



**TVET PASIFIKA**

TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION  
AND TRAINING FOR THE PACIFIC

# **FNU TVET Pasifika 2025**

*Advising the Industry and the Community*







Message from Pro-Vice Chancellor TVET Pasifika & NTPC	2
Trade Testing: A Gateway to Skilled Workforce	4
The Importance of Boiler Operations: Training & Inspections	7
Meeting Fiji's Growing Demand for Skilled Trades	10
Future Prospects in Fashion & Designing	14
The Department of Tourism, Hospitality and Trade: Offerings and Events for 2025	17
Elevating Hospitality Through Smart Tourism: A Preview of the 2025 National Hospitality Conference	20
Strengthening Fiji's Workforce NTPC and the Department of Community Based Non Formal Education	23
Towards Innovative Quality Circles (IQC's)	26
Aligning Technical Vocational Education & Training (TVET) Programs to Modern Development Trends	28
Inclusive Education for our Communities Through TAFE's Advanced Diploma of Leadership & Management	31
The Power of Persuasion and Active Listening in Building Strong Customer Relationships	34
ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management Systems in Fiji	37
Revolutionizing Workplace Safety: Highlights from the 2025 Fiji OHS Conference	40
Fiji Launches First Ever Certificate Program on Artificial Intelligence for Business Productivity & Innovation	43
Fiji OHS Conference: A Legacy of Workplace Safety and the Vision for 2025	46
Embracing Green Productivity Fiji's Path to Sustainable Growth Through APO Partnership	49
Enhancing Workforce Development: TSLs-Funded Training at FNU's NTPC under the Department of Community Based Non-Formal Education	52
Fiji Gears Up for the 6th National Conference on Information Technology	56
Unlocking Opportunities with a Glass Aluminum Joinery Course	59
Workshop and Electricity Safety Training Programs: Ensuring a Safer Workplace	62
Enhancing Construction Training for a Sustainable Workforce in Fiji	65
Driven by Wires Technology	68
A Smart Solution for Sustainable Water Use	71
Industrial Trends in Key Engineering Sectors	74
Fiji OHS Conference 2025-An Opportunity to Network, Collaborate and Learn	78
Emotional Intelligence Training: Missing Link in Workplace Success	81
Department of Executive Management	84
Power Down, Stay Safe: The Importance of Lockout/ Tag Out in Manufacturing	87
From Isolation to Digital Empowerment: Rotuma's Journey with the Smart Islands Program	90
Empowering Fiji's Future: Free Training at TVET Pasifika Centre	93
The Importance and Impact of the Construction Industry on the Society	95
Apprenticeship: A Pathway to a Skilled Future	98
Why SMEs in Fiji Should Embrace the Fiji Business Excellence Awards in 2025	101
NCIT: A Vision That Sparked a Movement in Fiji's Tech Landscape	104
Why Trade Tests Should Be Embraced by All Nations	107
Driving Skills, Productivity and Innovation: NTPC's Training Programs Empower Fiji's Workforce	110
Building Skills, Shaping Futures: DTHT at NTPC-FNU Expands Accredited Training at National Events	114
Hospitality Art Fair Returns to FNU: A Weeklong Showcase of Talent, Taste & Creativity	117
Leveraging South Korea's Health Care Innovations to Boost Productivity in Fiji	120
Productivity Measurement & Its Importance for SME's	123

## Message from Pro Vice Chancellor - TVET Pasifika & NTPC



It is with great pleasure that I present this booklet, which compiles the collective industry and community consultations and advice from our qualified and experienced TVET trainers and lecturers from the National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC) at FNU's TVET Pasifika.

This compilation reflects our shared commitment to strengthening Fiji's human resource through skills development, productivity enhancement, and innovation-driven growth. It captures the shared knowledge, skills and experiences achieved over decades of industry and community based TVET training delivery.

As Fiji navigates a rapidly changing economic landscape shaped by technological advancement, global competition, and evolving workforce demands, TVET Pasifika through FNU remain firmly focused on relevance, quality, and impact. This 2025 compilation emphasise the importance of effective engagement with industry, communities, and key stakeholders to ensure that our training and productivity initiatives are aligned with real-world needs.

Central to this approach is our commitment to equipping Fiji's workforce—particularly our youths, the unemployed, and those in rural communities—with not only technical skills, but also the right attitudes, adaptability, and innovative mindsets required to thrive in today's dynamic economy. By fostering closer partnerships with industry and communities, we aim to bridge skills gaps, enhance employability, and support sustainable economic development.

I invite you to explore this booklet and its various topics and join us in shaping a future where skills, productivity, and innovation drive national progress.

Vinaka vakalevu

*Dr Isimefi Tagicakivurata*

Pro Vice Chancellor - TVET Pasifika & NTPC





## TRADE TESTING: A GATEWAY TO SKILLED WORKFORCE

by Richard Gaunavou | Trade Testing Officer

In today's rapidly evolving economy, practical skills and competencies are essential for both personal career growth and the broader development of industries. Trade testing, a systematic evaluation of individuals' technical skills and expertise, plays a pivotal role in ensuring that the workforce is not only competent but also capable of meeting the demands of various professions. By offering accurate assessments of skills, trade testing benefits employers, employees, and the economy as a whole by improving job alignment, enhancing productivity, and fostering workforce satisfaction.

The National Trade Testing Scheme, a cornerstone initiative of the National Training Productivity Centre (NTPC), has been instrumental in providing skills assessment and certification in 29 diverse trades. Recognized nationwide for its credibility and impact, over 31,775 tradespeople have undertaken skills assessments to date. This achievement underscores the importance of skills validation in building a resilient and skilled workforce. The scheme continues to inspire tradespeople across the nation to hone their skills, validate their expertise, and unlock new opportunities for career advancement.

## A Vision for the Future

During the recent Conference on Resetting TVET held in Nadi, the demand for skilled labor echoed throughout the 2 days. TVET can make a meaningful contribution to growing the economy and creating the required skills pool and a pipeline of talent capable of addressing challenges facing unemployment, underemployment, and skills mismatches. The conference emphasized the critical role of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in equipping individuals with practical skills and knowledge tailored to meet industry demands.

Key discussions revolved around fostering stronger partnerships between industry and training institutions, enhancing the quality of training programs, and promoting innovation in skill development to align with emerging technologies and market trends. Delegates highlighted the need to prioritize apprenticeship programs, upskilling, and reskilling initiatives to ensure a dynamic and adaptable workforce.

The conference also underscored the importance of inclusivity in TVET, aiming to provide equal opportunities for women, youth, and marginalized communities to access quality training. By investing in TVET, stakeholders agreed that Fiji and the Pacific region could build a resilient workforce that drives sustainable economic growth, supports job creation, and effectively addresses the evolving demands of local and global labor markets.

## Why Trade Testing Matters

Trade testing offers numerous benefits for both individuals and organizations. For individuals, it provides a structured pathway to validate their skills, gain industry-recognized certification, and enhance their employability. Certification serves as a tangible acknowledgment of their expertise, opening doors to better job opportunities, higher wages, and career progression. Additionally, the process of preparing for trade tests often encourages candidates to refine their skills and stay updated with industry standards.





For employers, trade testing ensures that their workforce meets the required competency levels, leading to improved efficiency, safety, and quality of work. It enables organizations to identify skill gaps, invest in targeted training, and build a highly skilled team. Moreover, hiring certified tradespeople reduces the risk of errors and enhances customer satisfaction, ultimately contributing to the company's reputation and success.

On a national level, trade testing supports economic development by aligning workforce capabilities with market demands. A skilled workforce drives productivity, innovation, and competitiveness, positioning the nation as an attractive destination for investment and growth. By standardizing skills across industries, trade testing also facilitates labor mobility, both within the country and internationally.

### The National Trade Testing Scheme: A Commitment to Excellence

The National Trade Testing Scheme's success is rooted in its commitment to providing high-quality assessments and certifications. Covering 29 trades ranging from welding and electrical work to carpentry and automotive mechanics, the scheme caters to a broad spectrum of industries. This comprehensive approach ensures that tradespeople from diverse backgrounds have the opportunity to validate their skills and achieve their career goals.

### Encouraging Participation in Trade Testing

There remains a vast untapped pool of skilled tradespeople who have yet to take advantage of this opportunity. To bridge this gap, it is crucial to raise awareness about the benefits of trade testing and address any barriers to participation. Employers, industry associations, and training institutions can play a key role in promoting the scheme and supporting tradespeople in their journey toward certification.

FNU's Outreach initiatives, such as roadshows, are being held in all major city and town centers to raise awareness about its programs, services, and opportunities. You can visit our booths to obtain more information, or you can contact us via email at [enquiries\\_tradetest@fnu.ac.fj](mailto:enquiries_tradetest@fnu.ac.fj) or call us at +679 9988573.

**A Testimony of Success: Saula Waqa's Journey**  
One such inspiring story is that of Saula Waqa, a welder employed at 4R Electrical. Saula recently received his Class III Trade Test certificate, a milestone that marks the beginning of a promising journey toward higher certification and professional excellence. Expressing his gratitude to the National Trade Testing Department, Saula shared, "I would like to thank The National Trade Testing Department of The National Training Productivity Centre for assisting me in upgrading my skills, and I look forward to doing Class II." His sentiments reflect the life-changing impact of trade testing, which not only validates existing skills but also motivates individuals to pursue continuous improvement.

As a national representative for the Fiji Soccer Team and a member of the Lautoka Club, Saula exemplifies the balance between athletic achievement and professional development. His dedication to both his trade and his sport serves as a testament to the value of hard work, discipline, and a commitment to growth.

When asked for advice to future candidates considering the Trade Test, Saula emphasized the enduring demand for skilled tradespeople. "Trade is something that is in demand always, so I urge people with vast experience to take up the Trade Test for a brighter future," he said. His words resonate as a call to action for tradespeople across the nation to seize the opportunity and secure their place in a competitive job market.



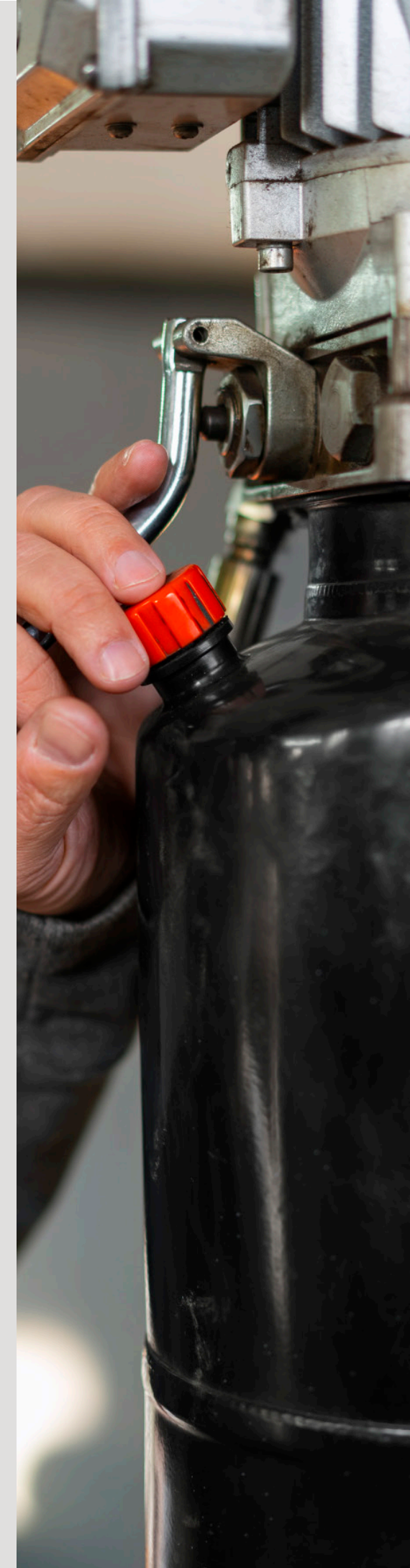
## THE IMPORTANCE OF BOILER OPERATIONS TRAINING AND INSPECTIONS

by Pauliasi Mawa | Senior Technical Officer

**B**oilers are an integral part of many industries, providing steam and heat for various processes. Proper training and regular inspections for boiler operations are essential to ensure safety, efficiency, and longevity. Neglecting these areas can lead to operational failures, environmental hazards, financial losses, and even catastrophic accidents. This document highlights the critical reasons behind the importance of boiler operations training and inspections, covering aspects such as safety, efficiency, regulatory compliance, and sustainability.

### Safety: The Cornerstone of Boiler Operations

Boilers operate under high pressure and temperature conditions. Without proper training and regular inspections, they can pose significant safety risks. Hazard awareness and prevention on boilers will assist operators understand potential hazards, including pressure buildup, water level issues, and fuel leaks. Training equips operators with the knowledge to identify and mitigate these risks before they escalate. Emergency Response in emergencies such as boiler explosions, fires, or leaks, quick and decisive action is critical. Well-trained operators can follow





emergency protocols, minimize damage, and ensure personnel safety. Inspections play a vital role in identifying potential failure points that may lead to such emergencies. Incidents have shown that improper maintenance and operator error can lead to catastrophic accidents. Regular inspections and adequate training could have prevented many such events by identifying vulnerabilities early.

### **Operational Efficiency: Enhancing Performance and Reducing Costs**

Boilers consume substantial amounts of energy. Training and inspections help improve operational efficiency by optimizing fuel usage and minimizing energy waste. Energy efficiency training programs teach operators how to manage fuel combustion effectively. This includes maintaining the correct air-to-fuel ratio and monitoring heat transfer to ensure maximum energy output with minimal fuel consumption. Preventive maintenance and inspections help identify wear and tear or minor issues before they evolve into major problems. For example, scaling inside boiler tubes can reduce heat transfer efficiency. Regular inspections can detect such issues early, allowing timely cleaning or repairs. Cost savings on trained operators and frequent inspections reduce downtime and maintenance costs. Efficiently operating boilers lead to significant fuel savings, ultimately reducing operational expenses.

### **Regulatory Compliance: Meeting Legal and Industry Standards**

The Labour Department of Fiji have strict safety and environmental regulations governing boiler operations. Non-compliance can lead to fines, penalties, and operational shutdowns. All companies require their boiler operators to undergo certification and periodic training to ensure they remain up to date on safety protocols and best practices. Mandate routine boiler inspections to verify compliance with safety and environmental standards. Inspections ensure that the boiler operates within permissible limits and adheres to all

relevant regulations.

#### **Environmental Responsibility**

Boiler operations can have a significant impact on the environment due to fuel combustion and emissions. Emission reduction training helps operators understand the importance of controlling emissions such as nitrogen oxides (NOx), sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), and particulate matter. Operators learn techniques to reduce emissions, such as optimizing combustion and using emission control equipment. Regular inspections ensure that boilers are equipped with and properly maintain pollution control devices. Detecting and addressing leaks or incomplete combustion also helps reduce environmental impact programs can incorporate sustainable boiler operation practices, such as using alternative fuels or incorporating waste heat recovery systems to reduce carbon footprints.

### **Equipment Longevity and Reliability**

Boilers are a significant investment extending their lifespan and ensuring reliable operation is essential to maximize return on investment. Training ensures that operators understand how to operate boilers within their design parameters. Overloading or improper control can accelerate wear and lead to premature failures. Regular inspections help identify and rectify minor issues before they cause major equipment failures. Routine inspections can uncover signs of corrosion, fatigue, or cracks in critical components. Long term cost benefits investing in regular inspections and operator training, companies can avoid expensive repairs and extend the service life of their boilers, reducing capital expenditures.

### **Risk Management and Business Continuity**

Boiler failures can lead to costly downtime and production losses. Training and inspections are essential components of a robust risk management strategy. Training helps operators identify potential risks, such as water treatment imbalances or combustion inefficiencies, and take corrective actions promptly. Inspection-



based predictive maintenance guided by regular inspections allows companies to anticipate and address issues before they lead to unplanned outages. By ensuring that boilers are well-maintained and operated by competent personnel, businesses can minimize the risk of production interruptions and maintain customer satisfaction.

### **Boiler Training**

National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC) provides training in boiler operations for companies all over Fiji. Most of these trainings are conducted in – house. There are 3 levels of training. Basic, intermediate and advanced boiler training and companies need to book their training needs well in advance due to the increasing demand for training.

### **Conclusion**

Boiler operations training and regular inspections are critical for ensuring safety, optimizing efficiency, maintaining regulatory compliance, protecting the environment, and extending equipment lifespan. Organizations that prioritize these practices benefit from reduced risks, lower operational costs, and enhanced business continuity. Investing in comprehensive training programs and thorough inspection routines is not just a regulatory requirement, it is a strategic move that pays dividends in operational excellence and long-term success. To ensure the highest standards, companies should establish ongoing training programs and partner with the National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC) By doing so, they can foster a culture of safety, efficiency, and sustainability in their boiler operations.





## MEETING FIJI'S GROWING DEMAND FOR SKILLED TRADES

*Kalaveti Tuiyabayaba | Technical Officer*

Fiji's industrial landscape is undergoing a significant transformation. As the nation's economy expands and diversifies, the need for skilled tradespeople—especially in welding and fabrication—has never been greater. These trades form the essential backbone of Fiji's industrial growth, infrastructure development, and overall economic progress. Recognizing this critical demand, the National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC) has stepped up by offering specialized welding and fabrication courses at its campuses in Naceva and Narere. Through rigorous training programs, NTPC is equipping a new generation of professionals with the skills necessary to support Fiji's evolving industries and meet tomorrow's challenges.

### Laying the Groundwork for Industrial Progress

Welding and fabrication are at the heart of many key sectors, including manufacturing, construction, shipbuilding, and equipment maintenance. The physical structures that define modern Fiji—ranging from towering steel frameworks for

commercial buildings to intricate machinery in factories—rely heavily on these trades. Skilled welders and fabricators ensure that these structures and machines are built to exacting standards, ensuring safety, durability, and efficiency.

NTPC's programs extend beyond teaching the basic mechanics of welding and fabrication, instilling a deep understanding of materials, processes, and technical standards. This comprehensive approach prepares students not only to perform tasks but to innovate and improve upon them. In doing so, NTPC plays a pivotal role in fuelling industrial progress and providing the human capital necessary for Fiji's ongoing development.

### Unlocking Economic Opportunities and Employment

The economic benefits of mastering welding and fabrication skills are considerable. Participants in NTPC's welding and fabrication training programs have access to a range of employment opportunities across Fiji's diverse industries. Construction projects, shipbuilding yards, automotive repair shops, and companies in the energy sector all seek skilled tradespeople to keep their operations running smoothly.

For individuals, this translates into stable employment prospects and the potential for financial independence. The demand for these skills ensures that graduates are well-positioned to secure well-paying jobs that contribute positively to their personal livelihoods and to the broader economy. Moreover, as Fiji continues to attract investment and develop new infrastructure, the need for such skilled workers will only grow, creating a sustainable career pathway for many young Fijians.

### Enhancing Productivity and Quality Standards

The quality and productivity of industrial operations hinge significantly on the skill level of their workforce. Skilled welders and fabricators can produce work that meets high standards of precision and durability, reducing the likelihood of defects, rework, and waste. This not only conserves resources but also shortens

production timelines and lowers costs.

NTPC's training curriculum emphasizes a combination of practical, hands-on learning and theoretical knowledge, ensuring that graduates are job-ready and able to contribute immediately to their employers. By nurturing a highly skilled workforce, NTPC enables local industries to enhance their competitiveness both regionally and internationally. Improved productivity and quality standards also enhance customer satisfaction, opening doors for Fijian products and services in global markets.

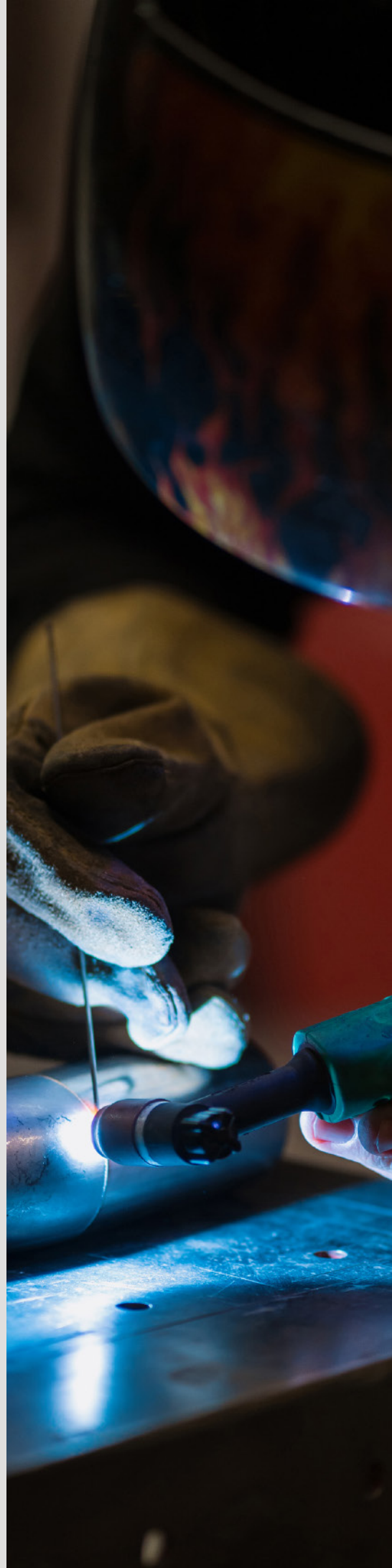
**Keeping Pace with Technological Innovations**  
The fields of welding and fabrication are far from static; they continuously evolve as new technologies, materials, and techniques emerge. Staying current with these advancements is crucial for maintaining relevance and competitiveness in the workforce. NTPC is proactive in integrating the latest welding technologies and modern fabrication equipment into its training programs.

Students are exposed to a range of welding techniques, including hands-on fabrication, Manual Metal Arc Welding, Mig welding, and Tig welding. This exposure prepares them to adapt quickly to changing workplace demands and technological trends. Consequently, Employers seeking to innovate and enhance their operations can highly value NTPC students because they bring both technological know-how and fundamental abilities to their positions.

### Emphasizing Workplace Safety

Safety is a non-negotiable aspect of all industrial work, and welding and fabrication are no exceptions. NTPC places strong emphasis on teaching students how to maintain a safe working environment. Proper handling of equipment, understanding safety protocols, and recognizing workplace hazards are core components of the curriculum.

By instilling a culture of safety, NTPC not only protects the well-being of individual workers but also reduces the incidence of costly accidents and downtime for businesses. This focus on safety contributes to healthier







workplaces and a stronger reputation for the industries that employ NTPC graduates.

### Promoting Environmentally Sustainable Practices

In today's world, environmental sustainability is integral to industrial practices. Recognizing this, NTPC incorporates lessons on energy-efficient techniques, waste minimization, and the use of recycled materials within its welding and fabrication courses. These practices help reduce the environmental footprint of industrial operations.

#### Example: 1. Energy-Efficient Techniques

Using advanced welding technologies such as TIG (Tungsten Inert Gas) welding with inverter-based welding machines that consume less power compared to traditional transformer-based welders. These machines also offer precise control, reducing energy waste.

#### 2. Waste Minimization

Implementing proper material planning and

cutting techniques to optimize the use of metal sheets and reduce scrap. For instance, training students to nest patterns effectively on sheet metal reduces leftover waste pieces, which otherwise might be discarded.

#### 3. Use of Recycled Materials

Incorporating the use of recycled steel or aluminum in fabrication projects instead of always using new raw materials. Students could learn how to identify and prepare scrap metals for welding, promoting circular economy principles and reducing the demand for virgin materials.

National Productivity Welding & Fabrication students emerge not just as skilled tradespeople but as advocates and practitioners of a sustainable industry. Their training aligns with Fiji's national commitment to environmental stewardship and global efforts to combat climate change. By embedding sustainability into its programs, NTPC ensures that future industrial growth can be achieved responsibly, safeguarding natural resources for generations to come.

### Preparing Fiji's Workforce for the Future

As Fiji continues its path of economic diversification and industrialization, the demand for a highly skilled workforce becomes ever more critical. NTPC's dedication to delivering top-quality welding and fabrication education means the country is well-equipped to meet these challenges head-on. The Centre's past Welding & Fabrication individuals are poised to support expanding infrastructure projects, new manufacturing ventures, and maintenance operations vital to economic growth.

Through consistent investment in training and curriculum development, NTPC helps ensure that Fiji's workforce remains adaptable, skilled, and ready to seize future opportunities. This forward-looking approach plays a fundamental role in sustaining long-term economic development and resilience.

### Strengthening Communities Through Education

Beyond its role as a training institution, NTPC's presence in Naceva and Narere makes a significant contribution to community development. The campuses serve as hubs of learning, opportunity, and social engagement within their regions. By providing accessible education and skills training, NTPC promotes upward mobility and empowers individuals to improve their quality of life.

