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# RESERVE BANK OF FIJI

## MEDIA NOTE

08 November 2018

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### 2018 NATIONAL MICROFINANCE AWARDS CALL FOR NOMINATIONS, DUE 31 JANUARY 2019

The 2018 National Microfinance Awards' nomination process has now opened and nominations are due on **31 January 2019**. The Reserve Bank of Fiji is inviting small business owners and financial institutions to submit their nominations.

Nominations are open to local registered business enterprises with an average annual sales or turnover of up to \$30,000, and successfully operating for at least three years. Financial institutions which provide services to the micro-finance market are also encouraged to make nominations.

Three (3) new awards have been added in 2018 which brings to seven (7), the total award categories as follows:

- (i) Best Microfinance Entrepreneur (Individual);
- (ii) Best Microfinance Entrepreneur (Partnership);
- (iii) Best Young Microfinance Entrepreneur;
- (iv) Best Microfinance Service Provider;
- (v) Best Innovative Microfinance Enterprise (new in 2018);
- (vi) Best Microfinance Farmer of the Year (new in 2018);
- (vii) Rising Star – Start-Up Award (new in 2018).

The awards have been by generously sponsored by:

**Gold Sponsors** – ANZ Banking Groups; HFC Bank; Westpac Banking Corporation and the Pacific Financial Inclusion Programme;

**Silver Sponsors** – Bank South Pacific Limited, Life Insurance Corporation of India;

**Bronze Sponsors** – Bank of Baroda; BRED Bank Fiji Limited.

Reserve Bank of Fiji Governor and Chairman of the National Financial Inclusion Taskforce, Mr Ariff Ali, has expressed his sincere gratitude for the overwhelming support of the sponsors which is reflective of the ongoing commitment of financial institutions and donor agencies to the important objective of developing Fiji's microfinance sector. The Reserve Bank of Fiji appreciates the strong partnership it has with the individual sponsors in recognising the contributions of outstanding and promising micro-businesses to Fiji's economic development.

All sponsors have also expressed their delight to be part of this annual event in 2018, as they support success stories of small entrepreneurs and assist in strengthening their brands to be recognised as leaders in their different industries

ANZ's Country Head Fiji & Head of Commercial, Pacific, Mr Saud Minam, stated that they were happy to participate and contribute towards these prestigious awards adding, "Every year we look forward to meet new entrepreneurs and listen to their success stories. This is very close to our hearts; helping people, customers and communities thrive".



Commenting on their sponsorship, Mr Brett Hooker General Manager Westpac Fiji said the “Westpac Microfinance markets provide a great avenue for micro entrepreneurs to sell their wares and this year we are honoured to be a Gold sponsor of the 2018-2019 National Microfinance Awards. The awards help the winners strengthen their brand and be recognised as leaders in their industries. We wish all the entrants all the very best.”

The Pacific Financial Inclusion Programme Project Manager Mr Braem Peters said that the Microfinance awards continue to be a great platform to recognise the efforts made by those financial service providers that made a genuine effort to provide financial services for all Fijians and the remarkable achievements of micro entrepreneurs. “We are proud to be a gold sponsor of this important event and encourage all Service Providers to continue to develop products and services that are suitable as well as affordable for all Fijians.”

Chief Executive Officer HFC Bank, Mr Rakesh Ram said that HFC is proud to be a Gold sponsor this year. “Being Fiji’s only locally owned bank, we are pleased to support our micro entrepreneurs given their contribution to Fiji’s socio-economic development.”

Application forms and further details on the 2018 National Microfinance Awards can be obtained from [www.rbf.gov.fj](http://www.rbf.gov.fj)

The awards ceremony will take place on 28 March 2019.

**For further information, please contact:-**

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