of Westpac's corporate devices in addressing the digital divide. Together, we have supported over 44,000 digitally excluded people in Australia by providing access to quality refurbished technology accompanied by empathetic digital support and coaching. For Westpac, the act of donating devices represents a win-win scenario: it enables a secure and sustainable way to dispose of devices while simultaneously helping Australians in need.”

The ADIA's paper is being discussed at a launch event today with The Smith Family, the Australian Government's First Nations Digital Inclusion Advisory Group, WorkVentures, and the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN). To join the online event, visit: <https://events.humanitix.com/paper-launch-a-digital-inclusion-approach-to-device-donation-and-reuse>

The paper is available on the ADIA website, visit: <https://www.digitalinclusion.org.au/news>

About the ADIA

The Australian Digital Inclusion Alliance (ADIA) is a shared initiative with over 500 business, government, academic and community organisations working together to accelerate action on digital inclusion. Our member organisations conduct a variety of research and practical programs aimed at reducing the digital divide and enabling greater social and economic participation for all Australians. The ADIA is supported by Infolink, Google, Telstra and TasNetworks. Australia Post was also a founding partner.

The ADIA's vision is to build a digitally inclusive Australia where everyone is equipped to fully participate in the economy and society. Being digitally included means a person has:

- Affordable access to quality internet and appropriate devices.
- Access to inclusively designed online content, that's readable and accessible, including if they are differently abled or from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- The knowledge, ability, skills and confidence to complete tasks safely and securely online.