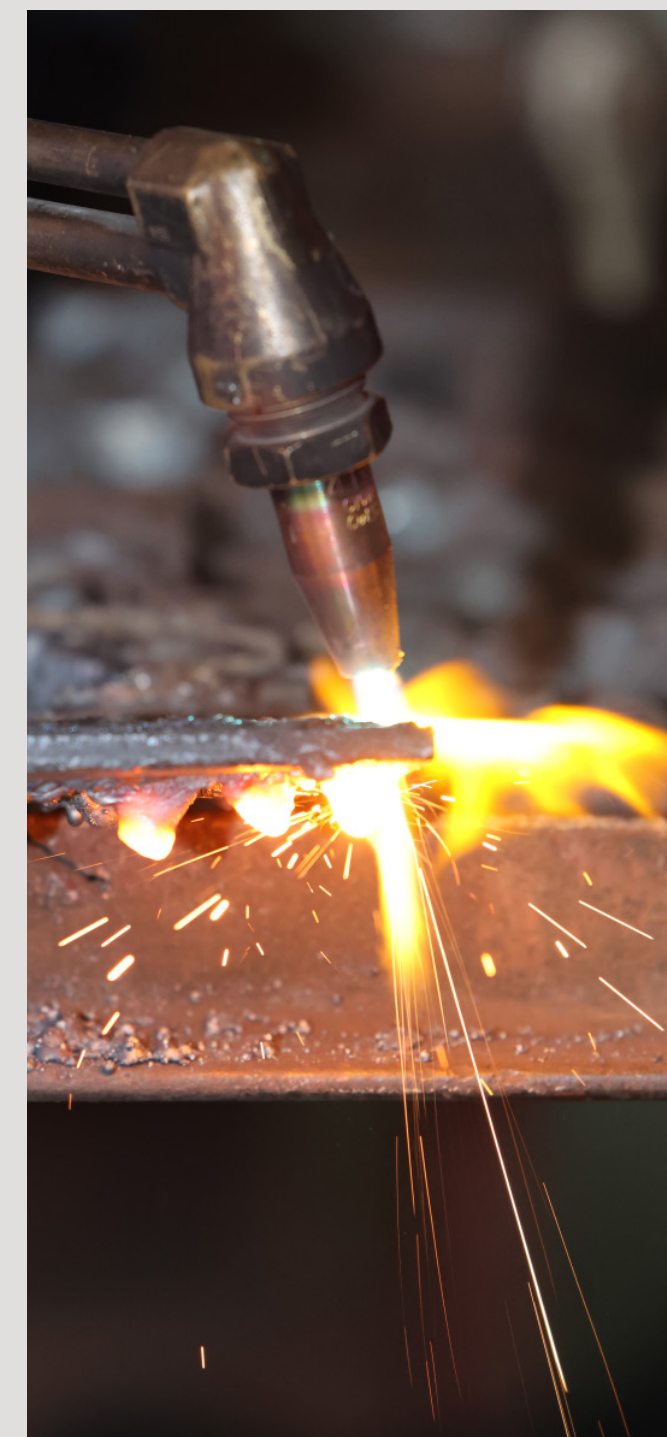
The ripple effects of this education extend into local economies and social networks, fostering stronger, more connected communities. NTPC's commitment to lifelong learning encourages graduates to continually upgrade their skills, thereby supporting ongoing personal and professional growth.

### Conclusion

Welding and fabrication training offered by NTPC at Naceva and Narere is indispensable to Fiji's industrial advancement and economic well-being. These programs produce a skilled workforce capable of driving productivity, innovation, and quality across multiple

sectors. They also underpin sustainable growth, workplace safety, and community development.

As Fiji continues to evolve and embrace new opportunities, NTPC remains a cornerstone institution—shaping the future by empowering individuals and industries alike. Its role in nurturing skilled tradespeople ensures that Fiji is well-prepared to meet the demands of tomorrow, fostering a thriving economy and vibrant communities for years to come.







## FUTURE PROSPECTS IN FASHION & DESIGNING

Rashri Lata | Training Instructor

**T**he **Fashion and Textile** Training Centre at the Nabua FNU Campus offers specialized programs, production designing studies, and practical opportunities to help early-stage fashion designers, start-ups, and businesses build their brands and navigate the complexities of the fashion industry.

The objective is not only to cultivate talent but also to ensure that new businesses understand the practical side of the fashion industry, including production processes.

This is the best place for local emerging talent designers. The Fashion and Textile Centre will provide businesses with streamlined product development, including:

- Fabric Cutting
- Tailoring
- Construction
- Designing
- Hand sewing
- Pattern grading



- Pattern Making
- Pleating
- Screen Printing
- Sample making
- Trimming
- Embellishment
- Styling
- Machine knowledge
- Sketching

The Centre also helps facilitate the business component, offering guidelines, especially where market demand and products are in alignment with each other. We will:

- Assist those in business who do not have the facilities and mentoring to help with productivity and growth. These are people who may not have

- Foreseeing the needs for this business, fashion is a fast-growing industry, and one needs to be able to produce, provide, and be consistent all the time, hence the need for better and modern facilities.

- Assist those intending to get into business and assist students who are taking Home Economics Fashion/Design and would like to experience the feel of being a fashion designer. They could have access during the holidays or arrange an apprenticeship once they leave school.

- Assist Groups who would like to improve their products and services

- Assist those who are already in business and doing well and would like to assist young or existing entrepreneurs.

Students will gain hands-on exposure to how the fashion industry operates—from design and production to marketing and retail:

- Opportunity to work with industry-standard tools, materials, and equipment.

- Enhances technical skills like pattern making, garment construction, textile selection, and

fashion illustration.

- Students can develop a professional portfolio with work created during the attachment, which is crucial for future job applications or launching their brand.

- Connect students with industry professional designers, mentors, suppliers, and potential employers.

- Exposure to creative environments helps students think outside the box and develop original designs.

- Offers insights into fashion entrepreneurship, branding, merchandising, and customer relations.

- Gaining competence through real work experience builds self-confidence and prepares individuals for challenges in the industry.

With the rise of e-commerce and social media, the future of fashion design in Fiji looks brighter than ever before. The fashion industry is a modern-day product, and the industry is made up of several sorts of companies, including shops, design sourcing, and sales firms.

The fashion industry is warming up to the actual extent of sustainability. Today's world is full of fashion, trends, design and style. When the fashion designer's job is considered, it is combined with creativity, imagination, and natural beauty to create costumes and other accessories items. The fashion design process basically evolves over time and from location to location, reflecting a vast range of social and cultural attitudes. Nowadays, fashion design is becoming an increasingly hot topic among the creative because this highly competitive industry has a wide range of opportunities and scopes both in Fiji and abroad.

Upon completion of their specialized studies in fashion design, students can have an abundance of opportunities in this industry. They can find employment in different sectors, such as the fashion industry, manufacturing,



and exporting units, or start their own business and sell their products on the market. Fashion designing is the artwork of crafting customized clothing and way-of-life accessories, and it has become a professional choice now. It is a promising career that is creative and, at the same time, serves an excessive bundle inside the glamorous enterprise. However, one wishes to be innovative and possess good managerial abilities. If you could create magic with shades, shapes, designs, cuts, and textiles, you've landed on the best article to stitch the decision that you have made a bit more potent. A profession that desires no creation, fashion designers are exactly linked with the enterprise.

Fashion short courses are an excellent option for individuals who want to upskill quickly,

explore new areas of the fashion industry, or make a career transition without a long-term commitment. It's flexible, affordable, and targeted learning, making it an ideal choice for anyone looking to advance in the fast-paced fashion world. Individuals also gain experience by working closely with experienced team members in production.

If you wish to explore this field of work and make your mark in the fashion and designing industry, please do not hesitate to come and meet us personally at the FNU Nabua Campus, Block C. We are always available to provide you with all the information you require and show you the potential of getting into this industry.



## — THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM, HOSPITALITY, AND TRAVEL: OFFERINGS AND EVENTS FOR 2025

*by Sheileshni Nair | Head of Training*

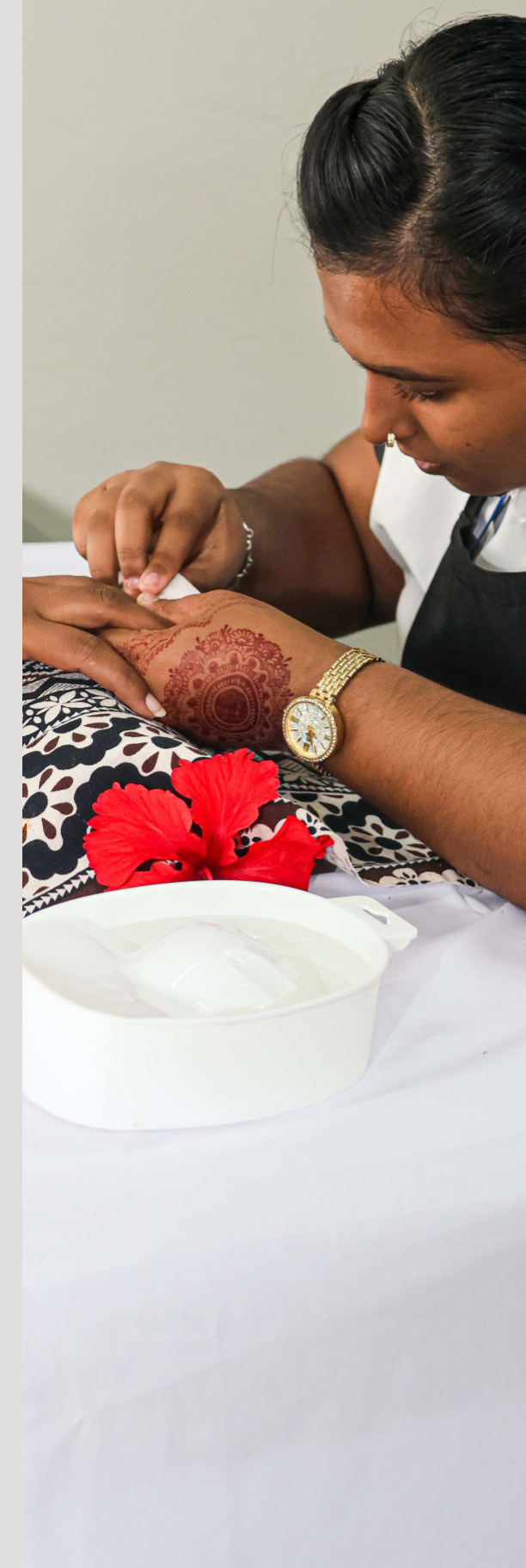
**T**he Department of Tourism, Hospitality, and Travel at Fiji National University is at the forefront of education and training for the tourism, hospitality, and travel sectors. With a commitment to excellence and innovation, the department offers a diverse range of programs and events designed to cater to the evolving needs of the industry. Whether you are an aspiring professional, a seasoned industry veteran, or someone seeking to upskill, our offerings for 2025 promise to meet your goals.

### Wide Range of Programs

The department's programs are designed to empower individuals with the skills and knowledge required to excel in the dynamic tourism and hospitality sectors. Our offerings include:

### Micro-Qualifications

We take pride in our regionally recognized and EQAP(Educational Quality and Assessment Programme)-accredited micro-qualifications, which focus on targeted skill development. These include:





• **Apply Leadership and Management Skills:**

Build foundational and advanced leadership skills to manage teams effectively.

• **Plan and Promote Sales and Marketing:**

Learn how to develop and implement sales strategies for tourism and hospitality businesses.

• **Provide Hospitality and Tourism Services:**

Gain practical insights into delivering exceptional guest experiences.

• **Manage Front Office and Customer Relations:** Master the art of front-office operations and fostering customer satisfaction.

• **Demonstrate Baking and Patisserie Skills:**

Hone your craft in baking and creating delectable desserts.

• **Demonstrate Advanced Culinary Skills:**

Elevate your culinary expertise with advanced techniques and knowledge.

• **Deliver Housekeeping and Accommodation Services:**

Specialize in maintaining high standards in hospitality environments.

• **Provide Restaurant Services in the Hospitality Environment:** Acquire the skills to excel in a restaurant setting.

**TAFE Award Programs**

Our TAFE Award programs are tailored for those seeking to achieve qualifications recognized across the region. These programs ensure hands-on learning and practical exposure to industry standards. The department will be launching Certificate III in commercial cookery to meet the industry's needs for upskilling and the labor shortage in the culinary sector.

**Certificate III in Beauty Therapy and Spa**

This program offers comprehensive training in beauty therapy and spa services, equipping graduates with the expertise to excel in the wellness industry.

**Certificate of Attainment Programs**

Our Certificate of Attainment programs cater to specialized areas, including:

- Child Care Management
- Beauty Therapy
- Hairdressing
- Rooms Division Management

Each program is designed to meet specific industry requirements, ensuring our graduates are job-ready.

**In-House Training and Tailor-Made Programs**

In addition to our structured courses, we provide in-house training and public programs across all sectors of the hospitality industry. Our tailor-made programs are developed in consultation with industry partners to address unique business needs, ensuring maximum relevance and impact.

**Key Events for 2025**

To complement our academic offerings, the department will host several major events throughout the year. These events are designed to provide learning opportunities, celebrate industry excellence, and foster collaboration among stakeholders.

**Workshops in February through APO TES (Technical Expert Services)**

We will organize a specialized seminar under the APO TES initiative, bringing in experts to deliver insights and practical knowledge in key areas of the tourism and hospitality sectors. These workshops are an excellent platform for participants to upskill and stay updated on industry trends.

**National Hospitality Conference – April 11, 2025**

Mark your calendars for the highly anticipated National Hospitality Conference, which will take place on April 11, 2025, at the Tanoa International Hotel. This premier event will bring together industry leaders, academics, and students to discuss the latest trends, challenges, and opportunities in the hospitality sector. Attendees can look forward to engaging

panel discussions, keynote speeches, and networking opportunities.

**Tourism and Hospitality Festival – May 2025**

In May, our Nadi Campus will host a week-long Tourism and Hospitality Festival. This fun-filled event will showcase the best of the industry with:

• Competitions in various categories such as bed-making, bar services, culinary arts, and more.

• Displays by local vendors promoting diversity, inclusivity, and local produce.

• Student-led initiatives and performances celebrating multiculturalism.

The festival is an excellent opportunity to witness the talent and creativity of students while engaging with industry professionals and the community.

**Our Commitment to Excellence**

At the Department of Tourism, Hospitality, and Travel, we are dedicated to delivering quality education and training that aligns with industry needs and expectations. Our programs are designed to foster innovation, critical thinking, and hands-on experience, ensuring our graduates are equipped to make a meaningful impact in their careers.





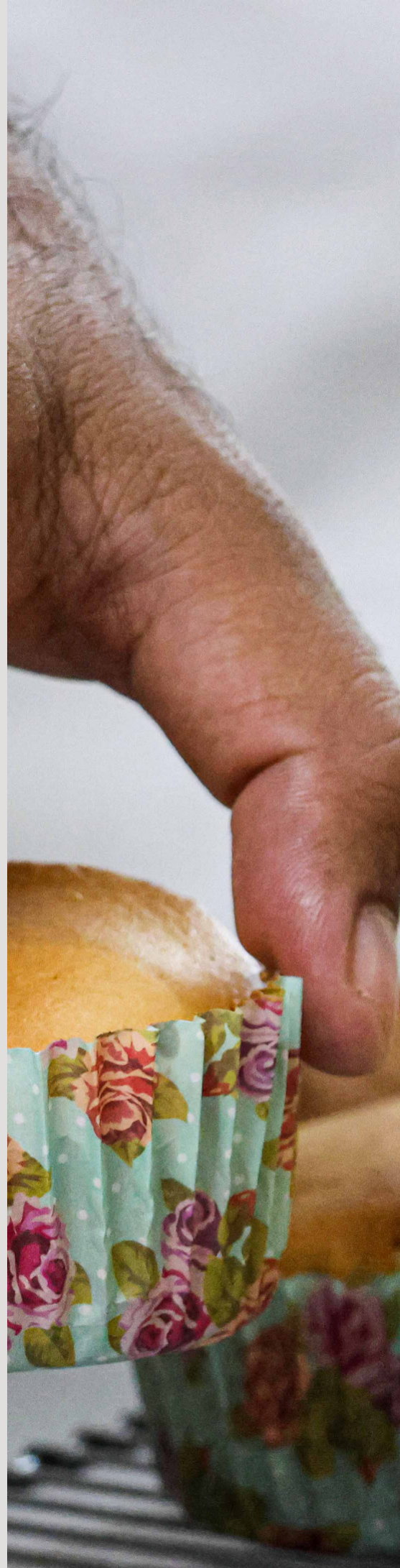


## ELEVATING HOSPITALITY THROUGH SMART TOURISM: A PREVIEW OF THE 2025 NATIONAL HOSPITALITY CONFERENCE.

*Meenu Mohan | Program Coordinator*

Experience the future of hospitality at the 2025 National Hospitality Conference, where industry leaders will gather to explore the transformative theme, “Elevating Hospitality through SMART Tourism.” Set against the stunning backdrop of The Pearl Resort in Pacific Harbour on April 11, 2025, this event, organized by the Fiji National University’s Department of Tourism Hospitality & Travel at the National Training & Productivity Centre, promises invaluable insights into the trends that are shaping a more efficient, eco-friendly, and customer-focused hospitality landscape. From tech-driven guest experiences to sustainable practices, attendees will have the opportunity to connect, innovate, and transform their approach to hospitality. Don’t miss this unique opportunity to engage with experts, share ideas, and explore the future of our industry.

Attendees will have the opportunity to hear from keynote speakers, including the distinguished guest of honor, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister and Minister for Tourism & Civil



Aviation, Honourable Villiame Rogoibulu Gavoka. His attendance highlights the government’s commitment to fostering growth and development in Fiji’s tourism industry, underscoring the importance of this conference.

Among the notable keynote speakers is Mr. Brent Hill, Chief Executive Officer of Tourism Fiji, who will be talking about “Data-Driven Decision Making in Hospitality.” In this session, he will delve into the critical importance of data analytics in understanding consumer behavior, optimizing pricing strategies, and enhancing operational efficiency. Through engaging case studies of successful implementation within the tourism sector, attendees will learn how data can drive better decision-making and lead to increased profitability.

Dr. Apisalome Movono, a Senior Lecturer and Honorary Research Associate at Massey University, will deliver a presentation titled “Creating a Seamless Omnichannel Experience.” He will discuss the importance of ensuring a consistent experience across different platforms, including online booking systems and in-person interactions. The presentation will emphasize how a smooth omnichannel strategy affects customer satisfaction and loyalty in the hospitality sector, as well as the challenges and opportunities that come with this trend.

The conference will feature an international speaker, Mr. Lee Stewart, the Founding Director and CEO of ESG Strategy in Australia. He will present Sustainable Practices in SMART Tourism, outlining innovative strategies that hospitality businesses can adopt to reduce their environmental footprint. His presentation

will address key topics such as energy-efficient technologies, waste management systems, and eco-friendly practices. These strategies are designed not only to benefit the environment but also to attract eco-conscious travelers.

Another keynote speaker will address the topic of Integrating Technology for Enhanced Guest Experiences. In this session, the speaker will delve into how emerging technologies—such as mobile apps, artificial intelligence chatbots, and Internet of Things (IoT) devices—can be leveraged to deliver personalized and efficient services. The discussion will focus on improving the overall guest experience in the hospitality sector through innovative technological integration.

In addition to these speakers, we will feature two guest speakers, including Dr. Avanish Kumar Shukla, Assistant Professor at the College of Business, Hospitality and Tourism Studies at Fiji National University. He will present on “Financial Resilience in Fijian Tourism – A Suggestion Using Systems Thinking.” Dr. Shukla will share valuable insights into the financial aspects of the tourism industry and their implications for hospitality businesses. This session will address economic trends, funding opportunities, and the financial health of the tourism sector, equipping attendees with the knowledge needed to make informed fiscal decisions.

Our second guest speaker, Mohammed Altaab Khan, Lead Consultant and Human Potential Strategist at the Transformative Learning Hub, will discuss AI and its impact on the hospitality industry—focusing on the connection between humans and digital technology. He will provide an insightful analysis of how artificial





intelligence is transforming hospitality. This session will explore various applications of AI, ranging from personalized guest services to the optimization of operational processes, highlighting the future potential of AI in the sector.

The 2025 National Hospitality Conference is more than just an event; it's a pivotal moment for industry professionals to unite, share knowledge, and discuss the future of hospitality. With its focus on SMART Tourism, this conference will equip attendees with the necessary tools and insights to elevate their businesses, making it a must-attend

event for anyone looking to thrive in the ever-evolving landscape of hospitality. Join us as we embark on this exciting journey towards a more innovative and more sustainable future in hospitality.

Mark your calendars for April 11, 2025, and prepare for a day filled with learning, networking, and inspiration at The Pearl Resort in Pacific Harbour. Don't miss out on the opportunity to be part of a transformative experience that aims to redefine the future of hospitality through innovation and collaboration. Together, let's elevate hospitality to new heights through SMART Tourism!



## STRENGTHENING FIJI'S WORKFORCE: NTPC AND THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY-BASED NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

by Setareki Valenitabua | Department of Community-Based Non-Formal Education

**T**echnical and vocational education has become a driving force in empowering individuals with the skills needed for sustainable employment and community development. For Fiji's rural, remote, and maritime communities, these programs bridge critical gaps in access to education, ensuring that no aspiring professional is left behind. The Department of Community-Based Non-Formal Education (DCBNFE) at the National Training & Productivity Centre (NTPC) at Fiji National University (FNU) plays a critical role in this transformation. By providing tailored training opportunities in partnership with government agencies and local institutions, DCBNFE is reaching the unreachable, strengthening Fiji's workforce, and fostering economic growth.

### Background

For years, rural and maritime communities in Fiji have faced significant barriers to education and skill development. Isolated from urban training centres due to geographical constraints, these regions often rely on traditional industries such as agriculture, fishing, and artisanal work. Recognizing





these challenges, DCBNFE has spearheaded industry-relevant vocational training that ensures rural learners receive career-focused education tailored to their needs. By collaborating with NGOs, village councils, and government organizations, the department provides accessible, community-based Non-Formal education that equips individuals with marketable skills and opportunities for economic independence.

### NTPCs and DCBNFE's Commitment to Workforce Development

As Fiji's leading provider of vocational training, NTPC—through its Department of Community-Based Non-Formal Education—delivers over 17 specialized courses annually, catering to automotive engineering, construction, electrical work, sustainable land use studies, tourism management, and fundamentals of business skills. With a strong emphasis on non-formal education, DCBNFE ensures practical, skill-based learning, enabling participants to secure stable employment or establish community-based businesses.

### Innovative Training Models & Implementation Strategies

To overcome logistical challenges, DCBNFE has pioneered mobile training units, satellite campuses, and digital learning platforms, bringing education directly to rural areas. These initiatives allow aspiring professionals to acquire industry-relevant skills without needing to relocate to urban centres.

#### Key strategies include:

- Community-Based Learning: DCBNFE collaborates with churches, NGOs, and provincial and village councils to transform existing infrastructure into effective training hubs.
- Blended Learning Approaches: The department integrates digital platforms, ensuring trainees receive theoretical knowledge alongside practical experience.
- Industry Collaboration: DCBNFE partners with private enterprises to create apprenticeships and employment pathways, facilitating smooth transitions into the workforce.

### Impact in Communities: Success Stories

Graduates of DCBNFE programs have transformed industries and improved livelihoods across Fiji. Studies indicate that individuals completing vocational training are 40% more likely to secure stable jobs compared to those without formal education.

#### Success Stories

##### 1. Agricultural Innovation:

Eight members of the Men's Fellowship in Nasautoka, Tailevu, led by Ratu Semi Seruvakula Jnr, were Land Use Management students.

Recognizing the growing need for vegetables in their village and aiming to fundraise for their church tithe, they expressed their plans to venture into vegetable farming. In support of their initiative, we constructed a nursery and began propagating various vegetables, including Chinese cabbage, lettuce, long beans, and eggplants.

After our departure, the group successfully transplanted the germinated seeds and began meeting market demands. With earnings from their first sales, they reinvested in a broader variety of vegetable seeds, continuing their cycle of planting and selling. By their fifth harvest, after fulfilling their church donation commitment, they had accumulated \$250 in savings.

These dedicated farmers have since expanded their vegetable cultivation, transitioning toward a semi-commercial phase with aspirations of mechanization in the near future.

##### 2. Business and Entrepreneurship:

Sera Nanovu, a dedicated Business student, emphasized the value of receiving proper business training, noting how it significantly enhanced her ability to manage finances wisely. She currently runs a small enterprise specializing in both *Tailoring and Cookery*, where she applies her learned skills in budgeting, planning, and customer service. Her experience reflects how practical knowledge gained through education can empower young entrepreneurs to turn their passions into sustainable income sources.

### 3. Wooden House Construction:

One student enrolled in this course with the goal of deepening his understanding of house construction techniques. He shared that the training proved highly beneficial, particularly in enhancing his skills in *site profiling, preparing detailed materials quotations, and drafting construction plans*. This hands-on experience not only broadened his technical knowledge but also equipped him with practical tools essential for real-world building projects.

These success stories highlight the transformative impact of non-formal vocational education in Fiji.

#### Challenges Faced

While vocational training has yielded remarkable results, key challenges remain:

- Limited Funding: Sustaining community-based training initiatives requires ongoing financial support.
- Infrastructure Deficiencies: Many villages lack adequate facilities for hands-on learning.
- Shortage of Skilled Trainers: Attracting experienced educators to rural areas remains difficult.
- Digital Barriers: Limited internet access hinders participation in online training programs.

DCBNFE, NTPC, and its partners continue to devise innovative solutions to address these obstacles and expand outreach.

### Future Prospects & Innovations

To ensure the continued growth of vocational training, DCBNFE is investing in emerging technologies and strategic partnerships.

#### Key Future Strategies:

- Technology Integration: Exploring VR training modules and AI-assisted learning to improve accessibility.
- Industry Partnerships: Strengthening corporate collaborations to enhance job placement opportunities.

