

## FLINDERS UNIVERSITY

### Citation for the Award of Doctor of the University *honoris causa*

#### Ms Taryn Brumfitt

Taryn Brumfitt is an award-winning filmmaker, bestselling author, and internationally sought-after keynote speaker. Named Australian of the Year in 2023, she is a fiercely passionate advocate for social change whose message has reached over 200 million people worldwide.

Taryn is the co-executive Director of The Embrace Collective, founder of the Body Image Movement, director of the *Embrace* and *Embrace Kids* films, and author of five books. Her global crusade to help people embrace their bodies has earned her recognition from international advocacy groups, including United Nations Women, Amy Poehler's Smart Girls, and the Geena Davis Institute.

The mother of four first stepped into the public eye in 2013, when a simple 'before and after' photo on Facebook went viral for showing Taryn in two different lights. The first showed her confidently posing in a bikini during a bodybuilding competition, while the second celebrated her body in a natural, relaxed state with no filters. This non-traditional comparison defied societal 'norms' and resonated with millions of people worldwide, leading to a flood of positive emails from those who connected with Taryn's story.

The overwhelming reaction inspired her to write her first book and create her documentary, *Embrace*, which tackles the serious issue of women's body loathing and Taryn's journey toward body acceptance. One of the most successful documentaries in Australian history, *Embrace* generated more than \$3.5 million in global revenue and fuelled the transformation of lives everywhere.

Driven by her mission for meaningful change, Taryn founded the Body Image Movement, which has connected with millions of people around the world. The movement promotes body acceptance while challenging toxic messages in media and advertising and sharing stories from the heart and resources for the mind.

In 2022, she released her second documentary, *Embrace Kids*. The compelling follow-up to *Embrace* combines Taryn's powerful message with an all-star cast to teach nine- to 14-year-olds how to move, nourish, respect and appreciate their bodies.

Taryn collaborated with body image researcher Dr Zali Yager to create a companion parenting book for *Embrace Kids*. Together, they have also launched the Embrace Hub — a free, research-based resource for teachers, parents, children, and communities to help foster body positivity. This powerful research is presented through creative and engaging products for parents, educators, and families in the places where young people live, learn and play. During Taryn's time as the 2023 Australian of the Year, they reached 1 million Australian children, and they're on track to reach that number again this year.

Taryn's desire to empower people of all ages in building a healthy relationship with their body has recently led to the launch of *Embrace* parenting magazine. This vibrant publication features uplifting stories and practical, science-backed advice on embracing our bodies and nurturing our children to do the same. One hundred percent of the magazine's proceeds go to The Embrace Collective charity, which Taryn has raised \$6.2 million for, continuing to change countless lives globally.

Taryn has taken her message around the world, from some of Australia's most remote communities all the way to The White House and everywhere in between. She has delivered over 250 keynote addresses, presenting at the National Press Club, Harvard University, and SXSW (in Austin, Texas and Sydney), and her talk at Google HQ in Silicon Valley was live streamed to every Google office worldwide.

In 2018, she was recognised in the Australian Financial Review *100 Women of Influence* awards, and received the SA Award for *Excellence in Women's Leadership from Women and Leadership Australia*. That same year, she was named *EY Entrepreneur of the Year* for South Australia, and was General Electric's highest-rated speaker.

Flinders University is proud to partner with The Embrace Collective through the work of the Embrace Impact Lab at Flinders University. This collaboration enables multidisciplinary researchers to connect research, policy, and practice to improve body image, health, and wellbeing at every stage of life. This unique partnership ensures that valuable insights come from universities about the efficacy of the programs, while also gathering invaluable information about the latest community needs, helping to bridge the gap in knowledge translation.

**With a powerful, universal message to help people embrace their bodies and an unwavering commitment to her cause, Taryn Brumfitt is a true force to be reckoned with and an extremely worthy recipient of a Doctor of the University *honoris causa* from Flinders University.**