



MEDIA RELEASE

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Good Things Foundation welcomes the Australian Government announcement on digital devices grants for Be Connected Network partners

Good Things Foundation Australia welcomes the [announcement by the Australian Government](#) that it has provided \$1million in digital devices grant funding through its Be Connected program. With this funding, 215 community organisations have been awarded grants of \$2,500 or \$5,000 to purchase loan digital devices.

Prior to Coronavirus restrictions, over 3,000 community organisations ran Be Connected programs through face-to-face workshops. With programs transitioning online, one of the biggest challenges facing isolated older Australians in staying digitally connected during the Coronavirus pandemic is not just a lack of digital skills, but also a lack of digital devices and access to internet.

The grants have been awarded to existing Be Connected Network Partners to enable the purchase of loan digital devices and data for older Australians. This will improve their access to the internet, which has become more important than ever with the pandemic. Older Australians receiving a device will be supported to access learning materials on the Be Connected website. When the pandemic is over, the devices will be returned to community organisations for ongoing use in digital skills programs.

Good Things Foundation manages the Be Connected program in partnership with the Department of Social Services and eSafety Commissioner to reduce the digital divide across the country. Good Things Foundation is administering the digital devices grants in its role as national Be Connected Network and Grants program manager.

"Good Things Foundation is grateful for the support being provided by the Australian Government to assist our dedicated Be Connected Network Partners across Australia as they transition from face-to-face workshops to online support during the pandemic. The \$1million in grants will address a need identified by our network partners; 75 per cent of them told us in a recent survey that access to devices is a challenge for their learners." said Jess Wilson, National Director, Good Things Foundation Australia.

Grants were awarded nationwide, including:

- 59 in New South Wales
- 1 in the Northern Territory
- 22 in Queensland
- 13 in South Australia
- 1 in Tasmania
- 87 in Victoria
- 31 in Western Australia
- 1 in Christmas Island

Be Connected Network Partners include community centres, libraries, men's sheds, Indigenous community groups, disability organisations, employment services providers, and non-English speaking community groups.

People needing support to learn digital skills can access:

- Be Connected website: <https://beconnected.esafety.gov.au>
- Be Connected Helpline 1300 795 897

-Ends-

Available for interview: Jess Wilson: National Director, Good Things Foundation Australia.

For further information, interviews or images, please contact:

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Information for editors:

- The Be Connected Network & Grants program is managed by Good Things Foundation - a social change charity with the vision of a world where everyone can benefit from digital. Find out more at www.goodthingsfoundation.org.au
- Be Connected is an Australian Government initiative designed to increase the confidence, skills and online safety of older Australians.
- More information about the digital devices grant:
www.beconnectednetwork.org.au/grant-program/digital-devices-grant