Through technology, strategic partnerships, and community-driven approaches, Fiji's workforce development is poised for long-term success.

#### Conclusion

Through its Department of Community-Based Non-Formal Education, NTPC remains committed to providing accessible vocational training that uplifts Fiji's workforce. By reaching the unreachable, DCBNFE ensures that even the most remote communities have access to skills training, employment pathways, and economic growth opportunities.

Investing in non-formal vocational training is an investment in Fiji's future, ensuring prosperity for generations to come.





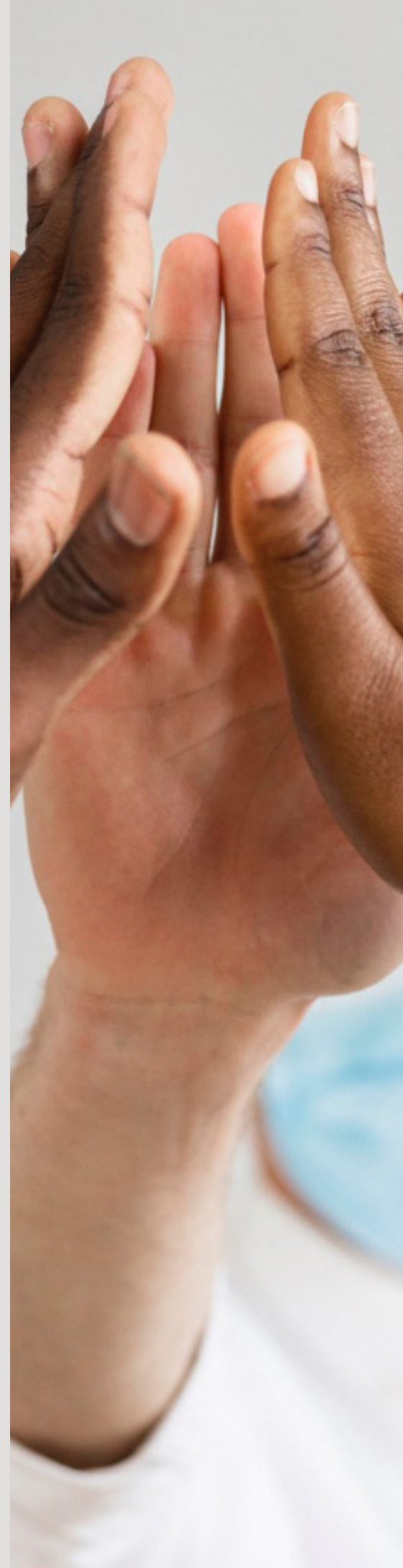


## TOWARDS INNOVATIVE QUALITY CIRCLES (IQCs)

*Viliame Waqalaivi | Manager Quality Awards*

**F**iji has had Quality Control Circles (QCC) for many years. The Training & Productivity Authority of Fiji then provided a platform through which QCC teams from the private and public sectors showcased their workplace improvement projects. Projects ranged from the introduction and implementation of 5S Basic Housekeeping to those that focused on energy savings.

A lot of the projects focused on a particular team that had a QCC Manager, QCC Team Leader, and QCC Facilitator. These key roles in a QCC setup were reported to a steering committee that was comprised of members of senior management.



### How different are Quality Control Circles from Innovative Quality Circles?

Firstly, it is about acknowledging that an implementing organization is mature. Mature in the sense that individuals who hold or have held the QC roles mentioned in the paragraph above are ready to collaborate with others who hold or have held similar roles to tackle or take on projects at a strategic level.

Secondly, QCC members are mature enough to look beyond foundational projects like 5S Basic Housekeeping. They are equipped with skills and knowledge to lead teams that are focused on more strategic projects, like those that result in cost savings or the introduction of a process that changes the way work is done in an organization.

In addition, Innovative Quality Circles (IQCs) are cross-functional in their composition. Projects are focused on matters that affect teams that are members of an IQC. Like QCCs, it is expected that QCC Team Managers, QCC Team Leaders, and QCC Facilitators will collaborate and get directions from their Steering Committee to successfully complete their projects.

As stated in the opening paragraph of this article, Fiji has had Quality Circles for many years, and the challenge is to continue

the momentum created when QCCs were introduced by encouraging the formation of IQCs and a more strategic approach to the implementation of IQCs. This would require the buy-in of every organization's Steering Committee because by its very name, it would steer IQCs to focus on projects that, when completed, would add the most outstanding value to any organization.

While QCCs and IQCs are considered Foundation Programs, embedding a continuous improvement culture through their adoption in an organization is crucial. Equipping individuals in an organization through constant training and refreshers is essential. Encourage continuity as an integral component of QCC and IQC implementation. It is for that reason that teams are always asked about what their next project would be after the completion of their current projects.

IQCs are the way to go. It acknowledges that no department or team exists on its own. It is dependent on others in the organization, and what better way to deal with matters that affect them than to work collaboratively with others. It is never too late to catch up with the rest of the world. The transition from QCCs to IQCs is necessary if Fiji is to take continuous improvement initiatives to the next level.







## ALIGNING TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET) PROGRAMS TO MODERN DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

Josaia Sumasafu | Senior Technical Officer

It is essential to prepare learners for the evolving global economy, technological advancements, and sustainable development goals.

Here are key strategies to ensure TVET programs remain relevant and impactful:

### 1. Incorporate Emerging Technologies

Incorporating emerging technologies in training programs is crucial for preparing professionals for the evolving industry landscape, enhancing their technical skills, and improving safety and customer experience. This includes embracing technologies like electric vehicles, advanced safety systems, and digital learning tools.

Additionally, Virtual labs, simulations, and online platforms offer a powerful way to enhance practical training by providing accessible, interactive, and cost-effective learning experiences.



They allow students to engage in real-world scenarios, practice skills repeatedly, and learn at their own pace.

### 2. Emphasize Green and Sustainable Skills

What are Green and Sustainable Skills?

- **Knowledge:** Understanding environmental issues, sustainability principles, and relevant regulations.
- **Abilities:** Applying green technologies, managing resources efficiently, and implementing sustainable practices.
- **Values and Attitudes:** Embracing environmental responsibility, promoting sustainable consumption, and advocating for change.
- **Examples:** Renewable energy technologies, sustainable building practices, circular economy principles, and waste management solutions.

Why are Green and Sustainable Skills Important?

- **Environmental Protection:** Mitigating climate change, conserving resources, and reducing pollution.
- **Economic Growth:** Creating new green jobs and driving innovation in sustainable industries.
- **Social Equity:** Ensuring access to clean water, air, and resources for all, promoting environmental justice.
- **Futureproofing:** Preparing individuals and communities to adapt to climate change and build resilient societies.

### 3. Foster Industry 4.0 Readiness

Industry 4.0, also known as the Fourth Industrial Revolution, refers to the ongoing shift towards digital and intelligent manufacturing and industrial processes. It involves integrating various technologies like AI, IoT, Big Data, and robotics to enhance productivity, efficiency,

and flexibility. Essentially, it's about creating smart, interconnected factories and supply chains that can adapt to changing customer needs and market conditions.

### 4. Promote Soft Skills and Entrepreneurship

Soft skills are crucial for entrepreneurial success, as they enable entrepreneurs to connect with others, build strong relationships, and navigate complex business situations. These skills are not just about technical expertise but also about how individuals interact and collaborate in various environments.

### 5. Embrace Digital and Blended Learning

Blended learning combines face-to-face instruction with online learning resources, offering a flexible approach to education. Digital tools and technologies are integrated to create a more engaging and practical learning experience. This approach allows for greater control over the pace and style of learning, catering to diverse student needs.

### 6. Strengthen Industry Collaboration

Industry collaboration, also known as university-industry collaboration or academia-industry collaboration, refers to partnerships and interactions between academic institutions and businesses. These collaborations can involve various forms of cooperation, including joint research projects, technology transfer, talent development, and knowledge sharing.

### 7. Integrate Lifelong Learning and Flexibility

Lifelong learning and flexibility in education are essential for navigating a rapidly changing world where knowledge and skills need to be continuously updated. Flexibility allows individuals to adapt learning to their unique needs and circumstances, while lifelong learning fosters a mindset of continuous growth and development.

### 8. Focus on Digital Infrastructure and Resources

Digital infrastructure and resources are crucial in TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) because they enhance learning





accessibility, improve the quality of training, and ensure graduates are equipped with the digital skills needed in the modern workforce. Digital transformation in TVET also helps to close digital divides and promote equitable access to education.

Most importantly, providing ongoing professional development for trainers is crucial for several reasons. It allows them to stay current with new educational trends and pedagogical approaches, ensuring they can effectively train others and improve the quality of instruction. This development also helps trainers adapt to evolving student needs, use new technologies, and enhance their own skills, ultimately leading to better student outcomes.

#### 9. Align with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Countries have committed to prioritizing progress for those who are furthest behind.

The SDGs are designed to end poverty, hunger, AIDS, and discrimination against women and girls. The creativity, know-how, technology, and financial resources from all of society are necessary to achieve the SDGs in every context. 10. Use Data-Driven and Agile Program Design Data-driven agile program design involves using data to inform and drive program design and execution while also embracing iterative and flexible approaches to adaptation. This means leveraging data insights to guide decision-making and prioritize features, all within a framework that allows for continuous refinement and improvement based on real-time feedback.

By systematically integrating these strategies, TVET programs can produce a skilled workforce capable of meeting modern development challenges and contributing to sustainable economic growth.



## INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR OUR COMMUNITIES THROUGH TAFE'S ADVANCED DIPLOMA OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

*Devika Ram | Assistant Instructor*

**A**t NTPC, we are committed to empowering individuals and fostering inclusive education for all members of our community. Through TAFE's Advanced Diploma of Leadership and Management, we aim to equip aspiring leaders with the skills, knowledge, and confidence they need to drive positive change in their organizations and communities. The Advanced Diploma of Leadership and Management is delivered by the National Training and Productivity Centre of the Fiji National University on behalf of the TAFE New South Wales (RTO 90003). TAFE NSW (RTO 90003) is the organization responsible for issuing the Australian qualification.

The Advanced Diploma of Leadership and Management (ADLM) at NTPC is designed to equip individuals with essential leadership skills in areas such as strategic planning, communication, team leadership, and decision-making. It aims to empower future leaders to drive positive change while promoting inclusive education and practices. The program fosters a deep understanding of inclusive leadership,





preparing graduates to create supportive and accessible environments where all learners can thrive, regardless of their background or abilities. Through its focus on diversity, inclusion, and social equity, NTPC's ADLM program contributes to building a stronger, more inclusive, and sustainable future for communities.

### First Ever Taveuni Students Graduation



Last year, NTPC celebrated a significant milestone with the first-ever ADLM graduation of students from Taveuni. This event marked an important achievement for the organization, as it reflected its commitment to improving education access in rural and underserved areas.

The Taveuni students' graduation represented not just academic success but also the hard work and dedication of both the students and the team behind NTPC's educational programs. It was a powerful reminder of how focused initiatives can bring transformative changes to local communities. The graduation ceremony was a moment of pride for everyone involved, as it demonstrated NTPC's role in creating opportunities for young people in Taveuni, helping them achieve their goals, and contributing to the overall development of the region.

This achievement signifies the growth and impact of NTPC's programs, marking a turning point for future students and the community as they continue to provide educational resources, mentorship, and guidance. It also serves as a testament to the potential of students from remote areas when given the right tools and support.

### Student Testimonials:

At NTPC, we are proud to offer the Advanced Diploma of Leadership and Management through TAFE, a program designed to empower individuals and foster inclusive education for all. This dynamic qualification equips students with essential leadership skills, enabling them to make a lasting impact on their organizations and communities.

Here's what some of our students have to say about their experience:



Labasa, outstanding students with disability Monisha Mamta Rao's inspiring journey serves as a testament to resilience, dedication, and hard work. A devoted mother of three, she balances the challenges of raising her children while living with a physical disability. Despite these obstacles, Ms. Rao has thrived in both her personal and professional life, demonstrating

an unwavering commitment to her growth and the betterment of others in her community. Her role as a clerical officer at the Fiji National Council for Persons with Disabilities in Labasa has been a driving force for her. Through her work, Ms. Rao not only advocates for the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities but also serves as a role model to others, showing that challenges can be overcome with persistence and determination.

In addition to her professional achievements, Ms. Rao's educational journey is nothing short of remarkable. After dedicating a year to her studies in Labasa, she was honored with the prestigious National Training and Productivity Centre Excellence Award for her outstanding performance in the Advanced Diploma of Leadership and Management program. This recognition was awarded to only two recipients, underscoring her exceptional leadership potential and commitment to excellence.

Her success story has inspired many, especially individuals with disabilities, proving that with passion and perseverance, anyone can reach their goals, no matter the barriers. Monisha Mamta Rao's story is a powerful reminder that determination and hard work can lead to success, no matter the circumstances.

Highlights of visits to Levuka, Taveuni, Labasa, Savusavu, Kadavu

In 2024, TAFE's Advanced Diploma of Leadership and Management (ADLM) program embarked on a series of impactful visits across Fiji's diverse regions, including Levuka, Taveuni, Labasa, Savusavu, and Kadavu. These visits aimed to engage with local communities,

expand access to education, and build strong relationships with students, educators, and local leaders. Each visit brought unique insights, experiences, and opportunities for growth, contributing significantly to the success and expansion of the ADLM program.

Our team recently visited several key locations to engage with the community and further promote our programs actively. The visit included a variety of impactful activities, such as conducting in-person tutorials, marketing our wide range of available courses, and taking part in cleanup initiatives aimed at improving the environment. These visits were not only an opportunity to showcase the successes of the ADLM program but also a chance to connect with communities, understand their unique needs and collaborate on solutions that will shape the future of leadership and management in Fiji.

In conclusion, the Advanced Diploma of Leadership and Management program at NTPC is more than just a qualification—it's a catalyst for change, empowering individuals to become leaders who prioritize inclusivity and equity. By equipping students with essential leadership skills and a deep understanding of inclusive practices, the program ensures that graduates are well-prepared to drive positive changes within their organizations and communities. As the demand for inclusive education and diverse leadership grows, the ADLM program plays a pivotal role in shaping a future where everyone, regardless of their background or abilities, has the opportunity to thrive. Join us in this transformative journey, and together, let's build a more inclusive, empowered society.







## THE POWER OF PERSUASION AND ACTIVE LISTENING IN BUILDING STRONG CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS.

Helen Ieli | Training Instructor – Customer Service, Sales & Marketing

In this digital age, sales and marketing have changed dramatically. Nowadays, establishing trust and learning about the needs of the consumer are more important than merely marketing a good or service. To be successful in this field, one needs soft skills like active listening and persuasion. Sales and marketing in the current digital era, involve more than just product sales. They also involve experience creation. Since the customer journey has become more individualized, genuine customer engagement is fueled by soft skills like listening, empathy, and ethical persuasion. Brands can create enduring relationships with their audience through human interaction driven by emotional intelligence, even though marketing automation and AI can handle data-driven tasks.

In order to succeed in a fast-paced, customer-focused world, this article integrates interpersonal and communication-based skills, to help create a deeper relationship with customers. The one thing that is probably the hardest thing, for not just salespeople,



but people, is just active listening. We think we are listening, but we are not, which means we miss out on important information that the customer is trying to say to us.

### Active Listening: Understanding the Needs of the Customer

An active listener spends more time listening than talking. They lean in, make good eye contact, ask good questions, connect the dots with the answers they get, and they actually get the message behind the message, because they are very good listeners. The reason why we need to spend a lot of time in this, is because a lot of salespeople fall into the trap, of what we call, listening to respond. This is when we ask a question and just listen long enough, to where we think we know what they are trying to tell us, and we start formulating our responses.

We might be so eager to say it, that we actually interrupt the customer to give our response. That couldn't be farther from the right way to develop a long-term customer relationship. Our goal is to be an exceptional salesperson. Exceptional salespeople listen to their customers, and they spend time asking great questions, pause after hearing a good answer, and reflect upon what they just heard. They are actually more into listening to connect, than listening to respond. If you would like to improve your listening skills, practice, start to measure the amount of time that you're talking instead of listening. If you're really dedicated to this idea and want to be the exceptional salesperson you can be, then take a listening assessment, to become an exceptional listener. All the relationships that matter to you will improve if you become a better listener.

### Persuasion: Adding Value and Changing Attitudes

We need to scan the other person.

**S** means, we have to **SMILE**, be open, positive and be able to convince other people.

**C** stands for **CONNECT**. We need to connect in a genuine way, be there in the here and now and connect with customers with a 100% focus. Focus is very important, because people can know and feel when your focus is not enough. We have around an average of 40 to 60,000 thoughts a day and only 5% of our thoughts are in the here and now. So, to connect, we need to be in those 5%.

**A** stand for **ACCEPT** and **ADAPT**. We need to accept the point of view of the other person we want to convince, and if we accept it, then only will we be able to adapt to it. If you are only willing to communicate your point of view, not adapting and accepting what the other point of view is, then we will not be successful, in convincing others.

**N** stands for **NEEDS**. We need to assess, define and understand what the needs are of the other person, when trying to make sales. Reason being, if people do not have the right to their own opinion, they will resist to your opinion, because its not one hundred percent similar.

And if we do a continuous scan of those four things, we will be able to convince the customer, in a proper way.

The Mutually Beneficial Connection Between Persuasion and Active Listening

Build trust with active listening. Show, that you're genuinely listening to what the customer says. Nod, smile and ask questions, because it makes people feel valued. Use story telling to connect emotionally. Share personal stories or relatable examples. Emotions stick with people longer than facts. Lastly, master the art of asking the right questions.

Open ended questions encourage deeper responses. Instead of asking, did you like it? Ask what did you like about it? These three skills can change the game. Build trust, connect

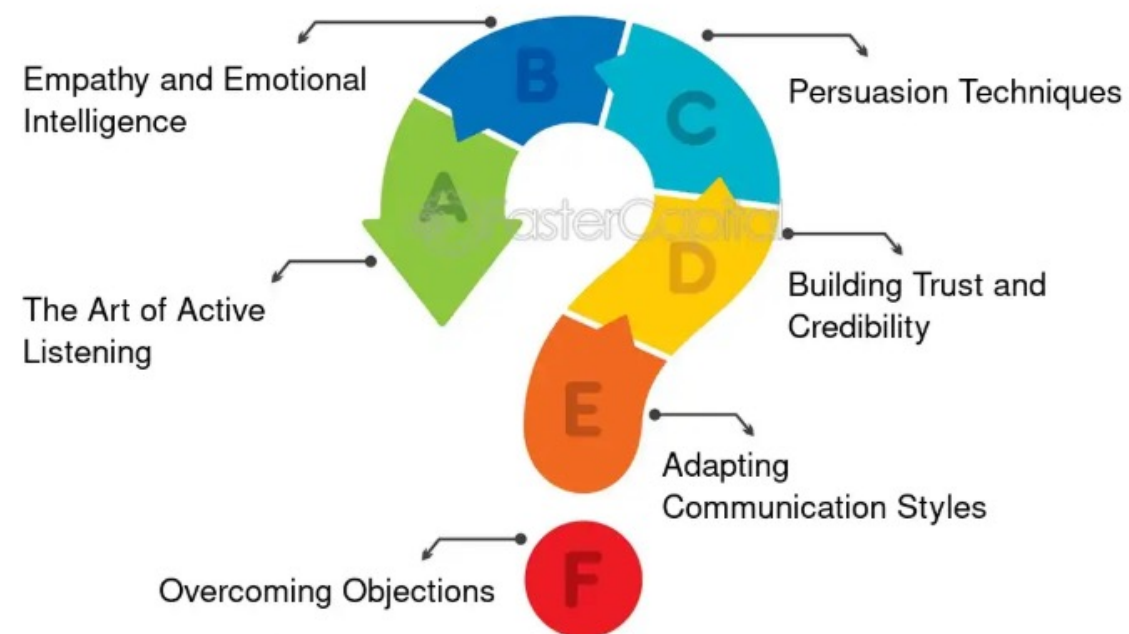


emotionally and ask smart questions. Start using them today and watch your influence grow.

In summary, persuasion gains from active listening by becoming more pertinent and successful in accomplishing shared objectives, and persuasion gains from active listening by creating an atmosphere of trust and understanding. The importance of

active listening and persuasion serve as the foundation for effective marketing and sales tactics. Persuasion enables salespeople to effectively convey the value of their offering, while active listening helps them gain a deeper understanding of their clients. The human touch offered by these soft skills will continue to be indispensable in producing significant customer experiences even as technology advances.

## Listening and Persuasion



## ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System in Fiji

Romeeta K. Chand | Assistant Instructor

ISO 9001:2015 is an internationally recognized standard for Quality Management Systems (QMS) that provides a framework for organizations to ensure their products and services consistently meet customer requirements and enhance satisfaction. In Fiji, the adoption of ISO 9001:2015 has gained momentum, significantly impacting various sectors, including manufacturing, services, and tourism. The National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC) plays a vital role in promoting and facilitating the implementation of this standard in Fiji, helping organizations improve their processes and achieve greater operational efficiency.

ISO 9001:2015 emphasizes a process approach to quality management, focusing on continuous improvement and customer satisfaction. The standard is built on several key principles:

**1. Customer Focus:** Organizations must understand and meet customer needs and strive to exceed their expectations.

**2. Leadership:** Strong leadership is essential for establishing a unity of purpose and direction within the organization.





**3. Engagement of People:** An engaged workforce is crucial for improving organizational performance.

**4. Process Approach:** Understanding and managing interrelated processes helps improve efficiency and effectiveness.

**5. Improvement:** Continuous improvement should be a permanent objective of the organization.

**6. Evidence-Based Decision Making:** Decisions should be based on the analysis of data and information.

**7. Relationship Management:** Organizations must manage relationships with interested parties to enhance performance.

By adhering to these principles, businesses can enhance their operational efficiency, reduce waste, and increase customer satisfaction.

In Fiji, various industries are increasingly recognizing the importance of quality management systems. The tourism sector, which is a significant contributor to the Fijian economy, has seen many businesses adopt ISO 9001:2015 to ensure they meet international standards and customer expectations. Similarly, in manufacturing, organizations are leveraging the standard to streamline processes and improve product quality.

Despite the growing awareness, challenges remain. Many Fijian companies, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), face barriers such as limited resources, lack of expertise, and insufficient training. This is where the National Training and Productivity Centre steps in.

The National Training and Productivity Center (NTPC) is a statutory body under the Ministry of Employment, Productivity, and Industrial Relations in Fiji. Its mission is to enhance productivity and promote quality in the Workplace through training, research, and consultation. NTPC has been instrumental in supporting organizations in Fiji to implement ISO 9001:2015 by:

**1. Training and Capacity Building:** offering a range of training programs aimed at equipping

organizations with the necessary skills and knowledge to implement QMS effectively. These training sessions cover various aspects of ISO 9001:2015, including:

- **Understanding and Implementing ISO 9001:2015**

- **ISO 9001:2015 QMS Internal Auditing**

- **Writing SOP and Policies**

- **Apply Root Cause Analysis at the Workplace for Continuous Improvement**

- **Organize the Workplace using 5S methodology**

By providing these training opportunities, NTPC helps build a pool of skilled professionals who can lead quality initiatives within their organizations.

**2. Consultation and Support:** provides consultancy services to organizations seeking to implement ISO 9001:2015 by,

- **Gap Analysis:** Assessing current practices against the ISO 9001:2015 requirements to identify areas for improvement.

- **Implementation Support:** Assisting organizations in developing and documenting their QMS, ensuring that all processes align with the standard.

- **Certification Preparation:** Guiding organizations through the certification process, preparing them for external audits. This hands-on support is crucial for organizations, especially those new to quality management systems.

**3. Raising Awareness:** To foster a culture of quality management, the NTPC actively engages with various stakeholders through seminars, workshops, and public awareness campaigns. These initiatives highlight the importance of ISO 9001:2015 and its benefits, encouraging more organizations to adopt the standard.

The NTPC collaborates with industry associations, government agencies, and educational institutions to promote quality

management practices across Fiji. This collaborative approach helps create a supportive ecosystem for organizations looking to enhance their quality management systems.

Despite NTPC's significant contributions, challenges remain. Some organizations still perceive ISO 9001:2015 as a bureaucratic burden rather than a tool for improvement. Additionally, the need for ongoing training and support is critical, particularly as standards evolve.

Looking ahead, NTPC aims to enhance its outreach and tailor its programs to meet the specific needs of different sectors. Strengthening partnerships with industry stakeholders and increasing access to resources will be essential for promoting quality management across Fiji.

The National Training and Productivity Centre is excited to announce its upcoming Certificate of Attainment course in ISO 9001:2015 Lead

Auditor Certification, scheduled from August 18 to August 22, 2025, at the Holiday Inn in Suva. This intensive five-day program is tailored for quality managers, internal auditors, and professionals eager to deepen their understanding of quality management systems. Participants will benefit from hands-on training led by Ms. Daventi Naidu, a distinguished expert with over 21 years of experience in the field, who holds multiple ISO certifications, including Lead Auditor qualifications for ISO 9001:2015, ISO 45001, and ISO 22000. The course will cover critical topics such as the principles and requirements of ISO 9001:2015, effective audit techniques, and strategies for identifying non-conformities and fostering continuous improvement. Participants will also learn how to document and report audit findings, equipping them to contribute significantly to their organizations' quality assurance efforts.

