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\$200m payroll potential for charities

By **MATHEW MURPHY**

BUSINESS and employees can “easily do more” with corporate giving programs, despite tough economic conditions, according to research to be released today.

A report on payroll giving programs funded by PricewaterhouseCoopers, the Australian Charities Fund, Charities Aid Foundation, United Way and the Centre for Social Impact, has

found that Australian businesses are well behind countries such as Canada and Britain in supporting charities.

The report estimates that less than 1 per cent of Australian employees participate in payroll giving programs, despite tax changes introduced in 2002 that allow donations to be made from pre-tax income.

About 5.6 per cent of the Canadian workforce donate

\$228 a year on average in payroll giving, a figure which, if replicated in Australia, would provide an additional \$200 million to local charities.

More than two-thirds of the 150 companies surveyed for the Centre for Social Impact report had never heard of payroll giving.

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