



## Juliette Wright, GIVIT Founder and CEO

An inspired and passionate social justice campaigner, Juliette Wright is on a mission to help alleviate the effects of poverty nation-wide. Founding an online platform in 2009 to connect those who have with those who need and championing it to become one of Australia's leading not-for-profits, Juliette is changing how society helps its most vulnerable people.

Founder and CEO of GIVIT, Juliette created [givit.org.au](http://givit.org.au) to ensure quality goods get to where they are needed most by safely connecting and inspiring an online network of givers. Since establishment, hundreds of thousands of urgent requests for goods and services across Australia have been matched with the resources of community and corporate donors. Australia's most trusted charities are supported by GIVIT, as quality urgently needed items are sourced direct from the public. Its simple, online list enables everyday Australians to see exactly what is required by vulnerable members of their local community.

Juliette started with a goal of making giving easy. She wanted to alleviate the effects of poverty in Australia by ensuring every charity has what it needs through the act of giving.

A naturopath by trade, Juliette graduated from the Australian College of Natural Medicine with a Bachelor Degree and certificates in Acupuncture, Homeopathy and Kinesiology. In 1995 she opened a successful naturopathic clinic where she thrived on helping patients and donating her time and skills to those in need, including women in prison and drug-affected youth.

Following the birth of her second child in 2008, Juliette was surprised at the struggle she endured trying to donate her second-hand baby clothes to someone in need. Instead, local charities were searching desperately for essential items such as sanitary products for women who had fled domestic violence, steel-capped boots to enable unemployed fathers to secure work and clean mattresses to stop children living below the poverty line sleeping on the floor. Juliette quickly realised it wasn't about overloading charities with items, but instead recognising the specific needs they had to help pull their clients out of poverty.

"Trying to give away our baby clothes gave me huge insight into the gap we had in Australia to give directly to those in need," Juliette said. "It was impossible to ring round the thousands of charities which exist to find out who needed baby clothes. I wanted to make giving simple and easy and what better way to do this than online."

Within six months, Juliette had set up a website and recruited 15 charities to request items. After launching the website on Facebook, the first items were donated and the importance of each item realised. A donated bike enabled a single mother to get to work and donated microwave heated meals for a man who had recently lost his wife and was unable to cook. Soon donors were lining up to give and charities were lining up to receive. Within a few weeks 80

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 [givit.org.au](http://givit.org.au)



charities were requesting items and GIVIT quickly turned into a national network, connecting thousands of Australians wanting to support hundreds of charities.

The online platform continued to grow and was inundated in 2011 when Queensland was hit by devastating floods and an overwhelming number of people desperately needed essential items to help rebuild their lives. Then-Premier Anna Bligh turned to Juliette for help and GIVIT became the state government's official website for matching donors and recipients so charities weren't swamped with excess goods. The GIVIT website received 1.8 million hits in 10 days and more than 33,500 goods were matched in three weeks. This led to the establishment of a dedicated GIVIT Disaster Recovery service.

In 2013 the Queensland Government entered into an official partnership with GIVIT to manage all goods and services, including corporate offers of assistance, during the recovery phase of disasters. The service has been activated during the Bundaberg floods, Cyclone Ita, Tropical Cyclone Marcia, Ravenshoe Café Explosion and other events. GIVIT is the only reliable source of exactly what is needed in disaster recovery. In 2015, the Bankwest Foundation brought GIVIT on to help manage offers of donated goods during disaster recovery in Western Australia.

Driven, inspired and ambitious, in 2014 Juliette launched GIVIT Kids, an online portal providing a fun and safe way for children to give new or pre-loved belongings to meet the urgent material needs of Australian families and children. GIVIT Kids aims to engage youths in giving and help develop a philanthropic culture in young Australians. The unique, fun and interactive website [givitkids.org.au](http://givitkids.org.au) empowers children to support others by safely and anonymously giving to impoverished, isolated and marginalised members of their local community.

GIVIT Kids was "born" when Juliette heard shocking statistics relating to childhood poverty indicating one in six Australian children are living at or below the poverty line. She decided then and there to commit to improving those statistics. Under Juliette's guidance, GIVIT Kids worked with the Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment (DETE) to develop teaching resources to support the Years 3, 5 and 6 Australian Civics and Citizenship Curriculum.

As a prominent social justice campaigner, Juliette was awarded Australia's Local Hero by the National Australia Day Council, National Resilient Australia Award by Australia's Attorney-General, The Australian National Innovation Challenge Award, Australian Businesswomen's Network Hall of Fame 2015, Ernst & Young Queensland Entrepreneur of the Year, Telstra Business Women's Social Enterprise Finalist, Cosmopolitan's Women of the Year Finalist, Westpac Community Leader Finalist, Telstra Queensland Business Women's Award for Innovation Finalist, recipient of the Vodafone Foundation's World of Difference program and Citizen of the Year in Dickson 2012. When not championing GIVIT, Juliette is wife to successful industrial, commercial and property real estate entrepreneur Glen Wright and mother to their two young children, Sara and Hudson.

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