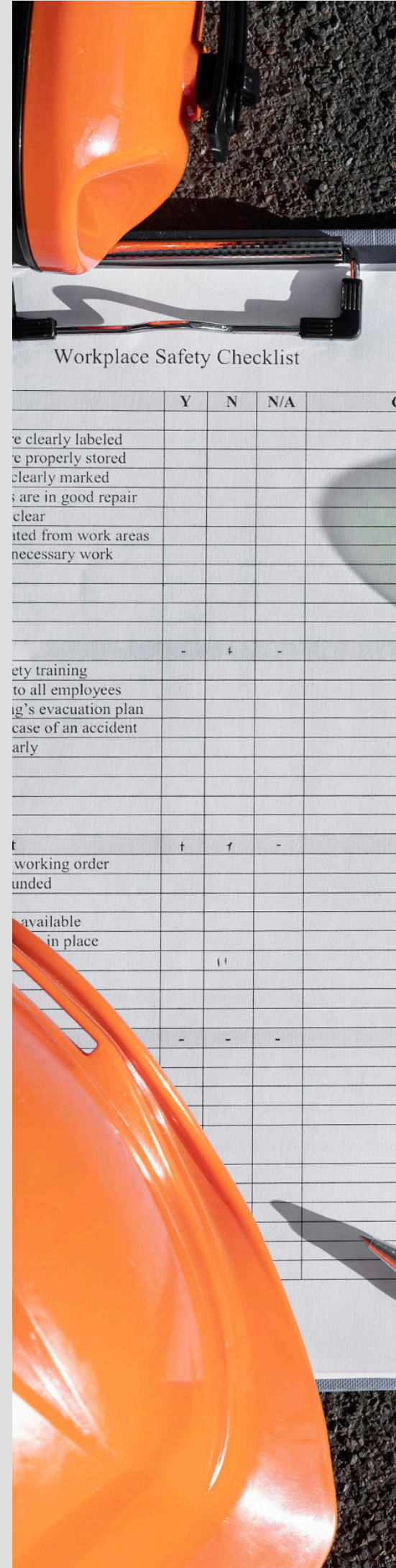




## REVOLUTIONIZING WORKPLACE SAFETY: HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2025 FIJI OHS CONFERENCE

Vicky Vinesh Narayan | Acting Manager

The 2025 Fiji Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Conference, held on 25 April at the Sheraton Fiji Resort in Denarau, concluded with resounding success. With the theme “Revolutionizing Health and Safety: The Role of AI and Digitalization at Work”, this year’s conference brought together over 200 professionals, innovators, and thought leaders from across the region and beyond. Hosted by the National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC) of the Fiji National University, the event served as a critical platform for discussing how emerging technologies are reshaping the landscape of health and safety at work.



From ground-breaking keynote speeches to immersive tech demonstrations, the conference challenged traditional paradigms and invited attendees to imagine a future where artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and cultural intelligence seamlessly support safer and healthier workplaces.

### Cutting-Edge Conversations

The day commenced with an energetic atmosphere as delegates—clad in the conference’s official “Pink Bula” attire—gathered for a full-day program that featured a compelling lineup of expert speakers.

Globally certified Emotional Intelligence Life Innovation Coach Mohammed Altaab Khan set the tone with the insightful presentation on “Psychological Safety in the Age of AI.” Khan emphasized the need for balancing technological advancement with empathy and emotional safety, stating, “We can’t automate care and connection. As we build smarter systems, we must build safer emotional environments too.”

Gregory Dearsly captivated the audience with his exploration of “Leadership and Cultural Intelligence in Safety.” He urged organizational leaders to move beyond compliance and embrace inclusive leadership as a central pillar of workplace safety. “Cultural intelligence is not just a buzzword—it’s a skill every OHS leader must develop,” he declared.

Equally engaging was Deborah Cameron, Director of Redhawk Safety, who highlighted the power of human connection in her presentation titled “Identifying and Managing Risks – Strengthening Safety Through Human Connection.” Deb’s address resonated strongly with delegates navigating the challenges of remote work, automation, and risk fatigue in complex industries.

### Technological Disruption in OHS

One of the most talked-about segments was the use of Virtual Reality (VR) in safety training. Attendees had the chance to engage with interactive VR demonstrations designed to simulate real-life workplace hazards, allowing trainees to practice response techniques in a risk-free digital environment. The sessions

showcased how digitalization is transforming safety training by making it more engaging, realistic, and scalable.

Nigel Davidson, Director and Co-founder of ACHIEVR, further examined the “Impacts of AI and Digitalization on Worker Health and Safety,” demonstrating how wearable tech, predictive analytics, and smart monitoring systems can pre-emptively identify risks.

Deidre Walsh delivered a compelling session titled “Toso Vata: Engaging Workers with Tech for Safer Workplaces,” highlighting the importance of inclusive, culturally responsive approaches to digital safety tools. Emphasizing that “Toso Vata” means “moving forward together,” she advocated for co-designed technology solutions that empower all workers—especially those on the frontlines—to actively participate in safety systems. Her message underscored that true progress in workplace health and safety must blend innovation with empathy, trust, and community engagement.

### Strengthening Local Capacity

The conference also spotlighted local efforts to enhance workplace safety frameworks. Pauliasi Nauku, President of the Fiji Institute of Workplace Health & Safety (FIWHS), presented updates on ongoing initiatives and progress by FIWHS. His session underscored the importance of a robust, locally anchored OHS infrastructure and the role of public-private partnerships in raising national standards.

The audience was particularly energized by their call for industries in Fiji to embrace innovation and strengthen safety culture through leadership development, workforce upskilling, and legislative alignment.

### Networking and Cultural Exchange

Beyond the presentations, the 2025 Fiji OHS Conference offered ample opportunities for networking, collaboration, and professional development. Participants engaged in meaningful discussions over meals and refreshments, culminating in a vibrant cocktail session that encouraged connections across sectors and borders.



The event fostered a truly inclusive environment where government regulators, private sector representatives, academic researchers, and international consultants shared best practices and built partnerships to advance OHS goals.

### A Step Forward for Fiji

According to Vicky Narayan, Acting Manager of the Department of National Productivity and Industry Innovation at NTPC, "This conference was more than a gathering of professionals—it was a milestone for the region. The blend of local leadership, global expertise, and frontier technology proves that Fiji is ready to lead in rethinking workplace health and safety."

The 2025 edition saw the highest number of female speakers in the conference's history and also introduced the country's first live VR safety simulation, setting a precedent for future learning and development programs.

Participants left not only inspired but also equipped with practical tools and renewed commitment to elevate health and safety practices in their own organizations.

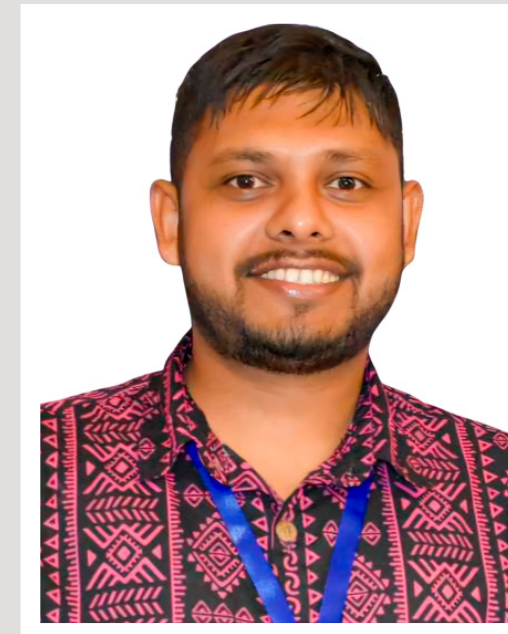
### Looking Ahead

As industries across Fiji and the Pacific continue to adapt to the rapid evolution of work environments, events like the Fiji OHS Conference will remain essential. They serve not only as platforms for innovation but as gatherings where shared values of protection, respect, and progress are celebrated.

The NTPC and the Fiji National University extend their sincere gratitude to all speakers, sponsors, partners, and delegates who made the 2025 OHS Conference a transformative experience.

We look forward to welcoming everyone back next year with new ideas, stronger networks, and an even bolder vision for safety in the digital age.

salespeople,



## Fiji Launches First-Ever Certificate Program on Artificial Intelligence for Business Productivity and Innovation

Ashwin Kumar | Assistant Instructor – Accounting & Finance

Fiji National University is stepping into the future of digital transformation with the launch of the country's first-ever Certificate of Attainment: Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Business Productivity and Innovation. The program, delivered by the National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC) of Fiji National University (FNU) in partnership with the Asian Productivity Organization (APO), will take place from October 27th to 31st, 2025, at the Holiday Inn, Suva.

This groundbreaking initiative is part of NTPC's ongoing efforts to provide cutting-edge, industry-relevant training that empowers Fiji's workforce to stay ahead of global trends. For the first time, a locally delivered program will directly focus on the use of artificial intelligence across multiple industries, offering participants both theory and hands-on exposure to AI tools that are already reshaping the global economy.



Adding further prestige to the program, the five-day training will be facilitated by Mr. François Trachy from Groupe MP-Plus, Canada, a recognized international expert in AI, digital innovation, and business productivity. His expertise will bring global insights to Fiji, ensuring participants benefit from world-class knowledge and practices.

### Why This Program Matters

Artificial Intelligence is no longer a futuristic concept; it is a present reality influencing how businesses operate, governments deliver services, and consumers make decisions. Across the world, organizations are leveraging AI for efficiency, cost reduction, and growth. Fiji, too, must embrace this wave of change to remain competitive.

By introducing this course, NTPC is giving Fijian professionals and organizations the opportunity to develop critical skills without relying on costly overseas training. The program is designed to address both local and global challenges by demonstrating how AI can enhance productivity, foster innovation, and enable more informed decision-making across diverse sectors.

In an increasingly competitive regional and global marketplace, the program provides a pathway for Fiji to strengthen its workforce capabilities, encourage digital adoption, and promote innovation-driven economic growth.

### Course Content Highlights

The Certificate of Attainment: Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Business Productivity and Innovation has been carefully structured to balance theory with real-world applications. Participants will explore topics such as:

- **Theory of AI:** Understanding the foundations, key concepts, and evolution of artificial intelligence.
- **Generative AI Platforms:** Exposure to both free and paid AI platforms that create text, presentations, images, voices, and videos.
- **AI in Business Functions:** Applications in sales, marketing, finance, operations, human resources, customer service, and administration.

- **AI in Specialized Fields:** Impact on healthcare, risk management, compliance, and data management.

- **Microsoft 365 Copilot:** Practical integration of AI within everyday productivity tools.

- **Virtual Reality (VR) with Meta Quest 3:** Exploring how VR can enhance training, presentations, and customer experiences.

- **Access to Interactive Tools:** Hands-on use of AI-powered applications for real business problem-solving.

This holistic approach ensures that learners not only gain theoretical understanding but also acquire the ability to apply AI practically in their workplaces.

### Who Should Enrol?

The program is designed for a diverse range of professionals across various industries. Business and finance managers, IT professionals, project managers, and operations specialists will benefit from strategies to integrate AI into their organizations. Marketing specialists, human resource officers, and customer service representatives will learn how AI can improve client engagement and streamline workflows. Small and medium entrepreneurs will discover how AI can reduce costs and increase competitiveness. At the same time, university students, academic professionals, and healthcare administrators will be introduced to the transformative potential of AI in their respective fields. In essence, the program is open to anyone eager to understand and leverage AI as a tool for greater productivity, efficiency, and innovation.

The Importance of this training program for Fiji Fiji's economy is at a crucial juncture, where innovation, digital transformation, and technological adoption are essential to remain competitive, with an increasing emphasis on knowledge-driven industries. Introducing a certificate program in AI positions Fiji as a forward-looking nation.

### This initiative is significant because it:

- **Bridges the Skills Gap:** Many Fijian professionals lack formal training in AI, despite

its growing importance globally. This program provides structured learning to close that gap.

- **Supports Business Growth:** By learning how to implement AI, businesses can reduce inefficiencies, enhance customer satisfaction, and explore new market opportunities.

- **Promotes Digital Inclusion:** The program ensures that not only large corporations but also SMEs and individuals gain access to AI knowledge.

- **Encourages Innovation:** As participants apply AI tools, Fiji is likely to see new business models, start-ups, and creative solutions emerge.

- **Strengthens Global Competitiveness:** With AI shaping global trade and commerce, Fiji's workforce will be better prepared to compete in the international marketplace.

### NTPC's Role in Workforce Development

As the training arm of Fiji National University, NTPC has long been committed to upskilling and reskilling Fiji's workforce through programs tailored to industry needs. From technical and vocational training to professional development, NTPC offers qualifications and short courses that prepare individuals and businesses to thrive in today's rapidly changing environment.

With this new AI certificate, NTPC is once again delivering on its mission to bridge skills gaps

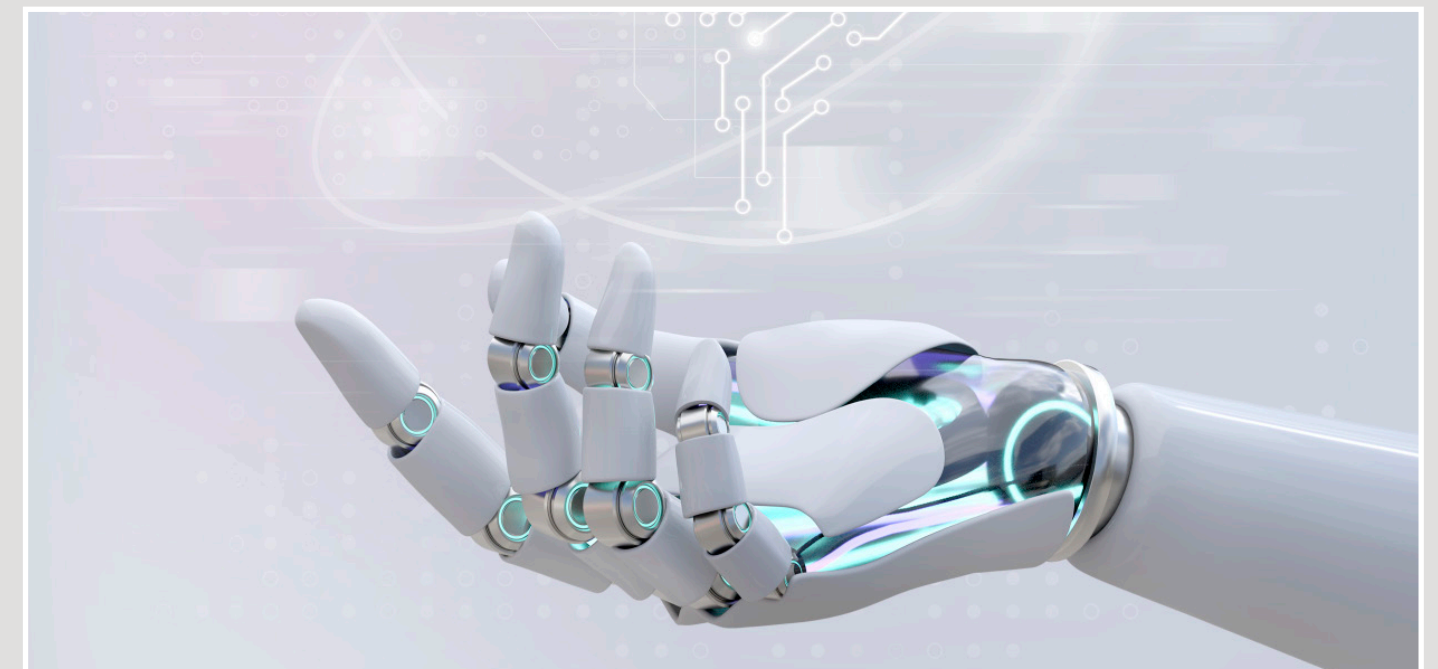
and equip Fijians with future-ready knowledge. The program aligns perfectly with NTPC's broader strategy of promoting productivity, innovation, and competitiveness among its target customers, which include small businesses, large corporations, government agencies, and individual professionals.

### Looking Ahead

The launch of this program reflects NTPC's and FNU's commitment to embracing technological progress. It also signals to the region that Fiji is ready to take a leadership role in digital transformation and workforce upskilling.

As AI continues to reshape industries globally, this certificate offers a timely opportunity for Fijians not only to adapt but also to innovate. By training professionals to confidently use AI, the program empowers individuals, strengthens businesses, and contributes to national economic development.

In the words of many technology experts, the question is no longer "Should we use AI?" but rather "How can we use AI responsibly and effectively?" This program answers that call by giving participants the tools, knowledge, and confidence to apply AI in meaningful and practical ways.







## FIJI OHS CONFERENCE: A LEGACY OF WORKPLACE SAFETY AND THE VISION FOR 2025

Vicky Vinesh Narayan | Acting Manager

### A Commitment to Workplace Safety

The Fiji Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Conference, hosted by the National Training & Productivity Centre (NTPC) of The Fiji National University, was first held in 2018 with the goal of strengthening workplace safety across Fiji. Since then, it has become the country's premier platform for safety professionals, industry leaders, and policymakers to discuss emerging trends, share best practices, and explore new approaches to ensuring occupational safety and health (OSH).

In its first edition, the conference focused primarily on basic safety awareness, compliance with Fiji's Health and Safety at Work Act 1996, and workplace hazard management. However, as workplaces continue to evolve, so has the conference, incorporating global insights, technological advancements,

and industry-driven solutions to keep up with modern challenges.

### How Far We've Come: Key Achievements

Since its inception, the Fiji OHS Conference has played a critical role in transforming workplace safety culture across various industries. Some of its significant contributions include:

- Capacity Building & Training – Hundreds of workplace safety officers, business leaders, and workers have updated their knowledge in risk assessment, safety compliance, and hazard prevention techniques.

- Advancing Technology in OHS – The introduction of Virtual Reality (VR) training will revolutionize workplace safety training in Fiji, allowing workers to experience real-life hazard scenarios in a controlled, immersive environment.

- Global Safety Standards & Best Practices – The conference has helped local businesses align with international OHS standards, thanks to partnerships with experts from Australia, New Zealand, and beyond.

- Growth of the Fiji Institute of Workplace Health and Safety (FIWHS) – The conference has contributed to the strengthening of the FIWHS, which plays a key role in providing guidance, certification, and advocacy for workplace safety.

From its early focus on basic workplace safety in 2018 to addressing Artificial Intelligence (AI) and digitalization in 2025, the Fiji OHS Conference has grown into a leading force for change in workplace safety.

### Alignment with ILO's World Day for Safety and Health at Work

The Fiji OHS Conference is closely aligned with the International Labour Organization (ILO) 's World Day for Safety and Health at Work, observed on April 28 each year. This global initiative highlights the importance of preventing workplace accidents and diseases through strong OHS policies, education, and innovation.

Both the ILO and Fiji OHS Conference share common goals, including:

- Raising Awareness – Educating businesses on safety hazards and risk mitigation strategies.

- Strengthening Safety Regulations – Advocating for policies that enhance workplace safety compliance.

- Empowering Employers & Workers – Providing training and resources to identify and address workplace risks effectively.

- Embracing Digitalization in Safety – Exploring how AI, automation, and new technologies can improve worker safety and well-being.

By aligning its focus with the ILO's global safety objectives, the Fiji OHS Conference continues to ensure Fiji remains a leader in workplace safety improvements.

### Fiji OHS Conference 2025: The Future of Workplace Safety

The 2025 Fiji OHS Conference, hosted by NTPC, will take place on April 25, 2025, at the Sheraton Fiji Resort, Denarau. This year's theme is:

"Revolutionizing Health and Safety: The Role of AI and Digitalization at Work."

This highly anticipated event will bring together industry experts, policymakers, and safety professionals to explore how technology, leadership, and worker engagement can drive safer, healthier, and more productive workplaces.

### Key Topics for 2025:

- Emerging Workplace Safety Challenges in an AI-driven world

- The Role of Digitalization in Worker Health & Safety

- Interactive Workshops and Hands-On Training

- Networking Opportunities & Cocktail Event



## Meet the Expert Speakers for 2025

The 2025 Fiji OHS Conference will feature an impressive lineup of safety professionals and industry leaders, each bringing valuable insights into workplace health, safety leadership, and digital transformation.

- Deb Cameron – Identifying and Managing Risks: Strengthening Safety Through Human Connection

Deb Cameron will explore how strong human connections, effective leadership, and teamwork are essential in identifying and managing workplace risks. She will discuss strategies to create a safety-conscious workforce that is engaged, proactive, and committed to OHS best practices.

- Deidre Walsh – Toso Vata: Engaging Workers with Tech for Safer Workplaces

Deidre Walsh will focus on how technology can enhance worker safety. She will discuss how real-time data, automation, and AI-driven safety tools can help businesses create more resilient and injury-free workplaces.

- Greg Deasly – Leadership and Cultural Intelligence in Safety

Greg Deasly will highlight how leadership and cultural intelligence play a crucial role in workplace safety outcomes. His session

will emphasize the need for leaders to foster safety-first mindsets, engage workers in safety discussions, and build trust across diverse teams.

- Mohammed Altaab – Psychological Safety in the Workplace & How This Could Optimize Workplace Culture in an AI Era

Mohammed Altaab will discuss mental health and psychological safety, especially as workplaces become increasingly automated and AI-driven. He will explore how businesses can support workers' well-being, reduce stress, and build an inclusive safety culture.

- Nigel Davidson – Impacts of AI and Digitalization on Worker Health and Safety

Nigel Davidson will present insights into how AI, robotics, and digitalization are transforming OHS practices. He will examine the benefits and risks of automation, helping organizations prepare for the future of work.

- Pauliasi Nauku – The Fiji Institute of Workplace Health and Safety

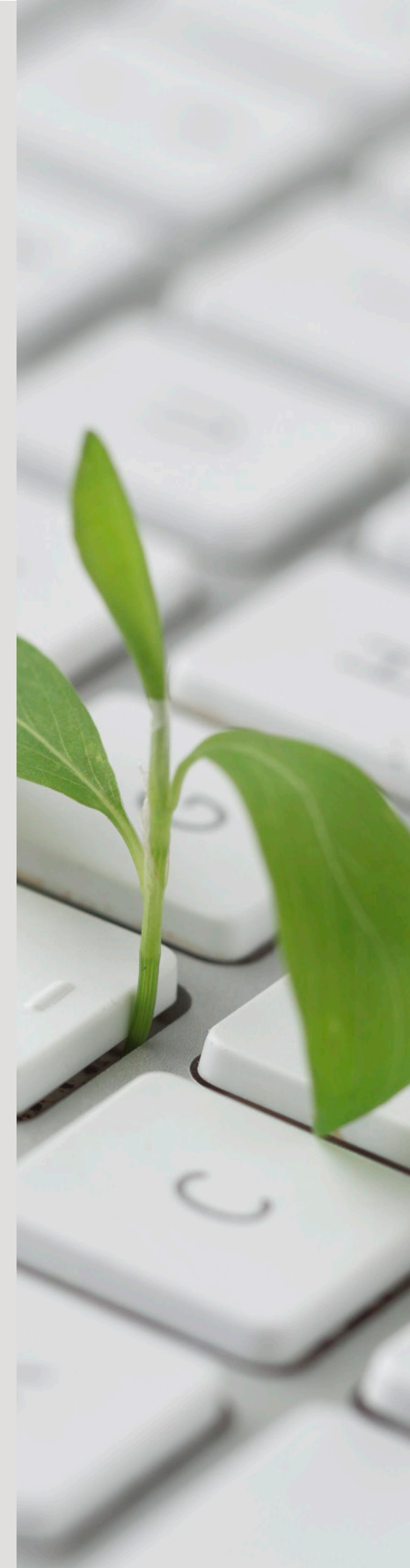
Pauliasi Nauku will provide updates on the FIWHS's latest initiatives, training programs, and certification opportunities. His session will highlight the Institute's role in shaping Fiji's OHS policies and supporting businesses in compliance and risk management.



## Embracing Green Productivity: Fiji's Path to Sustainable Growth Through APO Partnership

Shafina Shabnam | IT Trainer

The global shift toward sustainability demands innovative strategies to harmonize economic growth with environmental stewardship. As Fiji's National Productivity Organisation (NPO), the National Training & Productivity Centre (NTPC) of Fiji National University (FNU) continues to champion this balance through its strategic alliance with the Asian Productivity Organization (APO). This partnership turns local innovations into national triumphs. Asian Productivity Organization's (APO) Training Course on Green Productivity was in Hanoi, Vietnam, from 9 to 20 June 2025, and the intensive program equipped us with cutting-edge strategies to decouple Fiji's economic growth from environmental degradation—a critical step for our climate-vulnerable nation.





The Asian Productivity Organization (APO) is an intergovernmental organization established in 1961 to increase productivity in the Asia-Pacific region through cooperation. The APO contributes to the sustainable socioeconomic development of the area through policy advisory services, acting as a think tank, and undertaking smart initiatives in the industry, agriculture, service, and public sectors.

Fiji joined APO in 1984 and since then has benefited immensely from APO membership over the last forty years, and this is aptly demonstrated by the growth of the productivity movement in Fiji, which led to the success and popularity of the productivity-related programs such as Business Excellence and Quality Circles, Green Productivity, and 5s. The National Training & Productivity Centre (NTPC), which is the National Productivity Organisation (NPO) for Fiji, is the leading organisation in providing in-service training for industries and offering specialised consultative services to assist industries achieve their productivity goals.

