



## WORKPLACE PROGRAMS AND PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

### WHAT THEY ARE AND HOW THEY WORK

Workplace programs are about building partnerships between community groups, the communities that they work in and employers and employees.

This partnership take many forms– for many people one of the simplest and most straightforward is to support a cause of their choice via a deduction from their pay each pay period. Other people or groups want to build relationships with the organisation or project of their choice in addition to supporting it financially.

Workplace programs can provide all of these things and are a flexible, cheap, convenient and efficient way for people to provide effective support to other Australians and the communities in which they live.

### WHAT ARE THE KEY COMPONENTS OF A WORKPLACE PROGRAM

Workplace programs take many forms but most have the following key features:

- ◆ **The role of the employer:** the employer allows an organisation, such as Earth Share Australia, to coordinate a workplace program on behalf of Australian charities. The employer must wholeheartedly support the program to make it effective by providing several key components without with these programs will not work. These include:
  - Support from the CEO or managing director.
  - Publicity in magazines, newsletters, via email, over the intranet and through meetings.
  - The establishment of a volunteer support network to distribute information and forms.
  - A once a year annual “campaign” in which the program is promoted to everyone.
- ◆ **The role of Earth Share Australia:** Earth Share Australia is a coordinating and facilitating body allowing the employer and employee to support any tax deductible charity or community project of their choice without having to deal with hundreds of different organisations. Employees simply get one donation form (and sometimes a brochure). Earth Share Australia processes and distributes the donations to the charities nominated by the donor as well as providing training and support for the workplace program.
- ◆ **The role of the employee:** The employees choose the charities they wish to support, Sometimes groups of employees or even an entire company workforce will combine to support specific organisations or projects or even a range of projects within their local community. **In addition (and importantly)** the entire program is supported by volunteer employees within the workplace.

### WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF WORKPLACE PROGRAMS?

1. They are **much cheaper to run** than almost any other type of fund raising program. Earth Share Australia and its partner organisations take a maximum only 11 per cent of donations. This compares with a typical cost of 20 to 40 per cent for direct mail for example.
2. **They are convenient and easy.** Employers only have to deal with one organisation. Employees can donate to any organisation of their choice on one form or to a variety of organisations via Earth Share Australia itself. No waste, no complexity and it can all be done at work.
3. **They reach more people.** Although many Australians say they support a range of good causes, only a small number actually contribute financially or in other ways to most of these organisations. This is primarily because it is not easy for them to do so; workplace programs make it easy by bringing the



information and the charities into the workplace and so dramatically increasing the number of people supporting charities

4. **The employer will often match the employees donations** , thereby doubling the amount going to support the charities.
5. **They build partnerships and relationships:** over the years employers, employees and charitable community groups often build strong partnerships by working together. This creates very real benefits for all the parties involved

#### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

**If you already have a workplace program to support charities in your workplace you can contribute to the campaign by:**

- ◆ Donating yourself
- ◆ Assisting with promotion of the program
- ◆ Suggesting to your employer that a formal and pro-active program be set if the current program is very passive. This will dramatically increase employee participation
- ◆ Suggesting that more charities be included (see our information on “donor choice”) as this will also increase employee participation
- ◆ Contact us to assist you with this process

**If there is no workplace program you can:**

- ◆ Suggest to your employer that a program be started
- ◆ Contact us to assist with that process
- ◆ Suggest to your work colleagues that they also encourage your employer to start one.
- ◆ Support charities by donating using our secure on-line donation facility or our direct debit or credit card donation forms.

**Or if you are an employer**

Contact us to talk about how we can work together to start a program with employees and community groups