

# RESERVE BANK OF FIJI

## *PRESS RELEASE*



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### **NOMINATIONS FOR NATIONAL MICROFINANCE AWARDS OPEN**

The Reserve Bank of Fiji in collaboration with its stakeholders, calls for nominations for this year's National Microfinance Awards. The Awards recognise outstanding micro entrepreneurs and industry leaders in Fiji.

Small business owners with an annual sales or turnover of up to \$30,000 and successfully operating for at least three years and institutions that offer financial services to this market segment are encouraged to make a submission any time between now and 30 September 2017.

Gold sponsors this year are ANZ Banking Group Limited and the Pacific Financial Inclusion Programme (PFIP). Silver sponsors are the Life Insurance Corporation of India and Bank of South Pacific and Bank of Baroda are the Bronze sponsors.

“We’re committed to Fiji and helping our communities thrive, through the support of these important National Microfinance Awards,” ANZ Fiji Country Head, Mr Saud Minam said. “This is an excellent initiative to help MSMEs grow and we want to be a part of their success journey.”

Commenting on the Launch of the 2017 National Microfinance Awards, Mr Ariff Ali, the Acting Governor for the Reserve Bank of Fiji said, “We are delighted with the commitment and support from our partners and sponsors who have rallied behind us again this year. We appreciate and recognise that micro, small and medium enterprises are critical to our economy as these enterprises form the backbone of activity at the grass root level.”

PFIP Programme Manager, Mr Mark Flaming said access to credit plays a pivotal role in economic growth as it allows people to save and invest available assets and resources, which further supports and strengthens economic activity. He added, “PFIP continues to collaborate with the RBF to support the awards because we firmly believe that access to financial services enables existing businesses to grow and provides the necessary capital for start-up businesses.”

He also encouraged financial institutions to continue to innovate with financial services to further financial inclusion for the unbanked communities in Fiji.

Details on the Awards and the application forms can be found on [www.rbf.gov.fj](http://www.rbf.gov.fj). A new Innovation Award will be given out this year to honour and recognise individuals or companies that demonstrate an innovative approach to financial inclusion in Fiji. The winners will be announced at an Awards function in November 2017.