#### Local Success Story: From Campus Innovation to National Impact

Team Henko's digitization of FNU course materials eliminated over a ton of annual paper waste, saving 24+ trees yearly. This project won Fiji's National University's IQCC Quality Circles Gold Award and exemplified APO's Green Productivity principles: reducing resource use while boosting institutional efficiency. Crucially, it nurtured future leaders, including us as NTPC delegates at APO's 2025 Hanoi GP training, bridging local action with global expertise.

#### Advancing Green Productivity: APO's 2025 Training Initiative

Hosted by Vietnam's Directorate for Standards, Metrology and Quality (STAMEQ), the 2-week program combined expert instruction with

hands-on corporate diagnostics. This face-to-face workshop, targeted at high-performing alumni of the April 2025 online GP course, aims to:

- Equip professionals with tools to implement GP methodologies at the enterprise level.

- Certify participants towards becoming APO GP Specialists, enabling them to scale successes across Fiji.

- Explore the GP 2.0 Roadmap, addressing emerging challenges like climate change and technological disruption.

Key Focus Areas:

1. Practical GP Frameworks: Exercises on GP tools, waste-reduction techniques, and management systems.

2. Site Visits: Learning from Vietnam's sustainable enterprises.

3. Certification Alignment: Deep dive into APO-GPS 2021:2023 Requirements.

#### Why Green Productivity Matters for Fiji

As a climate-vulnerable nation, Fiji's industrial growth must decouple from environmental degradation. The GP model—pioneered by APO after the 1992 Earth Summit—empowers Fiji to:

- Boost Resilience: Adopt eco-efficient practices to mitigate climate risks.

- Empower SMEs: Train managers in cost-saving, waste-reducing techniques.

- Amplify Local Solutions: Scale grassroots innovations (like FNU's paperless transition) across sectors.

Attendance to this course enables the ability to transform GP strategies into actionable

projects for Fiji's agriculture, tourism, and education sectors.

#### The Road Ahead: Collaboration as the Key

To accelerate Fiji's green transition, three pillars are critical:

1. Capacity Building: Upskill NPO consultants and SME leaders via APO-GP certification.

2. Public-Private Synergy: Partner with agencies

to fund GP adoption, such as digitizing paper-heavy processes nationwide.

3. Institutionalize Successes: Embed award-winning Quality Circle models, like Team Henko's, into national productivity standards. This GP training exemplifies APO's role as an "institution builder," equipping Fiji to turn sustainability into a competitive advantage.







## ENHANCING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: TSLS-FUNDED TRAINING AT FNU'S NTPC UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY-BASED NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

*Setareki Valenitabua | Manager*

The Fijian government, through the Tertiary Scholarship and Loan Scheme (TSLS), continues to invest in skill development for unemployed individuals, aiming to strengthen workforce readiness across key industries. This initiative offers training in Construction, Tourism and Hospitality, Automotive, White Goods Repair, and Business Skills and Management, equipping participants with the knowledge and expertise necessary to secure employment or launch their own ventures. It's also great to see the Fiji National University's Department of Community-Based Non-Formal Education playing a central role in facilitating these trainings through TVET Pasifika. Since launching in 2024 for batch 1 and 2025 for batch 2, the program must have already started making a positive impact. Whether participants seek employment or entrepreneurship, these skills can open doors to new opportunities.



### Supporting Unemployed Individuals and School Leavers

All participants in this program are unemployed individuals, school leavers, and dropouts from both urban and rural areas. Many are seeking training opportunities to enhance their job prospects and contribute to Fiji's economy. For many of these young people, the TSLS program represents a vital pathway toward stable employment and professional development. The encouragement from trainers to pursue further education at Fiji National University (FNU), particularly through short courses at NTPC under the Department of Community-Based Non-Formal Education, is a great way to keep participants on an upward trajectory. These additional qualifications can strengthen their competitiveness in the job market and expand their career prospects.

#### Expanding Training Opportunities

Last year, the Department of Community-Based Training successfully trained and certified approximately 93 students across various courses. This year, the number of trainees has increased significantly, with some 210 persons enrolled in programs for construction, hospitality and tourism, as well as business skills and management. In construction, students specialize in Tile Laying, Painting, Block Laying, and Cabinet Making & Joinery. The hospitality sector offers training in Restaurant Operations and Front Office Management, while business-oriented individuals receive valuable instruction in Business Skills Management.

#### Addressing Employment Gaps

The program plays a crucial role in addressing workforce shortages caused by the mass movement of people under the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) Scheme. Many Fijian workers have migrated under this scheme, leaving employers struggling to find local replacements. As a result, businesses have increasingly sought workers from overseas, particularly from Asian countries, to fill these gaps. By providing structured training, TSLS

helps mitigate these challenges and ensures that more Fijians are equipped with the necessary skills to step into vacant roles.

#### Impact of the Program

The TSLS-sponsored training program has transformed the lives of its participants, with over 50% of graduates securing employment or pursuing self-directed, paid work. Those with existing businesses continue to operate efficiently, fostering growth and sustainability. Additionally, graduates contribute to key sectors, including construction, hospitality, and business, thereby strengthening Fiji's workforce and economy.

#### The program also plays a vital role in shaping the impact of Fiji National University (FNU) in several ways:

##### 1. Increasing Enrolment in Short Courses

By encouraging unemployed individuals and school leavers to pursue further education, particularly through FNU's National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC), the program drives higher student enrolment. This growth supports FNU's expansion and accessibility.

##### 2. Strengthening TVET Pasifika's Role

The Department of Community-Based Non-Formal Education plays a crucial role in delivering training under TVET Pasifika. As participation grows, the department becomes more influential in advancing technical and vocational education, reinforcing its mission to upskill Fiji's workforce.

##### 3. Enhancing Industry Collaboration

Through strategic partnerships with TSLS, NTPC, and CBNFE, these organizations offer specialized training in high-demand fields such as construction, hospitality, and business management. Strengthened ties with industry leaders lead to curriculum improvements that align with labour market needs.

##### 4. Increasing Graduate Employability

The training enables graduates to acquire practical skills and qualifications that enhance their job prospects. Their success reinforces



FNU/NTPC and the DCBNFE reputation as an institution that provides practical workforce training, attracting more students and institutional support.

### 5. Expanding Resources and Investment

As demand for training grows, FNU/NTPC and the DCBNFE stand to receive increased funding and private sector support. This enables the university to upgrade facilities, invest in modern equipment, and enhance learning environments.

### 6. Addressing Workforce Gaps

The training plays a crucial role in bridging employment gaps by equipping individuals with the job-ready skills they need. As Fiji's primary training provider, FNU ensures a steady pipeline of skilled professionals, strengthening its contribution to national economic development.

#### Some inspiring success stories include:

**Empowered Entrepreneur:** A graduate of the Business Skills Management program successfully expanded their small enterprise, employing others and contributing to their local economy.

**Construction Expertise:** A participant in the Cabinet Making & Joinery course secured a job with a reputable construction firm, using their newly acquired skills to create high-quality furniture.

**Hospitality Professional:** A trainee in Front Office Management is now employed at a well-established resort, enhancing customer service standards and guest experiences.

#### Challenges Faced and Solutions

Despite its successes, the training program encounters challenges:

#### 1. Limited Training Facilities and Resources

**- Solution:** Increased government funding and private sector partnerships can help upgrade training facilities and ensure students have access to industry-standard equipment for hands-on learning.

#### 2. Difficulty in Securing Immediate Job Placements

**- Solution:** Strengthening collaboration between training providers and employers can create structured internship programs, allowing graduates to transition smoothly into employment. Additionally, job placement assistance and career guidance can help graduates connect with the right opportunities.

#### 3. Business Sustainability for Entrepreneurs

**- Solution:** Offering post-training mentorship programs and financial literacy workshops can equip business owners with the skills to manage and grow their enterprises successfully. Access to small business loans and grants can further support them in expanding operations.

#### 4. Continued Labour Migration Under PALM Scheme

**- Solution:** Developing incentive programs to retain skilled workers within Fiji, such as offering competitive salaries, career growth opportunities, and work benefits, could help curb excessive labour migration.

#### Future Prospects

Moving forward, the TSLS training program aims to expand its offerings to include more specialized skill areas that align with the evolving demands of Fiji's labour market. Strengthening partnerships with employers, industry experts, and business mentors could further support graduates in securing sustainable employment. Additionally, efforts to improve funding and resources for trainees will enhance learning experiences and increase the success rate of job placements.

The government remains committed to fostering economic growth by investing in education and skills training. Future enhancements to the program could include digital business courses, entrepreneurial workshops, and even expansion into emerging industries such as sustainable energy and technology-driven careers.

#### Conclusion

The TSLS-sponsored training initiative continues to serve as a critical bridge between unemployment and career opportunities in Fiji. By equipping individuals—particularly those who are unemployed or have recently left

school—with practical skills tailored to industry demands, the program empowers graduates to take charge of their futures, whether by securing employment, launching businesses, or contributing to economic development.

While challenges remain, implementing solutions such as upgrading training resources, fostering employer partnerships, and supporting business sustainability can strengthen the program's impact. With continued commitment and innovation, TSLS will play a pivotal role in shaping a skilled, self-sufficient, and competitive workforce for Fiji's future.







## FIJI GEARS UP FOR THE 6TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

*Elenoa Naivalu | Assistant Instructor*

Fiji will once again stand at the forefront of digital dialogue as the 6th National Conference on Information Technology (NCIT) takes place on the 18th to the 19th of September 2025, at the Warwick Fiji Resort. Organized by the National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC) of the Fiji National University (FNU), this annual event has become one of the nation's platforms for innovation, collaboration, and knowledge exchange.

The theme for this year's event, "Leveraging Digital Transformation to Innovate the Business Landscape for a Connected Pacific," speaks to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Across the region, governments, industries, and communities are embracing digital tools not simply to improve efficiency, but to strengthen resilience, foster inclusivity, and unlock new possibilities for growth.

Public service delivery and cyber resilience open the technical discourse, led by the Digital Government Transformation team. This session is particularly timely as Fiji modernises service delivery while simultaneously strengthening its defences. Building on this, a focused track on cyber resilience in the Pacific reinforces the region's shared response to emerging threats. These discussions are informed by international reports, local consultancy findings, and the frameworks and roadmaps crafted by our government with contributions from NTPC staff and donor agencies alike.

Following that, attention shifts to the business landscape. Sessions on e-commerce, artificial intelligence, and automation will explore platforms and practical pathways to help Pacific SMEs sell, scale, and compete globally. The human side of technology is not forgotten, with sessions on the human risk in cybersecurity and AI-native networking reminding us that digital systems are only as strong as the people, processes, and architectures that sustain them. The day's conversations culminate in a lively panel on disruptive technologies, turning the lens to community transformation and examining how innovation reaches villages, schools, clinics, and the wider communities where digital disparity is steadily giving way to opportunity.

The discussions then widen on the second day, shifting focus to digital infrastructure, inclusion, and innovation. Sessions will highlight how the Fiber backbone serves as a catalyst for connectivity across the Pacific, how cybersecurity principles can create safer online environments, and how online safety initiatives empower or sometimes police users in Fiji's digital spaces. Sector-specific insights add further depth, tracing a digital journey through Fiji's hospitals, where technology is revolutionising the patient experience from check-in to check-out.

Following the main program on both days, hands-on technical sessions will provide delegates with a chance to move from

theory into practice. Generously facilitated by sponsors and partners, these workshops cover everything from designing Wi-Fi networks for high-density environments, to applying AI and ML for self-optimising networks. Others explore network solution design through the Omada Design Centre, with Fijian entrepreneurs and technologists at the helm, ensuring that solutions are rooted in Pacific realities. These sessions ensure that participants leave not only inspired but also equipped with tangible skills to apply within their own organisations. Since its inception, NCIT has been more than just a conference; it has been a movement for change. For NTPC, the conference reflects its ongoing mission to equip Fiji's workforce with the knowledge and confidence to thrive in the digital age. It also demonstrates the importance of grounding global innovations in Pacific realities, ensuring solutions are adapted to the needs of local communities.

The success of NCIT is also built on strong partnerships. Vinaka vakalevu to our gold sponsors, Telecom Fiji Limited and Kastel Technologies. We also extend sincere appreciation to our bronze sponsors, Ruckus and Bondwell, as well as our supporting partners Borderless CS, Juniper Mist, and Cambium Networks. Their contribution reflects a shared commitment to advancing digital transformation in the Pacific.

What makes NCIT truly special is the collaborative spirit it fosters. Researchers, vendors, technologists, and academics are not brought together in isolation but in meaningful dialogue. It is in these shared discussions that new partnerships emerge, and innovative solutions take root. As Fiji and its Pacific neighbours stand on the threshold of a new digital era, NCIT serves as both a compass and a catalyst, guiding the region toward a future that is digitally connected, resilient, and inclusive.

### Speaker Lineup

The 2025 NCIT will feature a distinguished roster of experts from Fiji and abroad, addressing key





issues that impact both business and society.

#### Day 1

• Mr. Mohammed Moishin – Director, Digital Government Transformation  
Topic: Building a Digital Future: Advancing Public Service Delivery and Cyber Resilience in Fiji

• Mr. Chathura Abeydeera – Cyber Security Advisor - Chair CREST  
Topic: Cyber Resilience in the Pacific: Securing the Digital Frontier

• Mr. Sitiveni Nabuka – General Manager IT, Fijian Holdings  
Topic: E-Commerce, AI, and Automation: Leveraging Digital Platforms to Transform Pacific SMEs for a Connected Business Landscape

• Ms. Dominika Zerbe-Anders – Partner, KPMG Australia | Cyber  
Topic: Human Risk in Cybersecurity

• Mr. Ian Sokol – Regional Sales Manager, Juniper Mist  
Topic: AI Native Networking

• Panel Discussion – Transforming Fijian Communities through Disruptive Technologies  
Panelists: Dr. Sofia Ali, Mr. Mohammed Moishin, Mr. Sitiveni Nabuka

#### Day 2

• Mr. Karunesh Mani – Managing Director, Kastel Technologies  
Topic: The Digital Pacific: Infrastructure, Inclusion & Innovation

• Mr. Mesake Tuinabua – Chief Technical Officer (CTO), Telecom Fiji  
Topic: Fiber Backbone – The Catalyst for Digital Innovation and a Connected Pacific

• Mr. Jayaprakash (JP) Muthuswamy – Founder & CEO, Borderless CS  
Topic: Building Digital Shift: The Strategic Importance of Cybersecurity Principles in a Connected Pacific

• Mr. Jeetesh Kumar – General Manager, Bondwell Fiji  
Topic: Simplifying Connectivity for the Pacific: Value-Driven and Resilient Networks with Omada

• Mr. Samuela Finau – Manager Outreach, Online Safety Commission  
Topic: Is Fiji's current approach to cyber safety empowering users – or policing them?

• Ms. Ruth Bishop – Director Technology & Compliance (Global), Aspen Medical  
Topic: From Check-In to Check-Out: A Digital Journey Through Fiji's Hospitals



## UNLOCKING OPPORTUNITIES WITH A GLASS ALUMINIUM JOINERY COURSE

Amit Kumar Lal | Training Officer

In the world of modern construction and architecture, the demand for sleek, durable, and energy-efficient materials is ever-growing. Glass Aluminium joinery has emerged as one of the most popular-after trades, combining the strength and versatility of Aluminium frames with the visual and functional appeal of glass installations. For individuals interested in a hands-on, skilled trade with excellent career prospects, a Glass Aluminium Joinery course offers the perfect gateway to mastering this specialized craft.

### What is Glass Aluminium Joinery?

Glass Aluminium joinery involves the design, fabrication, installation, and maintenance of Aluminium frames fitted with glass panels. These frames are commonly used in windows, doors, fronts, partitions, and curtain walls in residential, commercial, and industrial buildings. The trade demands precise workmanship to ensure that the final installation is





secure, weatherproof, and visually appealing. Aluminium joinery offers benefits such as corrosion resistance, lightweight strength, low maintenance, and superior durability. When combined with glass, it also contributes to natural lighting, energy efficiency, and modern aesthetics.

**Why Enroll in a Glass Aluminium Joinery Course?**

With rapid urbanization and innovative building designs, the construction industry has experienced a boom in the use of Aluminium and glass. This has created a strong market demand for qualified professionals who understand the technicalities of Aluminium joinery and glazing.

A structured Glass Aluminium Joinery course equips learners with both theoretical knowledge and practical skills, helping them become job-ready. Whether you are a beginner exploring career options or an experienced tradesperson aiming to upskill, this course provides a comprehensive foundation.

**Core Skills and Knowledge Areas**

**1. Material Properties and Selection**  
Students learn about the characteristics of Aluminium, different types of glass (tempered, laminated, double glazing), and how to select materials based on project requirements such as safety and design specifications.

**2. Measurement and Design**

Accurate measurement is critical. The course covers how to interpret blueprints, drawings, and technical plans. Students practice precise measuring and marking to ensure Aluminium frames fit perfectly with glass panels.

**3. Fabrication Techniques**

This involves cutting, shaping, drilling, and assembling Aluminium profiles. Techniques include using specialized tools and machines like mitre saws routers to create joints and frames.

**4. Glazing Installation**

Proper installation of glass within Aluminium frames requires knowledge of sealants, gaskets, and weatherproofing techniques. The

course teaches how to safely handle glass and install it to prevent leaks, drafts, or breakage.

**5. Safety Standards and Regulations**

Working with glass and aluminium-specific safety risks. Students learn about workplace safety, handling hazardous materials, and complying with local building codes and standards.

**6. Maintenance and Repair**

The course also covers how to inspect installations for wear and tear, conduct repairs, replace broken glass, and ensure the long-term functionality of Aluminium joinery systems.

**Course Format and Duration**

Glass Aluminium Joinery courses combine classroom theory with hands-on workshops. Some courses may last from a few weeks to a few days, offering part-time or full-time options.

Many programs also incorporate site visits, internships, and give learners real-world experience. Upon completion, students may receive certification of Attainment, which can significantly enhance employability with the course below:

- 1. Practice Safe Working Procedures in the Aluminium Joinery Workshop
- 2. Plans interpretation and Cost Estimation for Aluminium joinery products
- 3. Extrusion Quality Control
- 4. Demonstrate knowledge of the Aluminium joinery industry
- 5. Cut and machine Aluminium extrusions
- 6. Assemble Aluminium joinery products
- 7. Glaze Aluminium joinery products
- 8. Install residential Aluminium joinery products, including conservatories
- 9. Install commercial Aluminium joinery product

**Career Opportunities in Glass Aluminium Joinery**

Graduates of a Glass Aluminium Joinery course are equipped to work in various roles within the construction and architectural sectors, including:

- **Fabricator:** Crafting Aluminium frames and preparing glass panels.
- **Installer:** Install doors, windows, and partitions on construction sites.
- **Technician:** Inspecting, maintaining, and repairing existing Aluminium joinery installations.
- **Project Supervisor:** Overseeing the fabrication and installation process to ensure quality and compliance.
- **Sales and Consultancy:** Advising clients on material choices, design options, and installation techniques.

The skills gained can also serve as a foundation for starting one's own joinery business or working in allied trades such as metal fabrication or glazing.

**Benefits of a Career in Glass Aluminium Joinery**

- **High Demand:** Urban development and commercial construction projects constantly require Aluminium and glass installations.
- **Creative Work:** The trade involves problem-solving and creativity, especially in custom designs and complex installations.
- **Job Stability:** Skilled tradespeople in this field are often in demand, providing good job security.
- **Good Income Potential:** Experienced joiners and specialists can earn competitive wages, with opportunities for overtime or contract work.

**Who Should Consider This Course?**

- Individuals seeking a practical trade with a blend of technical knowledge and craftsmanship.
- Builders, carpenters, or metalworkers want to diversify their skill sets.
- Architecture or construction students aiming to gain hands-on experience.
- Entrepreneurs looking to start a place construction or joinery business.
- Anyone passionate about working with innovative building materials and modern construction techniques.

**Conclusion**

A Glass Aluminium Joinery course opens doors to a rewarding career at the intersection of technology, design, and skilled labour. With increasing architectural demands for sustainable, elegant, and durable building materials, expertise in Aluminium joinery and glazing is more valuable than ever. This course provides the essential skills, knowledge, and confidence to thrive in a dynamic and growing industry. Whether you want to become a proficient fabricator, installer, or industry consultant, investing time in this specialized training will prepare you to contribute meaningfully to the construction landscape of tomorrow.

If you are looking to build a career that combines craftsmanship with modern construction innovation, the Glass Aluminium Joinery course might be the perfect fit.







## WORKSHOP AND ELECTRICAL SAFETY TRAINING PROGRAMS: ENSURING A SAFER WORKPLACE

*Nishaant Dulare | Technical Officer*

**W**orkshops and electrical environments present numerous hazards that can lead to severe injuries or fatalities if proper safety measures are not followed. Electrical shocks, burns, fires, and mechanical accidents are common risks that workers face in such settings. To mitigate these dangers, the Fiji National Universities division of National Training and Productivity Centre's Department of Electrical & Electronics Engineering offers modular-based workshop and electrical safety training programs to educate employees on best practices, compliance regulations, and emergency response protocols. This article explores the significance of these programs and highlights their numerous advantages.

Workshop safety training programs are designed to equip employees, students, and technicians with the necessary knowledge to work safely in environments where tools,



machinery, and electrical systems are present. This modular program focuses on hazard identification, proper handling of equipment, and adherence to safety guidelines.

Training covers common hazards such as moving machinery, sharp tools, chemical exposure, and electrical risks. Participants learn about the appropriate use of gloves, helmets, eye protection, and footwear, with the safe operation of hand tools, power tools, and heavy machinery emphasized. Students are trained in fire safety measures, including extinguisher use and emergency response, and basic first aid and CPR are also covered to ensure participants can respond effectively to accidents when they encounter them in the real world. Evacuation drills and accident reporting procedures are essential parts of this training.

Electrical safety training programs focus on preventing electrical hazards, ensuring compliance with industry standards, and reducing workplace accidents related to electrical exposure.

**Electrical Hazard Awareness:** Participants are trained to recognize the dangers associated with live wires, circuit overloads, and faulty wiring.

**Lockout/Tagout Procedures:** This ensures machines are properly shut down before maintenance to prevent accidental energization.

**Safe Handling of Electrical Equipment:** Trainees are taught how to properly use, inspect, and maintain electrical tools and devices.

**Compliance with Safety Standards:** Training ensures adherence to OSHA, NFPA, and IEC safety regulations.

Emergency Response and First Aid: Trainees learn how to respond to electrical shocks, burns, and other incidents.

### **Risk Assessment and Prevention:**

Understanding risk mitigation strategies for different electrical work environments.

This type of training program significantly reduces the occurrence of accidents and injuries in workplaces. Educated employees are more likely to follow safety protocols, preventing incidents related to faulty equipment handling, electrical malfunctions, or negligence. Adhering to safety training programs ensures that businesses comply with national and international safety regulations such as the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), and other regulatory bodies. Compliance reduces the risk of legal penalties and enhances the organization's reputation.

When employees are well-trained in safety procedures, they feel more confident in handling equipment and performing tasks efficiently. This leads to increased productivity as workers focus on their jobs without fear of accidents. Accidents in the workplace can result in medical expenses, compensation claims, and legal costs. By investing in safety training programs, organizations minimize these expenses and protect their financial resources. A strong emphasis on safety creates a positive work culture where employees feel valued and protected. Workers who perceive that their employers prioritize their well-being tend to be more loyal and motivated.

In the event of an accident, fire, or electrical hazard, trained employees are better equipped to handle emergencies. This preparedness minimizes damage, saves lives, and ensures a quicker recovery process. Safety training programs teach workers how



to properly maintain equipment, reducing the likelihood of breakdowns and extending the lifespan of machinery and tools. This results in cost savings for businesses and uninterrupted workflow. It also emphasizes proper waste disposal, hazardous material handling, and eco-friendly practices, ensuring compliance with environmental regulations and promoting sustainability. A commitment to safety demonstrates professionalism and responsibility, boosting an organization's reputation among clients, stakeholders, and the public. This can lead to increased business opportunities and long-term success.

Workshop and electrical safety training programs play a crucial role in minimizing workplace hazards, ensuring legal compliance, and promoting a positive work environment. Individuals who invest in these training initiatives benefit from reduced accidents, enhanced employee productivity, and significant cost savings. By prioritizing safety, businesses not only protect their workers but also create a more sustainable and efficient workplace. Implementing and regularly updating safety training programs should be a fundamental component of any organization's safety strategy.



