



Benefits to the Tasmanian economy from allowing same-sex couples to marry

\$134,680,000

... that's the potential windfall to the Tasmanian economy if it becomes the first state to allow same-sex marriages.

The Australian same-sex wedding spend

Currently no Australian state allows same-sex couples to marry. But a nationwide survey of same-sex couples by the University of Queensland in 2009 found that 54% would marry if they could.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics just over 50,000 same-sex couples indicated their relationship on the 2006 Census, a figure it says is a significant underestimate of the actual number.

If 54% of Australia's 50,000 same-sex couples were to spend the national average on their wedding they would inject **\$742 million** into the national economy.

The benefits for Tasmania of being first

There are economic benefits that would flow by having Tasmania at the top of queue on same-sex marriages. Look at the gains made by the California economy from being the first cab off the rank in recognising same-sex marriages as legitimate.

Bruce Felmingham, reader in economics at the University of Tasmania, August 2011

A survey by Australian Marriage Equality of over 800 partners across Australia who support marriage equality found that **87%** would marry in Tasmania if it were the first state to allow same-sex marriages.

That translates to a potential 22,750 couples who would marry in Tasmania. Of these couples 60%, or potentially 13,468 couples, said they would spend \$10,000 dollars or more on their wedding.

This means the potential same-sex wedding spend in Tasmania if it is the first state to allow same-sex marriages is **\$134,680,000**.

This would be welcome income for small businesses in the wedding and hospitality industries. It would also be a much-needed injection into the state economy.

Figures at a glance

■ **\$742m***

The amount contributed to the Australian economy as a whole if same-sex couples were allowed to marry.

■ **\$134.7m**

The amount contributed to the Tasmanian economy if it were the first state to allow same-sex couples to marry.

** This figure is calculated by multiplying the number of same-sex couples in the Census by the percentage who indicate they will marry when it is legal by the average Australian wedding spend.*

The overseas experience

The overseas experience shows that states which take the lead in allowing same-sex marriages reap massive economic benefits.

New York is one of the first US states to allow out-state same-sex couples to marry. It has been estimated that this will be worth up to \$1 billion for the New York economy.

Mexico City remains the first Mexican state to allow same-sex marriages. The Mexico City Tourism Authority estimates same-sex marriage is worth \$100,000 a month to the city's economy.

If Tasmania allows same-sex marriages it has the potential to benefit in the same way from the strong desire of same-sex partners to tie the knot.



If Tasmania was the first state to allow same-sex couples to marry it would expand the number of couples marrying in Tasmania by several hundred percent. The impact would be spread across a wide and diverse range of small businesses from the obvious ones like celebrants, clothing retailers, florists and photographers through to accommodation, food and wine, gifts and travel. This is smart economics.

Steve Mihalenko, co-publisher, Bride Tasmania magazine

The hidden economic benefits

The economic benefits of allowing same-sex marriages is not just from wedding spend. 12% of the partners who responded to the AME survey were heterosexuals who said they would be marry in Tasmania if it led the way on equality.

This reflects the greater appeal Tasmania would have to the global creative class if it were to be seen as a more inclusive and accepting society that values equality.