



**Cass Business School**  
CITY UNIVERSITY LONDON



Date: 20 June 2012

## **Big Society or Better Society?**

*New report calls for 'proper discussion' on charitable giving in the UK*

Charitable giving in the UK needs powerful new perspectives if the government's hopes for a Big Society are to be successful.

Analysis of the government's social investment strategy found it to be paradoxical and fragmented, despite the commitment to the Big Society, with funding cuts undermining the very projects the initiative seeks to encourage.

While philanthropy plays a vital part in society, its contribution is limited by the values of donors. Hence, philanthropic policy and decision-making need to be directed at areas where giving is most needed and in ways that lead to greater inclusion, diversity and social justice.

These are the conclusions of a new report from the ESRC Centre for Charitable Giving and Philanthropy (CGAP), a consortium of universities and NCVO co-ordinated at Cass Business School, part of City University London. The report brings together leading CGAP academic experts to discuss the opportunities and challenges for philanthropy under the Big Society umbrella.

It also states that corporate giving is guided by the values of a company's board and does not necessarily reflect the needs of the local area.

The authors argue that the sector needs to focus on entrepreneurial philanthropy. Charitable start-ups answer specific needs within a community and, as such, have the capacity to grow and develop into strong resources which will help to moderate the individualism that characterises much of today's charitable giving.

Professor Cathy Pharoah, Co-Director of CGAP said:

"Philanthropy is increasingly vital to people at the sharp end of current economic and social upheaval. Our work shows that we need to re-think how to direct our help to where it is most

needed. There are many new opportunities to get involved in philanthropy, and in making a difference to society, and Government and others are supporting some dynamic initiatives. It's about much more than giving money, it's about sharing views, visions and values for a better big society."

**For more information contact:**

**Helen Merrills, Press Assistant, Cass Business School**

**tel: +44 (0)20 7040 4191**

**e-mail: [helen.merrills.1@city.ac.uk](mailto:helen.merrills.1@city.ac.uk)**

**About Sir John Cass Business School**

Cass Business School, which is part of City University London, delivers innovative, relevant and forward-looking education, consultancy and research. Located in the heart of one of the world's leading financial centres, Cass is the business school for the City of London.

Our MBA, specialist Masters and undergraduate degrees have a global reputation for excellence, and the School supports nearly 100 PhD students. Cass offers the widest portfolio of specialist Masters programmes in Europe. It also has the largest faculties of Finance and Actuarial Science and Insurance in the region. It is ranked in the top 10 UK business schools for business, management and finance research and 90 per cent of its research output is internationally significant.

Cass is a place where students, academics, industry experts, business leaders and policy makers can enrich each other's thinking. For further information visit: [www.cass.city.ac.uk](http://www.cass.city.ac.uk)

**About the ESRC Centre for Charitable Giving and Philanthropy (CGAP)**

The ESRC Centre for Charitable Giving and Philanthropy (CGAP) is the first academic centre in the UK dedicated to research on charitable giving and philanthropy. Three main research strands focus on individual and business giving, social redistribution and charitable activity, and the institutions of giving. CGAP is a consortium comprising Cass Business School, University of Edinburgh Business School, University of Kent, University of Southampton, University of Strathclyde Business School and NCVO. CGAP's coordinating 'hub' is based at Cass Business School. CGAP is funded by the ESRC, the Office for Civil Society, the Scottish Government and Carnegie UK Trust. For more information visit [www.cgap.org.uk](http://www.cgap.org.uk)