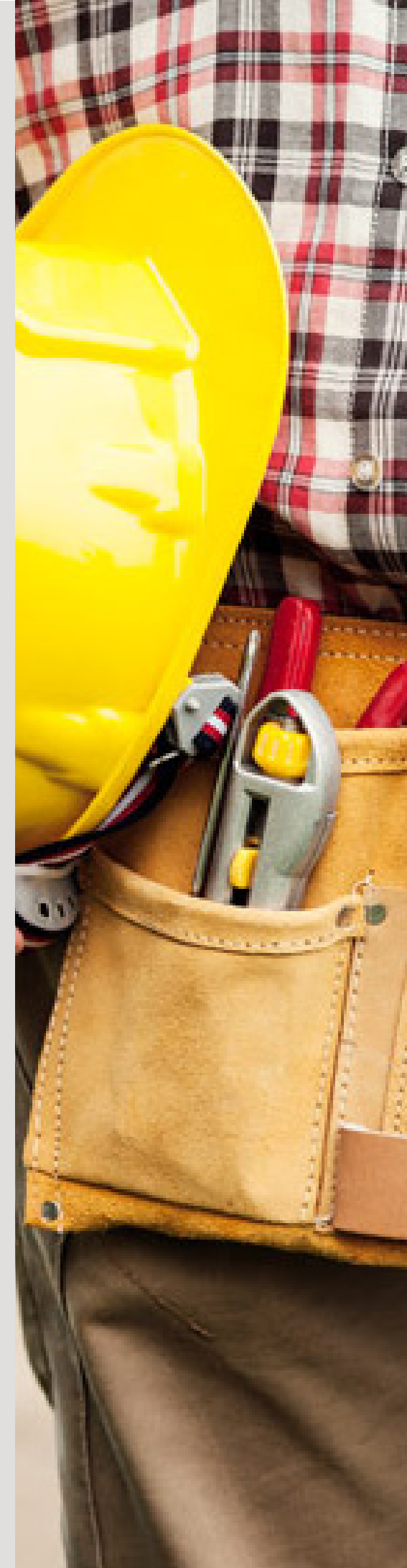
## ENHANCING CONSTRUCTION TRAINING FOR A SUSTAINABLE WORKFORCE IN FIJI

*Pramesh Chand | Technical Officer*

**F**iji, a Pacific island nation, has experienced a fast expansion in its construction sector, which is being driven by infrastructure development, tourism, and urbanization. Despite this development, there remains a substantial shortage of trained labor in the construction business. The necessity for specialist construction training in Fiji has never been more critical for the development of a sustainable workforce. This article delves into the current condition of construction training in Fiji, the issues facing the industry, and methods for upgrading training programs to satisfy the growing demand for skilled personnel.

### The Current State of Construction Training in Fiji

In Fiji, the building industry is vital to the economy, contributing significantly to employment and GDP growth. However, the number of skilled and trained workers in the construction industry remains restricted. Many workers are employed in





informal or unskilled positions, resulting in a workforce without the technical knowledge essential for modern building projects.

One of the main reasons for this skills shortfall has been found to be the absence of official construction training programs. Workers often learn on the job or through apprenticeships, which may not give them the thorough training and credentials required for more complicated building projects. Certain vocational schools and institutions offer construction-related courses; however, these programs frequently fall short of industry demands or lack the funding necessary to teach a large enough workforce.

### **Construction Training in Fiji with DCI of NTPC of FNU**

The National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC) is Fiji's top provider of skills training for the country's industries. To consistently create a productive and healthy workforce that is competitive worldwide, NTPC strives to provide the necessary skills with the right motivation through its more than 600 courses offered annually. The following parts comprise NTPC, each of which is responsible for providing short courses and programs focused on industry. Departments of Tourism, Hospitality, Fashion, and Travel; Department of Information Technology; Department of Executive Management; Department of Construction (DCI); Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering; and Department of Automotive and Mechanical are the training divisions. Division of Consultancy: Department of Community Based Non-Formal Education, Department of Trade Test and Apprenticeship, Department of National Productivity & Industry Innovation, and Department of Quality Awards. Several challenges hinder the growth and improvement of construction training programs in Fiji:

1. **Training Access:** Formal training programs are not widely available, particularly in rural areas. Due to factors like expense, location, or ignorance of the programs offered, many construction workers are unable to attend training facilities. We can also provide construction instruction on-site, such as a

community project, with DCI. Theory sessions will take place in the village hall, while relevant village projects will be used for hands-on training and evaluation. This program will be more valuable and enable participants to think creatively if it is planned and consulted with the village's natural resources.

2. **Curriculum and Training Institutes:** Many training institutes lack the resources and state-of-the-art facilities necessary to instruct employees on the newest construction methods and technology. Training programs are frequently out of date and do not take into account the demands of the industry today, especially when it comes to new materials, green building techniques, and contemporary construction processes. Thirty percent theory and seventy percent practical learning make up DCI's technical programs. Students are informed about the latest industrial practices in Fiji. Our training tools meet industry standards for both instruction and evaluation.

3. **Skilled Instructors:** Skilled instructors with current industry expertise are in short supply. Through DCI, we have trainers with up-to-date industry knowledge and expertise who can expose students to the newest developments in construction and improve the caliber of training they get.

4. **High Informal Employment:** A significant portion of the workforce is employed informally without proper training or certification, contributing to low productivity, inconsistent quality of work, and safety hazards on construction sites. To address the issue, DCI has designed short courses having day class mode, evening class, flexible mode, on-the-job mode, in-house, and on-site mode, which allows students to choose the most convenient methodology of learning.

5. **Safety Concerns:** Workers are more likely to sustain injuries and accidents on construction sites if they are not adequately trained. Both employers and employees benefit from the safety awareness and training that we provide.

### **The Importance of Construction Training**

Both workers and the economy can gain

significantly from practical construction training. Competent workers are better equipped to fulfill the increasing demands of the construction sector and be more productive. Enhancing training programs can give employees the skills and information they need to work on contemporary construction projects, utilize cutting-edge technologies, and implement sustainable best practices. Additionally, adequate training improves workplace safety by instructing employees on how to adhere to safety procedures and recognize possible risks. Safety training lowers the financial burden that workplace injuries place on the government, insurance companies, and businesses, in addition to preventing accidents.

Enhancing the general caliber of work in the industry is another benefit of construction training. Trained workers may use new materials and procedures to make more cost-effective and long-lasting structures, and they are more efficient and deliver better outcomes. By raising the competitiveness of the building sector, these advancements eventually aid in Fiji's economic growth.

### **Construction Training in Fiji**

To address the challenges and improve the quality of construction training in Fiji, several strategies can be employed:

There are various approaches that can be used to address the issues and raise the standard of construction training in Fiji:

1. **NTPC, DCI** has made investments to increase training opportunities in Fiji, especially in underserved and rural communities. Training may be made more available to a larger group of people by bridging the gap through collaborations with local communities, online courses, and mobile training units.

2. **Training Curricula:** DCI has revised its construction training programs to take into account developments in technology,

industry trends, and sustainable practices. Collaborations with global construction associations and professionals have facilitated curriculum modernization and guaranteed that workers possess the skills needed to meet future problems.

3. **Training Facilities:** NTPC training facilities, which are dispersed throughout the nation, particularly in rural and regional locations, would contribute to the expansion of the pool of skilled workers. These facilities are furnished with up-to-date machinery, tools, and equipment to give workers practical experience and get them ready for the reality of the construction industry.

4. **Trainer Capacity:** Our trainers' professional growth gives them access to the most recent advancements in the construction sector.

5. **Emphasizing Safety Training:** Safety training is an essential component of all short courses in construction training programs because of the considerable dangers involved in construction work.

### **In Conclusion**

For Fiji's expanding construction industry to have a trained and long-lasting workforce, construction training is essential. Through the resolution of existing issues like restricted access, outdated curricula, and a lack of trainers, Fiji may improve its construction workforce and make sure it satisfies the needs of a contemporary economy. Investing in construction training helps the country's long-term economic growth in addition to increasing productivity and safety on building sites.

Prioritizing investments in education and training is crucial for both the public and commercial sectors as Fiji's construction industry grows. Fiji can develop a more competent and resilient construction workforce that will support the nation's development if the appropriate policies are met.





## DRIVEN BY WIRES TECHNOLOGY

Sumesh Kumar | Technical Officer

As technology continues to evolve, the automotive industry is progressively integrating advanced electrical and electronic systems into motor vehicles, which increases the demand for qualified professionals in this field. National Training & Productivity Center (NTPC), under Fiji National University (FNU), has an Automotive Electrical & Electronics program designed to equip aspiring technicians with the essential knowledge and skills necessary to thrive in the rapidly evolving automotive industry.

This program offers comprehensive training covering the essentials of automotive electrical systems, engine management systems, hybrid electric vehicle systems, and diagnostic tools. This training not only emphasizes theoretical foundations but also prioritizes hands-on experience for participants with industry collaboration. By blending academic learning with practical applications, NTPC prepares students to meet the challenges of modern automotive technology and pursue rewarding careers in this dynamic sector.

Looking at automotive development trends, the automotive electrical and electronics trade significantly impacts sustainable development by driving the shift towards lower or zero emissions and developing more efficient and environmentally friendly technologies. At NTPC, we build our trainees not only to maintain and service current and past technologies, but also to support sustainable development and growth.

### Why Electrical and Electronics Training

In today's fast-paced automotive world, having a grasp on electrical and electronics isn't just a luxury; it's a necessity. With vehicles becoming more sophisticated than ever, the demand for skilled technicians who can troubleshoot and repair electric systems is through the roof. This training equips future automotive technicians with the know-how to diagnose issues, enhance vehicle performance, and contribute to the overall safety and sustainability of our rides. The days of just popping the hood and fiddling with a wrench are over; it's all about mastering the 21st-century digital age of automobiles.

### Training Modules and Their Relevance

The curriculum is designed to cover a wide array of core subjects that are focused on understanding automotive electrical and electronics systems. Students will start with basic topics such as electrical fundamentals and circuit analysis, then move to electrical and electronic systems and controls, and finally, will cover hybrid and electric vehicle technology. Each module is designed not only to provide theoretical knowledge but also to enhance practical skills that participants can directly apply in their careers. During training, the participants need not worry about memorizing all that technical jargon without knowing its purpose—the qualified trainer ensures you connect the dots!

The training is competency-based and is targeted at the participants to gain industry-relevant competencies.

### Training Itself

Learning with theory is great, but it does not suit all different types of learners. It is the hands-on training where real magic happens. The program incorporates vast lab work, on training simulators and real motor vehicles, allowing students to get equipped with personal protective equipment and gain hands-on experience. Whether it's working on sophisticated diagnostic tools or testing with electrical circuits, future technicians will have ample opportunities to apply their learning in a controlled and supportive learning environment, all while channeling their inner "car whisperer."

### Blended Learning Techniques

National Training and Productivity Center (NTPC) embraces a modern approach to training with blended learning techniques that combine traditional classroom settings with online resources. This approach can help working participants balance work, school, and personal commitments while still engaging with educational content.

With a mix of face-to-face interactions and digital content, students are allowed to learn at their own pace while still benefiting from direct support from instructors.

### Who is Conducting Training

At NTPC, our trainers are not just teachers but industry experts with a wealth of experience. By incorporating insights and real-world examples from their careers, these trainers provide students with a rich, contextual understanding of automotive technologies and troubleshooting. In addition, our trainers do professional development in line with current trainer certification and new technology, like hybrid electric vehicles and electric vehicle service and maintenance, to keep things fresh and relevant. This ensures that after training, our students are prepared for the actual challenges they'll face once they join the workforce.





## Use of Technology in the Learning Process

In a world driven by technology, it's no surprise that NTPC integrates cutting-edge tools into its learning process. From advanced diagnostic software to simulation tools, including online learning software and workshop simulators, students are exposed to the latest in automotive technology throughout their training. This not only enhances their learning experience but also ensures they're equipped with the tech-savvy skills employers seek.

## Pathway for Automotive Electrical and Electronics Program Participants

NTPC has its finger firmly on the pulse of the automotive industry, with updates on the latest tech, trends, industry standards, and demands. When students step into the program, they're not just learning theory; they're absorbing

skills and knowledge that's relevant and highly sought after by employers.

After completing the automotive electrical and electronics program at NTPC with the required industrial attachment period, the participants apply for the trade test in the motor vehicle electrical and electronics trade. A typical pathway for those in the Automotive Electrical and Electronics trade includes roles like Automotive Electrician, Diagnostic Technician, Electrical Systems Specialist, Electric and Hybrid Electric Vehicle Technicians, Service Advisors, and Quality Control Specialists.

The Automotive Electrical & Electronics program is a standout example, providing students with access to state-of-the-art resources and expert instructors who ensure that learning is both relevant and engaging. Think of NTPC as your trusted pit crew, helping you rev up your career.



## A SMART SOLUTION FOR SUSTAINABLE WATER USE

*Bhim Sharma | Technical Officer*

In a time when sustainable living is more than a trend—it's a necessity—rainwater harvesting has emerged as a practical, eco-friendly solution for conserving water and reducing utility costs. With increasingly unpredictable rainfall and rising demand on municipal water supplies (WAF), households across the country are turning to rainwater harvesting systems to supplement their water needs and promote environmental responsibility.

At the heart of any rainwater harvesting system lies the storage tank, or cistern, a key component that holds the filtered rainwater collected from the rooftop. The process begins with rain falling onto the roof, which acts as the initial catchment surface. From there, water flows into screened gutters, protected by gutter guards that block large debris such as leaves and twigs.





The initial rainwater, often referred to as the “first flush,” is diverted by a sloped screen or first flush diverter to prevent roof-borne contaminants from entering the storage tank. Once this preliminary diversion is complete, cleaner water is filtered through a finer screen and channeled via a roof washer into the system’s cistern through the line inlet.

To ensure cleanliness and functionality, a screened intake blocks finer debris, while a sump collects any particles that manage to bypass initial filters. Water then flows into the tank, where it’s safely stored and accessed via a non-potable spigot or an outlet pipe with an insect screen, ensuring no pests or contaminants can re-enter.

When used indoors, the harvested water is drawn through a 1¼” line to a house pump. A slow-drip flow-control valve regulates the water pressure, preventing pipe damage from surges. Excess water exits through an overflow pipe, protecting the tank from overfilling. The utility hole access allows for routine inspection and cleaning, ensuring long-term system integrity.

For those in remote or dry regions, a water carrier’s fill pipe offers a convenient backup, allowing tanker trucks to top up the cistern during extended dry periods. A force breaker further protects the system by preventing water from flowing backward into the supply line.

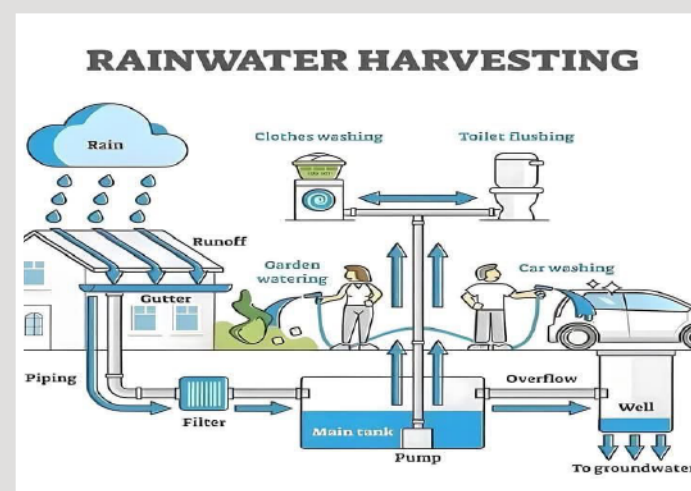
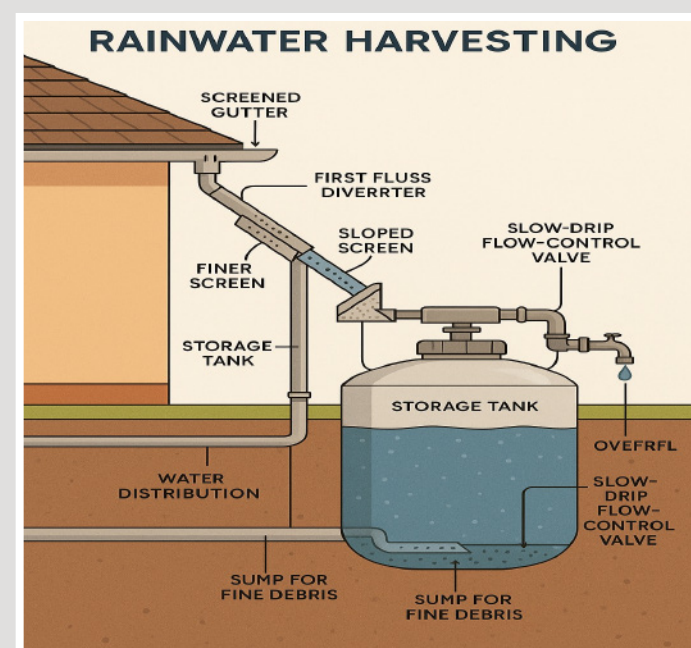
### Benefits of Rainwater Harvesting

Rainwater harvesting provides an array of benefits:

- **Water Conservation:** Significantly reduces dependence on municipal supplies (WAF).
- **Lower Bills:** Many households report significant savings on water usage costs.
- **Eco-Friendly:** Limits stormwater runoff and reduces the risk of soil erosion.
- **Healthier Plants:** Naturally soft and chlorine-free, rainwater is ideal for gardening.
- **Improved Quality:** In many areas, rainwater is purer than heavily treated tap water.

- **Reduced Soil Erosion** – Minimizes stormwater runoff.
- **Environmental Impact** – Reduces strain on freshwater supplies and mitigates runoff.
- **Better for Plants** – Chlorine-free water promotes healthier plant growth.

With its blend of environmental benefit and practical design, rainwater harvesting is more than just smart—it’s essential for building resilient, self-sufficient communities. As climate variability continues to challenge our infrastructure, investing in simple, effective systems like these can ensure a reliable water future for all.



### Plumbing and Rainwater Harvesting Training Programs

Fiji National University (FNU), through its Department of Construction Industry Training, National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC), is pleased to offer a range of industry-relevant training programs designed to equip individuals with practical skills in Plumbing, Water Fitting, and Rainwater Harvesting systems.

We provide both evening classes for working individuals and full-day programs for school dropouts or other interested parties. There are no minimum academic qualifications or technical prerequisites for enrollment, ensuring inclusive access for all learners.

Our training programs are tailored to deliver the core competencies needed in the plumbing industry. The modules prepare participants for Trade Tests, which are conducted at three levels and are available to individuals who meet the required work experience criteria. These programs aim to support participants in achieving the Trade Test Certification in Plumber General qualifications.

Training Program Schedule for Plumbing Evening Classes, offered under the Department of Construction. The training dates are set per individual module to ensure flexibility and focused learning.

### Key Competencies Addressed:

- Safety protocols in workshops and worksites
- Proficient use of hand tools is required for plumbing tasks
- Interpretation of plumbing plans and calculation of plumbing quantities
- Skills relevant to installation, maintenance, and operations within the plumbing trade

NTPC is committed to upskilling and reskilling individuals to meet current industry demands. We believe that continued training helps foster a strong workplace culture, increasing morale and productivity.

We welcome the opportunity to collaborate with your organization and would be pleased to discuss how we can assist you further with your training needs.







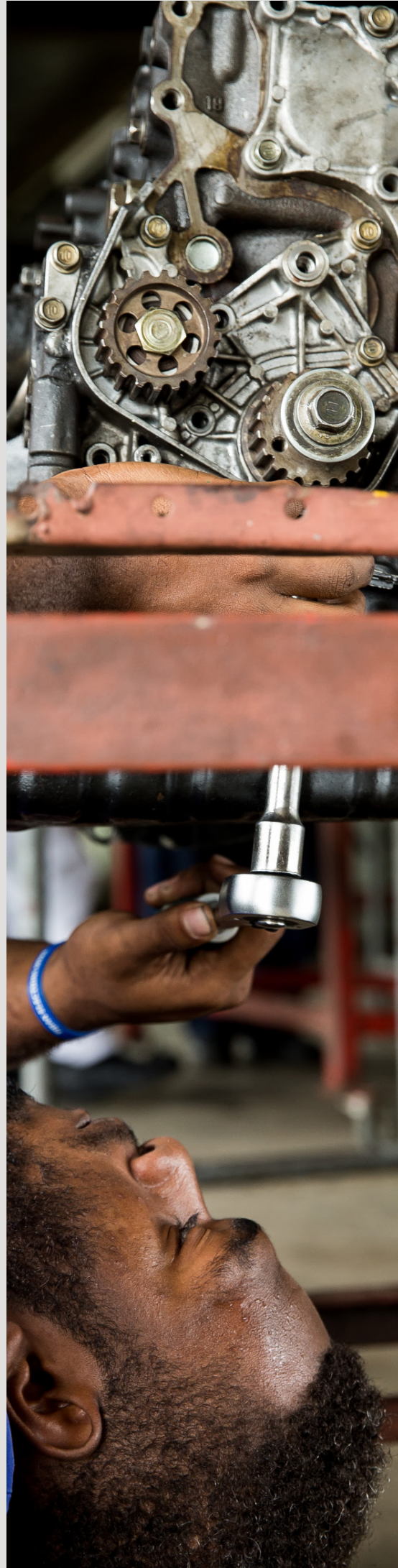
## INDUSTRIAL TRENDS IN KEY ENGINEERING SECTORS

Joseva Lesivakadua | Head of Training

### Refrigeration & Air Conditioning, Fitting & Machining/ Maintenance & Diagnostics, Welding & Fabrication, Automotive Engineering, and Computer-Aided Design

**M**echanical and Automotive Trade represents two of the most dynamic and essential sectors in the modern economy. Mechanical engineering and automotive technology have been at the heart of industrial progress for over a century, shaping the way we live, work, and travel. From the intricate mechanics of machinery to the complex systems powering today's vehicles, professionals in these fields are the driving force behind technological innovation, efficiency, and safety in manufacturing, transportation, and engineering.

The mechanical trade involves the design, production, and maintenance of machines, tools, and mechanical systems that are crucial across industries like manufacturing, energy, aerospace, and construction. Meanwhile, the automotive trade focuses specifically on the design, repair, and maintenance of motor vehicles, including everything from cars and trucks to specialized machinery and electric vehicles (EVs).



All trade sectors in mechanical & automotive are built upon a foundation of hands-on skills, technical expertise, and a deep understanding of its principles. Today, the demand for highly skilled workers in these trades is growing as industries embrace automation, electrification, and sustainable solutions. This article will explore the significance of the mechanical and automotive trades, the skills required to excel in these fields, and the emerging trends that are shaping their future.

#### 1. Refrigeration & Air Conditioning:

The refrigeration and air conditioning (RAC) industry plays a critical role in a variety of sectors, from food preservation and medical storage to comfort cooling in buildings and vehicles. The industry is undergoing transformative changes driven by technological innovations and growing environmental concerns.

##### Key Trends:

- **Energy Efficiency:** The demand for more energy-efficient systems continues to rise. Advances in compressor technology, heat exchangers, and the use of variable-speed drives are driving better performance and reduced energy consumption. The increasing regulatory focus on energy standards globally has accelerated this trend.
- **Natural Refrigerants:** With the phase-out of harmful refrigerants like HFCs, there is a shift toward natural refrigerants such as CO<sub>2</sub>, ammonia, and hydrocarbons. These alternatives are eco-friendly and have low global warming potential (GWP).
- **Internet of Things (IoT) Integration:** Smart refrigeration systems equipped with IoT sensors allow for real-time monitoring and predictive maintenance. This helps reduce downtime, extend equipment lifespan, and improve operational efficiency.
- **Sustainable Design:** As sustainability becomes a key concern, manufacturers are focusing on reducing the carbon footprint of refrigeration systems through sustainable materials, recyclable components, and designs that minimize resource consumption.

#### 2. Fitting & Machining:

Fitting and machining involve the precise shaping, cutting, and assembling of materials to create mechanical components used across various industries, including aerospace, automotive, and manufacturing.

##### Key Trends:

- **Additive Manufacturing:** 3D printing, or additive manufacturing, is revolutionizing the fitting and machining sector by enabling the production of highly complex parts with reduced material waste. It is handy for rapid prototyping and low-volume production runs.
- **Automation and Robotics:** Robotics and CNC (Computer Numerical Control) machines are becoming more sophisticated, increasing production speed, precision, and consistency while reducing human error. Automation in machining also leads to lower labor costs and enhanced safety in manufacturing environments.
- **Advanced Materials:** With the growing demand for high-performance products, manufacturers are working with advanced materials such as titanium, composites, and specialized alloys that require more precise machining techniques.
- **Lean Manufacturing:** Fitting and machining companies are adopting lean principles to optimize production lines, reduce waste, and streamline processes. This trend is driving improvements in both efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

#### 3. Welding & Fabrication:

Welding and fabrication are critical processes in industries such as construction, aerospace, automotive, and energy. New technological advancements and automation are enhancing these processes, resulting in higher quality, safety, and productivity.

##### Key Trends:

- **Automated Welding:** Robotic welding systems are becoming more prevalent, offering precision, repeatability, and speed. Automated systems are also reducing the risk of human



error, improving consistency, and enhancing workplace safety.

- **Laser Welding:** Laser welding is a growing trend in precision industries due to its ability to produce high-strength welds with minimal thermal distortion. It is particularly beneficial for industries that require high-precision parts, such as electronics and medical devices.

- **Wearable Technologies:** The integration of wearable technology in the welding industry is helping to monitor welders' health and safety. Smart helmets and goggles with built-in sensors are used to detect dangerous fumes and radiation levels, ensuring a safer working environment.

- **Material Innovation:** With increasing demand for more substantial and lighter materials, welding and fabrication are incorporating new alloys and composite materials that present challenges in terms of welding techniques and equipment. Manufacturers are developing specialized welding equipment to work with these materials.

#### 4. Automotive Engineering:

The automotive engineering industry is evolving rapidly due to the convergence of new technologies and shifting consumer demands. Trends such as electric vehicles (EVs), autonomous driving, and advanced manufacturing techniques are shaping the future of the automotive sector.

##### Key Trends:

- **Electric Vehicles (EVs):** The shift toward electric vehicles continues to dominate the automotive industry, driven by regulatory mandates and consumer demand for more sustainable transportation options. EVs are expected to make up a significant portion of the global automotive market in the coming years.

