Foreword

The energy, scholarship and working knowledge evident in the presenta-
tions and exchange of ideas at the international Modernising Charity Law
conference held in Brisbane in April 2009 has been maintained in the pro-
duction of this collection of papers that originated at the conference. The
conference was held at a critical time for reflection on significant reforms
affecting charities and charity law in some jurisdictions and consideration
of the possibility of greater reform in other jurisdictions, against the impact
of the global financial crisis. As with any good conference, general themes
emerged during the presentation of the papers and panel discussions that
did not necessarily reflect the anticipated structure of the conference. This
has been accommodated by the ordering of the chapters in this volume to
cover these themes in a methodical way (rather than the order in which
papers were presented), as is explained in the introduction to the volume.

The work of charities was important to English society when the Statute
of Elizabeth was enacted in 1601. Charities remain important to the func-
tioning of society in each jurisdiction, but their role and the regulation
and nature of charities have changed significantly since 1601 and will con-
tinue to change to meet the challenges of a dynamic society that demands
transparency and accountability where any use of public funds or benefit
arising from charitable status is involved.

This volume is an excellent resource for those who wish to make a
comparative study of recent developments in charity law in a number
of jurisdictions, or wish to gain a better understanding of the current
issues in the area of charity law and the regulation of charities, or simply
wish to ponder on the possibilities for future reforms. I congratulate
the Australian Centre for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies at the
Queensland University of Technology for its foresight in organising the
Modernising Charity Law conference and the authors of this volume, not
only for their scholarship, but for cooperating to produce this cohesive
work to enable the benefits of the engagement at that conference to be
available to a much wider audience.

Justice Debra Mullins
Supreme Court of Queensland, Brisbane

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