

## **MEDIA RELEASE: Juliette Wright, GIVIT Founder & Director, visiting North Townsville Community Hub to meet with residents returning to their homes.**

GIVIT's Founder and Director Juliette Wright, OAM, will visit the North Townsville Community Hub on Tuesday, March 26.

**Mrs Wright will be available from 11.15am – 11.45am for media interviews to discuss GIVIT's current and ongoing purchasing of items that are helping residents get back into their homes.**

GIVIT is working with Townsville charities to provide essential items to local residents recovering from the floods and has already provided more than 165,000 items which have helped many return to their homes.

GIVIT Founder and Director Juliette Wright said, as in all disaster recovery operations, the online not-for-profit had activated additional resources to provide the extra support required by GIVIT's charity partners but welcomed the additional support provided yesterday for further purchasing resources.

"At the moment the longest it is taking us to process a request for an essential item, once we receive it from the charity, is two weeks. Many requests are able to be met within days. With additional resources we will be able to bring that processing time down even further, which will see even more people settling back into their homes." Juliette said.

"GIVIT is working closely with charities in the region to prioritise the most urgent requests," she said. "Our charity partners assess an individual's need before passing on requests for items to GIVIT. If GIVIT is able to provide the item, we coordinate to buy it locally in accordance with the instructions provided to us by the charity making the request for their client."

GIVIT receives and processes the requests for essential items, while non-essential requests are listed on the website for direct donation by members of the public. For example requests for items such as X-Boxes are not purchased using donated funds, however they do remain on the GIVIT website in case a member of the public wishes to donate a X-Box directly.

GIVIT does not reject requests, however, GIVIT is not able to provide items listed on its Prohibited List: <http://givit.org.au/terms#Prohibited>, or items that involve an ongoing fee – e.g. rental of whitegoods, storage.

Mrs Wright acknowledged that some residents were expressing frustration that their requested items were not being delivered fast enough. "Agencies are dedicated to working as quickly as possible through the necessary processes to ensure items are distributed to those most in need. If a request has been prioritised by a recovery charity then GIVIT expedites the purchase with local suppliers as much as we can." she said.

“This has been an unprecedented weather event and it will take time to meet the enormous need. GIVIT prioritises urgent requests based on the information given to us by our charity partners and at this stage those items include beds, bedding, towels, fridges and washing machines. These are the bare basic items people need to return to their homes.”

Mrs Wright said 100 per cent of funds donated to GIVIT’s Queensland Floods Appeal would be used to purchase items needed by flood-affected community members.

The Community Recovery Hubs have been an extraordinary resource for locals who have been able to meet with someone face-to-face and ascertain what they need moving forward. A simple request form is then completed by the charity and sent to GIVIT for action.

“This is such an incredibly emotional and stressful time, and for many people it is hard to ask for help. I have also personally met the many, many volunteers working in the recovery hubs and they on the whole do an amazing job.” Juliette said.

Affected individuals should connect with a recovery agency or charity for all of their needs to be assessed. Requests forwarded by these agencies to GIVIT are managed by the purchasing team. The team, comprising of paid staff and volunteers, manage the purchasing process as well as supporting our relationship with local suppliers and charities.

GIVIT purchases, using donated funds, are prioritised according to urgent need, and requests for beds, linen, fridges, washing machines, grocery and clothing vouchers are being filled first in this current round of requests.

The type of need is expected to change as time elapses since the impact of the monsoonal trough. While genuine need is still to be determined by recovery agencies and local charities, it is expected it will look more like items needed to repair homes – e.g. hardware vouchers, donated tools, hot water systems, stoves etc – along with items to relieve ongoing financial hardship – e.g. grocery, clothing and fuel vouchers, school needs.

“GIVIT is here for the long term – no matter how long it takes Townsville to recover, we will be here,” Juliette said.

**Note: SuperCars drivers Jamie Winchup and Will Davidson will arrive at the hub to meet volunteers, staff and residents from 11.55am – 12.15pm and join Juliette in delivering another package of IGA vouchers worth \$5k.**

**For further information or interviews please contact GIVIT’s Media Team**

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## About GIVIT

GIVIT is a national online not-for-profit connecting those who need with those willing to give. Through its website [givit.org.au](http://givit.org.au), trusted Australian charities are supported as they request essential, quality items on behalf of their clients. GIVIT matches their needs with public and corporate generosity, facilitating quality goods to reach our most vulnerable, impoverished and marginalised individuals in a safe, easy and timely manner. Since establishment in 2009, more than one million items have been donated via GIVIT to assist Australians in need. In 2011 GIVIT established its disaster recovery service following the Queensland floods and managed the donation of more than 18,000 items. Since then GIVIT has become the official partner of the Queensland Government managing offers of assistance after disasters on its behalf and is currently distributing tens of thousands of items after 2019 Queensland flooding. GIVIT distributed more than 16,000 items to people in need after the 2018 Queensland fires and after 2017’s Tropical Cyclone Debbie, coordinated the donation of 92,000 items. In 2015, GIVIT gained national attention with Founder and Director Juliette Wright receiving Australia’s Local Hero Award by the National Australia Day Council and inducted into the Australian Businesswomen’s Network Hall of Fame. In 2019, she was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM). GIVIT also received a National Resilient Australia Award by Australia’s Attorney-General for its disaster recovery service and The Australian National Innovation Challenge Award.