- **Autonomous Vehicles:** Self-driving technologies are advancing, with major automotive companies investing heavily in research and development. These innovations are expected to improve road safety, reduce

traffic congestion, and alter the entire automotive ecosystem, from design and manufacturing to service and maintenance.

- **Advanced Materials:** The push for lighter, more fuel-efficient vehicles has led to an increased use of advanced materials such as carbon fiber, lightweight alloys, and composites. These materials not only improve performance but also meet the demand for sustainability in the automotive sector.

- **Industry 4.0:** Automation, IoT, and artificial intelligence are revolutionizing automotive manufacturing. Smart factories that integrate data analytics, robotics, and machine learning are driving increased productivity, precision, and cost-efficiency in vehicle production. It is essential for any tradesperson to upskill themselves to meet the current changes in the market.

#### 5. Computer-Aided Design (CAD):

CAD technology has transformed engineering, architecture, and product design by enabling precise and detailed modeling of products and structures. The field is continuously evolving, with new tools and capabilities emerging to meet the demands of modern industries.

Key Trends:

- **Cloud-Based CAD:** Cloud computing is becoming a significant trend in CAD systems, allowing for real-time collaboration, data storage, and access to design files from anywhere. Cloud-based platforms offer scalability and reduce the need for in-house IT infrastructure.

- **3D CAD and Simulation:** The use of 3D CAD modeling and simulation software is on the rise as engineers seek to test and refine designs before they are physically manufactured. Virtual testing and simulations reduce prototyping costs and accelerate time-to-market for new products.

- **Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning:** AI and machine learning are being integrated into CAD systems to enhance design optimization, automate repetitive tasks, and

provide intelligent design recommendations. These technologies are expected to accelerate the design process and improve design accuracy.

- **Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR):** AR and VR technologies are increasingly being incorporated into CAD tools, allowing designers and engineers to visualize and interact with 3D models in a more immersive and intuitive manner. This helps in detecting potential issues earlier in the design process.

##### Conclusion:

Across multiple engineering sectors, the integration of advanced technologies, automation, and sustainability principles is

driving innovation. In refrigeration and air conditioning, natural refrigerants and smart systems are taking center stage. In fitting and machining, automation and additive manufacturing are improving efficiency. Welding and fabrication are becoming more precise and safer with robotics and laser technology, while automotive engineering is shifting toward electric and autonomous vehicles. In the realm of computer-aided design, cloud computing, and AI are transforming the design and manufacturing landscape. These trends not only improve productivity and product quality but also respond to growing environmental and safety concerns, ensuring that industries remain adaptable in a rapidly changing world.







## FIJI OHS CONFERENCE 2025 – AN OPPORTUNITY TO NETWORK, COLLABORATE, AND LEARN

*Neeraj Kumar | Assistant Instructor*

**T**his year's Fiji OHS Conference, hosted by Fiji National University, will be held on April 25th at the Sheraton Fiji Resort, Denarau. The theme of this year's conference is

**“Revolutionizing Health and Safety: The Role of AI and Digitalization at Work.”**

### Introducing our esteemed conference speakers

This year's Conference will feature an impressive lineup of international and local safety professionals and industry experts who will provide varying viewpoints on how emerging digital and AI technologies can transform workplace health and safety. The conference will provide valuable networking opportunities, a chance to meet experts, and learn about emerging technologies that will have an impact on future work.



### Deborah Cameron

Topic: 'Identifying and Managing Risks: Strengthening Safety Through Human Connection'

Deborah has been a key member of the New Zealand Institute of Safety Management (NZISM) Senior Leadership Team since 2020. She is a Certified Professional Accredited Member and has been the NZISM Logistics Sector Lead and Branch Manager for the Bay of Plenty region. She is a Registered Practitioner with the Health & Safety Association of New Zealand (HASANZ).

Deborah holds a Master of Workplace Health & Safety (with Distinction) from the University of Newcastle, Australia, and a Bachelor of Management Studies from the University of Waikato, New Zealand. She is the Director of Redhawk Safety with extensive experience in the Ports & Logistics and Manufacturing sectors. Currently, she works as a Health, Safety & Sustainability Manager in the FMCG food industry. Deb also serves as a board member of Waipuna Hospice Incorporated, providing health and safety governance within the not-for-profit health sector.

### Deidre Walsh

Topic: 'Toso Vata: Engaging Workers with Tech for Safer Workplaces'

Deidre is an AIHS-certified Professional Safety Consultant with 12 years of experience in construction, utilities, and agriculture. She has contributed to major projects like the Australian War Memorial redevelopment and the PEC mega energy project, thriving in fast-paced, high-risk industries. As a small business owner with a generalist background, Deidre offers a practical, systemized approach to hazard and risk management. She is also a dedicated trainer and mentor.

### Greg Dearsly

Topic: 'Leadership and Cultural Intelligence in Safety'

Greg has 25 years of experience in health and

safety and has held leadership roles as past President of the New Zealand Institute of Safety Management (NZISM) and International Network of Safety & Health Professional Organisations (INSHPO). He has guided businesses of all sizes in improving workplace safety and has a wealth of knowledge on leadership, cultural intelligence, and risk management.

Greg has a Master's in Advanced Leadership Practices from Massey University, New Zealand, and is the Managing Director of First 4 Safety Ltd. He is also a Certified Cultural Intelligence Facilitator.

### Mohammed Altaab Khan

Topic: 'Psychological Safety in the Workplace & How This Could Optimize Workplace Culture in an AI Era'

Altaab is a highly accomplished Learning and Development (L&D) specialist, trainer, and coach with over 20 years of experience in driving business and people excellence. Passionate about transformative learning, mental health, and professional development, he founded Transformative Learning Hub, a consultancy dedicated to empowering organizations and individuals through practical, results-driven training, coaching, mentoring, and advisory services. He is a Registered Training Officer with the Fiji National University.

Altaab's expertise spans diverse industries, including Tourism & hospitality, retail, and education, where he has led key initiatives such as brand standard implementation and enabled/supported organizations in achieving the Fiji Business Excellence Awards, Fiji Human Resources Awards, and ANZ Excellence in Tourism Awards. He is a Certified Emotional Intelligence Life Coach, Lead Food Safety Auditor, certified Practitioner with the Fiji Human Resources Institute, and an Affiliate Member of the Fiji Psychological Society. He is also a Neurolinguistic Programming Practitioner, a certified Psychological Safety-First Aider, Justice of Peace, Commissioner for Oaths, and Fiji Business Excellence Awards Evaluator.



## Nigel Davidson

Topic: 'Impacts of AI and Digitalization on Worker Health and Safety'

Nigel is the CEO of ACHIEVR and a leading expert in AI, VR/AR, and workforce safety. With 20 years of global experience across the UK, Australia, and South America, Nigel brings a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities presented by emerging technologies in workplace safety.

A passionate advocate for the intersection of AI and workplace health, Nigel leads ACHIEVR, a pioneering company specializing in AI-driven safety training. His expertise bridges traditional safety principles with cutting-edge technology, offering practical strategies for industries navigating the future of work.

## Pauliasi Nauku

Topic: 'The Fiji Institute of Workplace Health and Safety'

Pauliasi is the current President of the Fiji Institute of Workplace Health and Safety. He has been providing training, consultancy, auditing, and advice on occupational health and safety for 20 years.

Pauliasi has qualifications in Environmental Health and Occupational Health and Safety and is an Accredited Occupational Health & Safety Trainer with the Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Workplace Relations.

This conference provides an ideal forum for the exchange of knowledge, practices, and experience between participants with the aim of promoting health and safety at workplaces in Fiji. By attending this conference, participants will be able to reinforce and build networks and alliances, which can facilitate a platform for the development of knowledge and strategic and practical ideas suitable for their workplaces. It also provides an invaluable opportunity for continued professional development for local OHS Practitioners.



## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE TRAINING: MISSING LINK IN WORKPLACE SUCCESS

Shehana Hussein | Assistant Instructor

In the modern evolving work environment, success and productivity depend not only on what we know but also on how we manage our emotions and subsequently our reactions at the workplace. Emotional intelligence training is the key to effective communication, collaboration, and navigating challenges in diverse and challenging environments. Technical knowledge and qualifications, while essential, are no longer enough to provide the level of productivity required for sustained progress. This is where Emotional Intelligence (EI) comes in as the “missing link” in personal and professional development.

As a workplace trainer, I have witnessed the impact of emotional intelligence training firsthand. After being trained, employees display a heightened emotional awareness and tend to build stronger relationships, resolve conflicts more effectively, and adapt better to change. They become not just good workers, but dependable teammates and resilient leaders.



## What Is Emotional Intelligence Training?

Emotional Intelligence (EQ) training enhances leadership skills, learning, effectiveness, communication, relationships, and wellbeing in the workplace. Emotions also impact one's creativity and productivity, career, and social skills, which are critical factors that are essential in today's dynamic work environments. Emotionally intelligent employees are much better equipped to tackle the interpersonal and emotional demands of the workplace. They can control their emotions, resolve conflict respectfully, and navigate difficult conversations by offering and receiving feedback constructively. Their ability to work well with diverse teams enhances collaboration and inclusion, while their empathetic and authentic leadership style fosters trust, motivation, and a resilient and positive work culture.

## Why Emotional Intelligence training matters in Fiji

In a multicultural and closely connected society like Fiji, emotional intelligence plays a crucial role. Our workplaces are reflections of our communities, rich in cultural values, customs, and relationships. How we communicate and relate to one another has a direct influence on our productivity and wellbeing.

In many workplaces, misunderstandings, poor communication, and unresolved tensions are often the root causes of low morale, absenteeism, and reduced teamwork. These problems are rarely the result of inadequate technical performance—instead, they frequently stem from a lack of emotional awareness and interpersonal sensitivity.

Workplaces that foster emotional intelligence are generally more inclusive, respectful, and resilient—these are values that align with Fiji's cultural emphasis on community, harmony, and mutual respect.

## The Role of Leaders in Promoting Emotional Intelligence

Leaders set the tone for workplace culture. Emotionally intelligent leaders can transform a toxic or stagnant work environment into one that is empowering and people-centred. They model behaviours such as active listening, empathy, humility, and effective communication.

### An emotionally intelligent leader:

Understands team dynamics and adapts their approach accordingly

Encourages feedback and open dialogue  
Supports staff wellbeing and mental health  
Takes accountability while inspiring trust and confidence

Strategically makes decisions to enhance overall organizational performance

In contrast, leaders who lack emotional intelligence may react impulsively, dismiss concerns, or micromanage—behaviours that lead to disengagement and high staff turnover. There is a need for more leaders who can guide with both competence and compassion. Leadership training that includes emotional intelligence should be a priority in both the public and private sectors.

## Incorporating EI into Training and Development

As leaders, we can support the development of emotional intelligence within our teams. While focusing on technical skills and compliance, the next step of staff development must also include emotional awareness, resilience, and interpersonal effectiveness. Integrating emotional intelligence into professional growth can be achieved through self-awareness exercises, such as journaling, reflection, and personality assessments, which can help individuals better understand their emotions

and behaviour. Role-playing scenarios allow team members to practice handling conflict, giving feedback, and navigating difficult conversations. Team-building activities foster trust and open communication, while stress management workshops provide tools to manage pressure and prevent burnout. Finally, empathy training, through storytelling or simulation, encourages employees to see from different perspectives, strengthening compassion and cooperation across the workplace.

Training does not always require expensive tools. It begins with creating safe spaces for dialogue, encouraging honest reflection, and modelling emotionally intelligent behaviour. Benefits of an Emotionally Intelligent Workforce

Research supports the advantages of fostering emotional intelligence in the workplace. Globally, studies show that emotionally intelligent employees and leaders tend to experience greater job satisfaction, enhanced productivity, and improved overall performance. They are also less likely to suffer from burnout and stress, contributing to a healthier work environment. In addition to stronger teamwork, smoother collaboration, and greater adaptability, particularly during times of organizational change.

For Fiji, which is working towards sustainable economic growth, improved governance, and stronger public service delivery, emotional intelligence training can support these goals by strengthening the human side of development.

## Challenges and Opportunities

Despite its importance, emotional intelligence is often misunderstood or undervalued. Some people may view EI as too “soft” or not relevant to their work. Others may not know how to develop it.

Qualifications or test scores cannot measure EI, but it can be felt in moments of tension, conflict, and decision-making. It requires consistent practice, feedback, and a willingness to learn from mistakes. “The strength of the team is each member. The strength of each member is the team.” - Phil Jackson. Organizations need to understand that the team is only as strong as its members, and to excel, communication and understanding through EI are extremely important.

## A Call to Action

Now is the time for Fiji's organizations—both large and small—to prioritize emotional intelligence as a core professional skill. This can be achieved through offering regular training focused on self-awareness, communication, empathy, and self-management. Promoting workplace cultures that encourage reflection, listening, and support. Recognizing and rewarding emotionally intelligent behaviour in performance reviews

The Department of Executive Management is committed to embedding emotional intelligence into its training philosophy and aligning it with national training standards. Awareness sessions and professional development initiatives focused on emotional intelligence and other emerging competencies will equip trainers and professionals with practical tools to foster empathy, resilience, and effective communication within their organizations.

As trainers, leaders, and employees, we all have a role to play. If we want to build more compassionate, collaborative, and high-performing workplaces in Fiji, emotional intelligence must become a shared priority.





Yashwant Samir | Head of Training

The Department of Executive Management at the National Training and Productivity Centre of the Fiji National University is one of the most diverse training units in the country.

With its core function being the provision of training in multiple areas, it also handles the following functions, which are integral in maintaining the mandate of the National Training and Productivity Centre. The functions include:

### Occupational and Psychometric Assessment

#### These include:

- **Cognitive/Aptitude Tests:** Measure reasoning (numerical, verbal, abstract), problem-solving, and critical thinking.
- **Personality Tests:** Assess traits, behavioural styles, leadership potential, and values (e.g., how you handle pressure, teamwork).
- **Emotional Intelligence Tests:** Gauge self-awareness, empathy, and social skills.
- **Work-Related Inventories:** Can be used to evaluate stress, burnout, motivation, or overall well-being.



### Management of the NTPC Garment Centre and Fashion and Design Learning Centre

This centre offers practical, project-based learning that encompasses artistic, technical, and business aspects, providing a holistic fashion education that transforms ideas into finished, wearable clothing. We specialize in:

- **Creative Design:** Sketching, colour theory, trend forecasting, and developing collections.
- **Technical Skills:** Pattern making (drafting), fabric cutting, sewing (machines/sergers), garment construction, finishing, alterations, pressing.
- **Production & Business:** Understanding machinery, garment production processes, quality control, sometimes marketing and entrepreneurship.

### National Trainer Registration Process

The Department is also responsible for the registration of trainers across the country in 3 different categories, namely:

- Resource Professional
- Training Instructor
- Training Officer

We are responsible for registering trainers and accrediting Training Providers so that their training programs can be eligible for grant claims by employers who pay the FNU Levy.

### Management of the Training of Trainers Program

The Training of Trainers (ToT) program run by the Department equips professionals with skills to deliver effective training. This program consists of 4 modules.

It is a specialized program that teaches individuals how to become effective facilitators and instructors, focusing on adult learning principles, instructional design, communication, and practical delivery skills, rather than just subject matter, creating a “multiplier effect” for knowledge dissemination

within organizations. It equips new trainers with the confidence and techniques to deliver engaging, relevant, and impactful training, ensuring higher knowledge retention and broader reach.

### Key components of this training program are:

- **Adult Learning Theories (Andragogy):** Understanding how adults learn best (relevance, experience, self-direction).
- **Instructional Design:** Crafting clear lesson plans, objectives, and adaptable structures.
- **Delivery & Facilitation:** Developing strong presentation skills, managing group dynamics, and using multimedia.
- **Practical Application:** Hands-on practice, peer feedback, and mastering the flow of a training session.
- **Evaluation:** Assessing training effectiveness and learner engagement.

### Consultancy Services

The Department has an array of professionals offering specialised advice to improve business performance, covering areas such as strategy, HR, Retail, Customer Services, BPO management and operations. Consultants provide deep knowledge, helping organisations solve complex problems, drive growth, and manage change through tailored solutions and implementation support.

Our current areas of expertise include the following:

- **Strategy:** Corporate strategy, market entry, growth.
- **Management:** Organizational structure, process improvement, change management.
- **Human Resources:** Talent management, HR strategy, organizational development.
- **Operations:** Operational efficiency, specialized recruitment and counselling



When considering the core function, we believe that executive management training is highly relevant because it equips leaders with crucial skills (strategic vision, emotional intelligence, digital agility) to navigate complex business environments, drive innovation, build strong teams, ensure organizational continuity through succession planning, and achieve sustainable growth in a rapidly changing world, translating directly to better performance and competitiveness.

It transforms experienced managers into impactful business leaders by focusing on mindset, communication, and strategic decision-making, moving beyond technical skills to foster broader organizational success.

One of the measures of success for the Department of Executive Management is our ability to manage the ever-changing needs and circumstances of our customers, evolution of new technology, products and services. We have committed ourselves to specific standards of performance against which the public can gauge what they can and should expect from us. Such benchmarks call for an immense amount of flexibility, commitment and skill from all of us. We must ensure that our operational standards develop even further through the perseverance and performance of our employees.

Each of us has a role to play in meeting the challenge of improving our operational efficiency and maintaining a dynamic and progressive approach to people management.

A successful career is directly proportional to an individual's abilities, his or her will for action, capacity for vision, knowledge gathered through experience and, above all, education and training, a high standard that we believe our Training Department can offer you.

The Department has a broad spectrum of short course training in Human Resources Management, Customer Service, Sales & Marketing, Business Communications, Real Estate, Executive Management & Leadership. The Department also holds the only National Trainers Conference annually, which brings together trainers, assessors and HR Personnel from all over the nation with international speakers and local experts discussing new and innovative training methodology and practises.

The Department programmes are vetted by the relevant Industry Advisory Committees before it is approved by the University's Senate. These short courses now all have credit point allocations to assess requisition of prior learning for attainment programs in the relevant pathways.

In addition to this, we also undertake a review of existing programmes every year to assure that we progress as per our plans. We also invite industry practitioners as guest speakers to add value to our programmes. Our trainers are well qualified with industry experience and practical attachments in the industry to understand the process and best practices. We also do post and pre-course evaluations to determine the entry and exit behaviour of our participants.



## POWER DOWN, STAY SAFE: THE IMPORTANCE OF LOCKOUT/TAGOUT IN MANUFACTURING

*Setoki Buka | Senior Training Officer – Electrical*

In the bustling world of manufacturing, where heavy machinery and complex systems are the norm, Safety is not just a priority. It's a necessity. Among the most vital safety protocols in this environment is Lockout/Tagout (LOTO), a procedure designed to protect workers from hazardous energy during equipment maintenance and servicing. Despite its critical role, LOTO is often overlooked or misunderstood, leading to preventable injuries and fatalities. This article explores the significance of LOTO training, its impact on workplace safety, and the tangible benefits it offers to employers and employees alike.

### What is Lockout/Tagout?

Lockout/Tagout refers to specific practices and procedures to safeguard employees from the unexpected energization or startup of machinery and equipment or the release of hazardous energy during service or maintenance activities.





### The process involves two key components:

- Lockout: Physically locking the energy-isolating device with a padlock to prevent the machine from being turned on.
- Tagout: Placing a tag on the device to indicate that it should not be operated until the authorized person removes the tag.

These procedures are mandated by the following Australian Standards, which outline the control of hazardous energy.

- AS/NZS 3000:2018 Electrical installations “Wiring Rules”; 2.3.2.2 Devices for isolation – 2.3.2.2.1 General
- AS/NZS 4024.1201:2014 Safety of machinery – General principles for design - Risk assessment and risk reduction - 6.3.5.4 Measures for isolation and energy dissipation
- AS 60204.1:2005 Safety of machinery – Electrical equipment of machines; Part 1 – General requirements - 5.3 Supply disconnecting (isolating) device; 5.3.1 General; 5.3.2 Type.

### Why LOTO Training is Essential

LOTO (Lockout/Tagout) training is essential for ensuring workplace safety during the maintenance and servicing of machinery and equipment. It educates employees on how to properly shut down, isolate, and secure machines to prevent the accidental release of hazardous energy—such as electrical, mechanical, hydraulic, or pneumatic energy—that could cause serious injuries or fatalities.

Without proper LOTO procedures, workers are at risk of unexpected machine startups or energy discharges, which can lead to amputations, electrocutions, or crushing injuries. Training ensures that all personnel understand their roles and responsibilities, including how to identify energy sources, apply locks and tags, and verify that equipment is safely de-energized before work begins.

LOTO training also helps organizations comply with occupational safety regulations, such as the General Work Conditions Regulations

2003 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1997 of Fiji, reducing the risk of legal penalties and improving overall safety culture. It fosters communication and coordination among teams, especially in environments with complex machinery or multiple workers. The training ensures that workers understand:

- The types of hazardous energy (electrical, mechanical, hydraulic, pneumatic, chemical, thermal, etc.)
- How to identify energy sources
- The proper steps to isolate and control energy
- The importance of communication and coordination during maintenance

Without appropriate training, even a momentary lapse in procedure can result in catastrophic consequences.

The Importance of LOTO Training for Employers LOTO (Lockout/Tagout) training is crucial for employers as it forms a vital part of a robust workplace safety program. Firstly, it ensures legal compliance with safety regulations, helping employers avoid significant fines and legal consequences, as LOTO violations can be cited. Secondly, it significantly reduces the risk of workplace injuries caused by unexpected machine startups or energy releases, protecting employees and minimizing operational disruptions. This leads to improved productivity, as workers in a safe environment are more focused and efficient. Additionally, fewer accidents result in fewer insurance claims, which can lower insurance premiums and reduce overall business costs. Beyond financial and operational benefits, LOTO training enhances a company's reputation. Organizations that prioritize Safety gain the trust of employees, clients, and the public, which can be a competitive advantage when attracting skilled workers or securing contracts. Overall, LOTO training is not just a regulatory requirement but a strategic investment in workforce safety, operational efficiency, and business credibility.

### Benefits for Employees

LOTO (Lockout/Tagout) training offers

significant benefits for employees working in hazardous industrial settings. Foremost, it ensures personal Safety by preventing accidental machine startups during maintenance, protecting workers from serious injuries or fatalities. Beyond physical Safety, LOTO training empowers employees with the knowledge and confidence to take control of their work environment, encouraging them to recognize and report unsafe conditions. This sense of empowerment fosters a proactive safety culture. Additionally, being trained and certified in LOTO procedures enhances an employee's professional profile, opening doors to career advancement opportunities such as supervisory roles. The training also strengthens team cohesion, as it promotes clear communication and cooperation across departments during maintenance tasks. When everyone understands and follows the same safety protocols, mutual respect and trust among team members are built. Overall, LOTO training not only safeguards workers but also contributes to their professional growth and a more collaborative, safety-conscious workplace.

### Implementing Effective LOTO Training

Effective LOTO (Lockout/Tagout) training must go beyond a single session to truly safeguard workers and ensure compliance. It should be comprehensive, covering all forms of hazardous energy and the specific equipment used within the facility. Practical, hands-on training is essential, allowing employees to engage with real-world scenarios and better understand procedures. To remain relevant, the training must be regularly updated to

reflect any changes in machinery, safety protocols, or regulations. Inclusivity is also key; training should be tailored to the specific roles and responsibilities of all employees, from maintenance personnel to supervisors. Additionally, employers must keep thorough records of all training sessions and ensure that only authorized and properly trained individuals carry out LOTO procedures. By embedding these elements into their safety programs, organizations can create a more informed, prepared, and safety-conscious workforce.

### LOTO Training Offered at NTPC

The National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC) currently offers specialized Lockout/Tagout (LOTO) training for industries across Fiji. This comprehensive 2-day program has already been successfully delivered to Paradise Beverages Limited and South Pacific Distilleries, with upcoming sessions scheduled for Viti Foods Limited. The training covers essential topics including:

- LOTO roles and responsibilities
- Hazardous forms of energy
- Developing LOTO procedures
- Use of LOTO equipment.

Employers in Fiji are strongly encouraged to engage NTPC for this critical training to enhance workplace safety, ensure compliance with safety standards, and protect their workforce from preventable industrial accidents. Invest in Safety and partner with NTPC today.







## FROM ISOLATION TO DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT: ROTUMA'S JOURNEY WITH THE SMART ISLANDS PROGRAMME

Ashutosh Maharaj | Senior Instructor

**N**estled far from Fiji's main islands, Rotuma is a place of remarkable beauty and culture. With its emerald coastline and tight-knit communities, it embodies the charm of the Pacific. However, Rotuma's isolation also brings challenges—particularly when it comes to accessing opportunities in a rapidly digitizing world. But change is on the horizon, thanks to the Smart Islands programme, a groundbreaking initiative that is reshaping lives and bridging the digital divide.

This joint effort, led by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), UNOPS, and Fiji National University (FNU), is part of the broader Joint SDG Fund initiative. It's an ambitious project that aims to equip remote Pacific communities with the digital skills and awareness needed to thrive in the 21st century. In Rotuma, this has meant not only teaching basic digital literacy but also fostering confidence in using technology for education, agriculture, and finance. This is the story of how digital tools

are unlocking human potential on a small but resilient island.

### A Community Hungry for Change

Arriving in Rotuma, you're greeted by smiling faces and a sense of closeness that comes from generations of shared traditions. Yet, there's also an undercurrent of curiosity—a palpable hunger for knowledge. For years, residents have faced challenges common to remote areas: limited internet access, fewer opportunities for digital education, and a lack of resources to address online safety.

The Smart Islands programme set out to address these gaps. Starting at Rotuma High School, we engaged with students who were eager to learn how technology could open new doors for their futures. It wasn't just about learning to use a smartphone or computer—it was about understanding how digital tools could transform their education and career prospects.

From the school, we moved to the villages of Pepjei, Malha'a and Ahau. Here, we met farmers, homemakers, and elders—all eager to explore how the internet and digital platforms could make their lives easier and more connected. It was inspiring to see residents in traditional thatched meeting houses listening intently as we explained concepts like protecting personal data, online scams, and using digital platforms for farming advice.

### Breaking Down Barriers

One of the most significant hurdles to digital literacy in isolated communities is fear—fear of technology and fear of the unknown. For many in Rotuma, a smartphone or laptop was not just a device but an intimidating mystery. "How do I make it work?" "What if I break it?" These were common concerns voiced during our training sessions.

We tackled this fear by starting small. In our workshops, we emphasized hands-on learning. Participants were shown how to navigate a phone's basic settings, use messaging apps, and perform online searches. We explained

how email works and demonstrated how to use it for everything from applying for scholarships to communicating with relatives abroad. The shift in mindset was noticeable: participants who were hesitant at first grew increasingly confident as they mastered each new skill.

The emphasis wasn't just on functionality; online safety was a cornerstone of the training. The digital world offers countless opportunities, but it also comes with risks. Teaching participants to identify phishing scams, secure their accounts, and avoid misinformation was just as crucial as teaching them how to browse or email. In a world where cyber threats are growing, building this foundational knowledge felt like an essential step in empowering the community.

### Empowerment Across Generations

A key part of the programme was highlighting how technology could enhance traditional livelihoods. Rotuma's economy is deeply rooted in agriculture and fishing, and we worked with participants to explore ways digital tools could support these industries. Farmers learned how to access weather updates and market prices online, ensuring their crops could fetch better prices. Fishermen explored navigation tools and sustainable practices, while local artisans discovered platforms where they could showcase their work to a global audience. For the younger generation, the sessions sparked dreams of careers in technology, healthcare, and education.

### Building Resilience Through Connection

While the programme's immediate focus was on education, its broader goal is resilience. In the Pacific, where communities are vulnerable to natural disasters and economic challenges, connectivity can be a lifeline. By introducing digital tools and skills, the Smart Islands programme is helping Rotuma build a foundation for sustainable development.

For example, one of the key topics we covered was disaster preparedness. With climate change increasing the frequency of cyclones, residents learned how to use digital platforms





to receive real-time weather updates and emergency alerts. These skills could make a critical difference in the event of a natural disaster, ensuring that communities stay informed and prepared.

The programme also emphasized the importance of using technology for community-building. From creating local WhatsApp groups to sharing village announcements on social media, participants learned how digital tools could strengthen their sense of togetherness. This aspect was especially important in a place like Rotuma, where oral traditions and collective decision-making are central to the culture.

### Looking Ahead

The work in Rotuma is far from over. While the initial phase of the Smart Islands programme has laid a strong foundation, sustaining this momentum will require ongoing support and collaboration. Expanding internet access, providing more advanced training, and equipping communities with up-to-date tools will be critical to ensuring the long-term success of this initiative.

Yet, the progress so far offers hope. In a world where digital connectivity often feels like a given, Rotuma's story is a reminder of how transformative it can be. It's proof that even the most remote communities can find their place in the digital age—with the right guidance,

resources, and a shared belief in the power of learning.



## EMPOWERING FIJI'S FUTURE: FREE TRAINING AT TVET PACIFIKA CENTRE

Setareki Valenitabua | Manager

In a bid to uplift and empower the diverse communities of Fiji, the TVET Pacifika Centre on Robertson Road hosted a free training program in December 2024. This commendable initiative saw the enthusiastic participation of over 250 individuals from various walks of life.

The training sessions spanned 13 different courses and attracted school leavers, the unemployed, marginalized individuals, street youths, solo mothers, and those who had to leave school due to financial constraints or peer pressure. For two weeks, these participants immersed themselves in invaluable skills and knowledge that would pave the way for brighter futures. Upon the conclusion of the training, successful participants were awarded Certificates of Attainment in their respective courses. This acknowledgment not only recognized their dedication and hard work but also opened new avenues of opportunity for them.





Following graduation, name lists of students were sent to FNU Colleges such as CAFF, CETVET, and CBHTS. Fortunately, most participants were able to enroll in these colleges, pursuing Certificate 3 and 4 programs, Diploma programs, and even degree programs. Additionally, several students enlisted in the Military Engineering sector, while a few fiberglass boat repair students found employment in boat building. Some participants also secured jobs in the hotel and hospitality industry.

It's truly impressive to see the lasting impact that the TVET free training program has had on communities in Fiji. The initiative, sponsored by FNU under NTPC, has evidently played a crucial role in reducing crime and unemployment, as well as fostering village development through basic technical and vocational skills. From 2012 to 2023, the training program was funded by Government under the Ministry of Finance.

Even though the government grants ceased in 2024, it's encouraging to hear that the demand for training from various provinces, special groups, government ministries, and NGOs continues. The success stories and positive outcomes from this program are a testament to its value and the need to find alternative ways to sustain and expand it.

To further meet the demand and address the skills gaps created by the Palm Scheme, it might be worth exploring potential partnerships with private sector companies, international organizations, and other educational institutions. Crowdfunding campaigns and community-driven initiatives could also be

effective in securing the necessary resources to continue offering these vital training programs.

The CBNFE staff conducted interviews with some participants to gather their views on the training and the knowledge they gained. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing gratitude for the opportunity and highlighting the skills they acquired during the program. Here are some of their thoughts:

#### Participant A

"This training has given me a new lease on life. I now have skills that I can use to support myself and my family."

#### Participant B

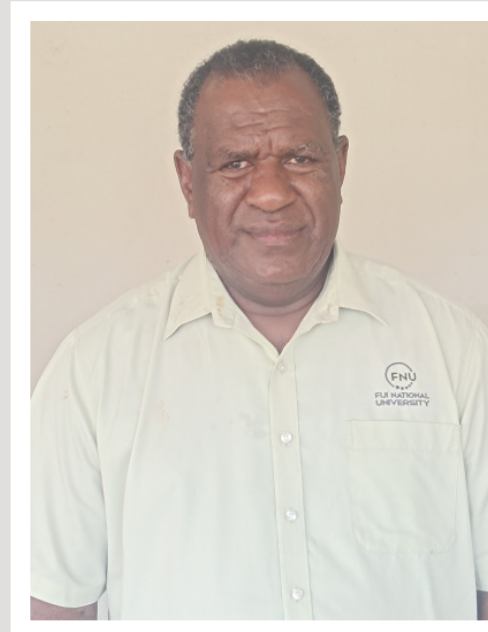
"I am grateful for the opportunity to learn and grow. The training was intense but very rewarding."

#### Participant C

"The instructors were fantastic, and the hands-on experience was invaluable. I feel ready to take on new challenges."

Positive feedback from participants can be incredibly motivating and validating for all the effort put into the training sessions. It also strengthens the case for securing further funding to continue such valuable initiatives.

Such initiatives are instrumental in creating a more inclusive and skilled society, fostering growth, and bridging gaps. Congratulations to all the participants, and heartfelt thanks to the TVET Pasifika Centre for its unwavering commitment to the community.



## THE IMPORTANCE AND IMPACT OF THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY ON THE SOCIETY

Josefa Salobo | Training Officer

The building sector greatly influences the physical surroundings in which we live work, and play. It is among the most established and essential sectors of the world economy, making a substantial contribution to infrastructure, employment, economic growth, and social advancement. Comprehending the significance of the construction sector facilitates the appreciation of its diverse impact on societies and countries across the globe

#### Contribution to the Economy

The building industry's significant economic contribution is one of the main factors making it so important. Every year, construction projects bring in billions of dollars, which support economic expansion and advancement. Millions of people, including architects, engineers, laborers, project managers, and skilled craftspeople, are directly employed by the industry. It indirectly increases the demand for raw materials.





Moreover, building initiatives frequently operate as stimulants for more extensive economic activity.

Complexes can draw in companies, boost output, and advance regional growth. Due to the multiplier impact of the construction industry, every dollar spent on building can lead to more economic activity in a variety of other businesses. Urbanization and the Development of Infrastructure. Building and maintaining vital infrastructure, such as ports, airports, bridges, highways, water supply systems, and energy facilities, depends heavily on construction. These components are essential for facilitating communication, trade, transportation, and access to critical services. Dependable infrastructure improves economic efficiency, draws investment, and raises living standards.

Construction is a significant factor in urbanization, which is fueled by the

world's fast urban population growth. Building commercial hubs, public facilities, and affordable housing helps raise living standards and accommodate growing populations. Sustainable urban planning and smart city projects rely significantly on creative building techniques that support resource-efficient and ecologically friendly developments. The building sector substantially impacts the benefits to society and life quality, which is the well-being of society. It offers the real estate required for cultural, recreational, medical, and educational endeavors. Building projects that promote social cohesiveness and enhance quality of life have produced schools, hospitals, parks, and community centers. Additionally, building promotes resilience and safety. Current building standards and norms guarantee that buildings are secure, resilient to natural disasters, and able to withstand environmental stresses like hurricanes, floods, and earthquakes.

### **Innovation in Technology and Sustainability**

Technological innovations like Building Information Modeling (BIM), 3D printing, automation, and green building techniques are being adopted by the construction industry more and more. These developments

decrease environmental effects, cut expenses, and increase efficiency. By utilizing energy-efficient materials, waste reduction techniques, and renewable energy sources, sustainable building practices bring the sector into line with international initiatives to tackle climate change. In addition to lowering carbon footprints, green buildings and environmentally friendly infrastructure also provide long-term energy and maintenance cost benefits. The drive for environmentally friendly building practices shows a dedication to both addressing societal demands and preserving the environment.

### **Employment and the Development of Skills.**

With a wide range of professional options for people with different skill levels, the construction sector is a major employer. From highly educated experts to unskilled laborers, it employs a diverse range of personnel. In order to maintain a skilled workforce that can adjust to technological advancements, the sector also promotes skill development through training programs, apprenticeships, and vocational education. Construction jobs are essential for lowering unemployment and poverty in many areas. Building initiatives that support local employment can result in community development and economic empowerment.

### **Promoting Skill Development for a Future-Ready Workforce**

To keep pace with rapid technological advancements—such as the adoption of new building materials, construction machinery, and digital project management tools—there is a pressing need to upgrade the skills of the workforce continuously. Recognizing this necessity, educational and training institutions like NTPC (NATIONAL TRAINING PRODUCTIVITY CENTRE) actively promote skill development through various initiatives. These include specialized training programs, apprenticeships, and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) courses tailored to the construction sector, such as Joinery, Carpentry, Plumbing, and Wet trades.

Such programs not only enhance the technical competencies of workers but also foster safety awareness, environmental responsibility, and

adaptability to new construction methods. By investing in human capital development, the industry ensures a competent workforce capable of executing complex projects efficiently and safely.

### **Globalization and the Reduction of Poverty**

In order to accomplish more general development objectives, such as lowering poverty and enhancing living standards in emerging nations, construction is crucial. For underserved communities, infrastructure initiatives, including housing, roads, sanitary facilities, and clean water supplies, have a direct impact on their economic, educational, and health prospects. International organizations frequently give top priority to initiatives pertaining to construction as part of development assistance programs. Countries may increase resilience to natural disasters, draw in foreign investment, and promote sustainable growth by investing in infrastructure.

### **Obstacles and Construction's Future**

Notwithstanding its significance, the construction sector faces difficulties such as resource scarcity, project delays, cost overruns,

and environmental issues. In order to solve these problems, stakeholders must work together, embrace digital change, and implement creative methods. Innovative technologies, resilience, and sustainability are anticipated to be the main focuses of the building industry in the future. Infrastructure that is more effective, economical, and ecologically friendly will be produced by emphasizing green construction, modular building methods, and digital integration.

### **Conclusion**

The building sector is essential to the advancement of society. It supports sustainable development, boosts infrastructure, raises living standards, and supports economic progress. The function of the construction industry becomes even more crucial as the world continues to urbanize and face environmental issues. Building a brighter future for communities around the globe requires investing in creative, robust, and sustainable construction techniques. Because it shapes our society's social and physical structure and makes growth and prosperity possible for future generations, its significance cannot be emphasized.







## APPRENTICESHIP: A PATHWAY TO A SKILLED FUTURE

Aitish Chand | Apprenticeship Officer

Apprenticeships have long been recognized as an essential means of bridging the gap between education and the workforce. In an increasingly complex and rapidly evolving job market, apprenticeships provide a unique and powerful pathway to developing the skills and experience necessary for long-term career success. By combining classroom-based education with hands-on, practical experience, apprenticeships enable individuals to acquire specialized skills in a range of industries. The benefits of apprenticeships, the role they play in shaping the workforce, and how they provide a sustainable solution to the growing demand for skilled labor.

### The Essence of Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship is a structured form of training that combines technical classroom instruction with paid, practical work experience under the guidance of skilled mentors. Unlike



traditional academic routes that often lead to delayed employment and heavy student debt, apprenticeships immerse learners in the workforce from the outset. This dual-learning model ensures apprentices acquire both technical expertise and soft skills that are directly applicable in the real world.

Fiji's National Apprenticeship Scheme, managed by the Fiji National University's (FNU) National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC), exemplifies this model. It connects young learners with employers across various sectors, including engineering, automotive, construction, information technology, and hospitality. Through this framework, apprentices develop strong foundational knowledge and hands-on experience, increasing their employability and readiness for the workforce.

### Bridging the Skills Gap

One of the most pressing issues facing many economies around the world is the shortage of skilled labor. As industries evolve and new technologies emerge, the demand for specialized skills continues to rise. Apprenticeships play a crucial role in addressing this skills gap by providing individuals with the necessary training to fill high-demand roles.

Moreover, the scheme addresses regional workforce disparities by facilitating placements not only in urban centers but also in outer islands and rural communities. This helps to decentralize economic opportunity and reduce youth unemployment across Fiji. With over 430 apprentices currently in training and the program expanding into new areas, such as renewable energy and digital trades, Fiji is making strategic headway in workforce planning.

### Economic and Social Benefits

The economic benefits of apprenticeships are multi-dimensional. For individuals, apprenticeships are a practical alternative to expensive tertiary education. They offer immediate income, hands-on experience, and

a direct route into full-time employment. This "earn while you learn" model is particularly appealing to school leavers and those from financially constrained backgrounds.

For employers, the program serves as a talent pipeline. By training apprentices in-house, businesses can mold future employees to their specific operational standards and culture. Companies involved in the National Apprenticeship Scheme often report higher retention rates, reduced recruitment costs, and improved employee performance.

From a national perspective, apprenticeships fuel economic growth by reducing unemployment, enhancing productivity, and ensuring a steady supply of skilled labor in critical sectors. They also foster innovation and sustainability by encouraging the adoption of new technologies and practices learned through collaborative training between institutions and industries.

### The Role of Technology in Apprenticeships

In the modern job market, technological advancements are transforming the way work is done across a wide range of industries. From automation in manufacturing to digital tools in healthcare and business, technology is reshaping the skills required by employers. Apprenticeships incorporate these technological changes to ensure that workers are equipped with the skills needed to thrive in the future workforce.

In addition to providing technical training, apprenticeships also help individuals develop the soft skills necessary to succeed in a tech-driven economy. Communication, problem-solving, and adaptability are all critical skills in the modern workplace, and apprenticeship programs often emphasize the development of these skills alongside technical expertise.

### Long-Term Career Growth and Success

One of the key advantages of apprenticeships is the potential for long-term career growth. Unlike short-term training programs or temporary jobs, apprenticeships provide



individuals with a comprehensive, career-focused training experience that can lead to stable and rewarding employment. Many apprentices go on to secure full-time positions with their employers upon completing their programs, and some even advance to higher-level roles within the organization.

Apprenticeships offer excellent opportunities for professional development. As apprentices gain more experience and expertise in their chosen field, they can pursue additional certifications, training, and qualifications that further enhance their career prospects. With the support of mentors and experienced

professionals, apprentices can continue growing their skills throughout their careers, positioning themselves for leadership roles and greater responsibilities in the future.

As the global economy continues to evolve, apprenticeships will remain an essential pathway to a skilled future. By embracing the value of apprenticeships and ensuring that they are accessible, inclusive, and aligned with the needs of employers, countries around the world can create a more sustainable, prosperous, and equitable workforce for the future.



## WHY SMES IN FIJI SHOULD EMBRACE THE FIJI BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS IN 2025

*Jiuta Lewanituva | Quality Service Officer*

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play a pivotal role in Fiji's economic landscape, contributing significantly to employment, innovation, and community development. As businesses navigate an increasingly competitive market, many are considering ways to enhance their operations and gain recognition for their efforts. One such opportunity is participating in the Fiji Business Excellence Awards (FBEA). For SMEs still contemplating their involvement, it's crucial to understand the requirements, preparation steps, and the benefits of using the FBEA Framework to drive performance excellence.

### Understanding the Fiji Business Excellence Awards

The FBEA, administered by the National Training & Productivity Centre (NTPC) of the Fiji National University, is a prestigious platform designed to recognize and promote organizational excellence. It is modelled on a framework known as the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, with a focus on





fostering a culture of continuous improvement and innovation across various sectors, including SMEs.

### Requirements for Participation

To participate in the FBEA, organizations must demonstrate a commitment to excellence and be prepared to undergo a thorough assessment by trained evaluators. Key requirements include:

- Eligibility - SMEs must be legally registered and operational in Fiji to qualify for assessment.
- Submission of an Application – organisations wishing to participate need to enquire an intent to participate, followed by a comprehensive application document. This document outlines the organization's structure, operations, and adherence to the FBEA Framework.
- Self-Assessment - SMEs are encouraged to conduct an internal review of their processes and performance using the FBEA criteria.
- Documentation - Detailed evidence supporting claims of excellence in leadership, strategic planning, customer focus, workforce engagement, and operational processes must be provided.
- Trainings – send representatives to two mandatory programmes, the FBEA Information Seminar and the FBEA Submission Writing workshop
- Payment of Fees - An application fee is required, which varies depending on the level of FBEA recognition applied.

### Practical Preparation Steps

Preparation is essential for SMEs aiming to achieve recognition through the FBEA. Practical steps include:

1. Understanding the Framework - Familiarize yourself with the seven categories of the FBEA Framework:
  - i. Leadership
  - ii. Strategy

- iii. Customer and Market Focus
- iv. Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management
- v. Workforce Focus
- vi. Operations
- vii. Results

2. Engaging Leadership - The commitment of top management is vital. Leaders must champion the journey toward excellence and inspire the workforce to align with organizational goals.

3. Developing a Culture of Excellence - Establish systems and processes that promote quality, innovation, and accountability. Employee training and awareness programs are crucial.

4. Gathering Evidence - Collect data and documentation that demonstrate your organization's achievements, processes, and improvements in line with the FBEA Framework.

5. Seeking Guidance - Consider attending FBEA workshops (held annually in February and March), engaging with past participants, or consulting us, the FBEA team at NTPC for insights.

6. Allocating Resources - Ensure the necessary time, budget, and personnel are dedicated to the application and evaluation process.

### Short-Term Benefits of Participation

For SMEs, participating in the FBEA offers immediate advantages, such as:

1. Comprehensive Evaluation - The rigorous assessment process provides valuable insights into your organization's strengths and areas for improvement.
2. Enhanced Reputation - Recognition through the FBEA boosts credibility, which can attract customers, investors, and partners.
3. Employee Motivation - Participation demonstrates a commitment to excellence, inspiring employees and fostering pride in their work.

4. Networking Opportunities - The awards process facilitates connections with other like-minded organizations and industry leaders.

5. Publicity - Achieving recognition through the FBEA ensures media exposure, enhancing brand visibility.

### Long-Term Benefits of Using the FBEA Framework

The FBEA is not merely an award but a framework for sustained excellence. Its long-term benefits include:

- Improved Organizational Performance - By adopting the principles of the FBEA, SMEs can streamline operations, reduce waste, and enhance productivity.
- Strategic Clarity - The framework encourages organizations to define and align their vision, mission, and goals.
- Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty - A customer-focused approach ensures that SMEs deliver consistent value, building trust and long-term relationships.
- Adaptability and Resilience - Emphasizing continuous improvement equips SMEs to respond effectively to market changes and challenges.
- Sustainability - The framework's focus on long-term results helps SMEs balance profitability with social and environmental responsibilities.
- Competitive Advantage - Businesses that implement the FBEA Framework are better

positioned to differentiate themselves in the market.

### Overcoming Challenges

SMEs often perceive the FBEA process as resource-intensive or suited only for larger organizations. However, the NTPC offers support to address these concerns, including:

- Tailored training programs and resources
- Access to experienced evaluators
- Opportunities to learn from success stories of past award recipients.

### Why 2025 is the Year for SMEs

With the FBEA celebrating its 26th year in 2025, there's no better time for SMEs to embark on this journey. The milestone anniversary underscores the program's legacy and commitment to fostering excellence in Fiji. SMEs have a unique opportunity to gain recognition, enhance their capabilities, and contribute to national productivity and economic growth.

In summary, engaging with the Fiji Business Excellence Awards is not merely about recognition but embarking on a transformative journey for SMEs. By adopting the FBEA Framework, businesses can achieve operational excellence, enhance their reputation, and secure a sustainable future. For SMEs in Fiji that are still planning or considering participation, 2025 could mark the beginning of a new chapter of growth, resilience, and success. Start preparing today and take the first step toward becoming part of Fiji's legacy of excellence.







## NCIT: A VISION THAT SPARKED A MOVEMENT IN FIJI'S TECH LANDSCAPE

Ashutosh A Maharaj | Senior Instructor

In 2019, the gentle breeze of Pacific Harbour carried more than just salt air; and it carried conversations that would shape the future of technology in Fiji. At the Pearl Resort, a quiet but important event unfolded. The first-ever National Conference on Information Technology (NCIT) brought together IT professionals from around the country, not for a product launch or training, but to talk.

It may not have made headlines that year. But for those who were there, it was clear that something meaningful had begun.

There had never been anything quite like NCIT in Fiji before. While other sectors had their annual conferences, IT had long operated in scattered pockets. The Department of Information Technology under the National Training & Productivity Centre (NTPC), part of the Fiji National University, took a bold step. They didn't wait for someone else to create a national platform; they built one.

That first gathering was humble: a one-day event a few speakers, and a lot of hope. But behind it was a powerful motive to create a space for professionals to come together, share their work, discuss emerging challenges, and explore what technology could look like for Fiji and the Pacific.

Fast forward six years, and that small idea has grown into one of the most anticipated events in Fiji's digital calendar.

### A Place to Talk, A Platform to Grow

Each year, NCIT has evolved not just in size but in meaning. What started as a conversation has become a movement. It's more than a conference now. It's a place where digital dreams are debated, refined, and, in some cases, launched.

Over the years, the conference has welcomed industry giants like Google, Microsoft, Check Point, Huawei, Vodafone Fiji, Digicel Fiji, and Telecom Fiji. These names don't just bring credibility. They bring ideas, experience, and opportunity. Their involvement has helped bridge the gap between global technology trends and local implementation.

However, what has perhaps been most valuable is the collaboration sparked among local ICT vendors. Partnerships that might have taken months or years to form are now often seeded over lunch or coffee during NCIT. Companies like Kastel Fiji, Bondwell, and Telecom Fiji have used the conference to forge new connections, share updates, and jointly develop new initiatives. It's become the go-to platform for digital networking—no suits and ties required.

There was a pause in 2021 due to the pandemic. But when NCIT returned in 2022, it did so with a renewed sense of urgency. The appetite for dialogue had grown, and so had the expectations. The audience was bigger. The topics were deeper, and the impact was stronger.

### This Year's Conference: Bigger Goals, Deeper Focus

The 6th NCIT will be held from 18–19 September 2025 at Warwick, Fiji, a fitting location for what's expected to be the most ambitious edition yet. The theme "Leveraging Digital Transformation to Innovate the Business Landscape for a Connected Pacific" is not just timely. It's a call to action.

Across the Pacific, digital tools are transforming the way businesses operate, from large enterprises to small rural cooperatives. The aim this year is to examine not just how we adopt new technology but also how we use it to truly innovate and build resilience in our interconnected economies.

While the speaker lineup is still being finalised, discussions are ongoing with APNIC to run technical training workshops at the event. Ruckus, in partnership with Kastel Fiji, has already begun pre-conference training activities as part of the build-up—a sign of the proactive momentum this year's event is carrying.

There's even talk of producing a conference whitepaper—an official document capturing key insights and recommendations from the event, which could later be presented to the Ministry of Communications. It's an exciting development. For the first time, NCIT wouldn't just be a stage for discussion—it could also become a contributor to national policy direction.

### From One Day to Two—and Still Growing

Reflecting on the first conference in 2019, the growth is undeniable. What was once a one-day event is now a two-day programme with side sessions, industry exhibitions, and national media coverage. But the heart of the event has remained the same: bringing people together to talk about what matters most in technology. There's something almost poetic about the way NCIT has grown, not through aggressive marketing or flashy gimmicks, but through



trust. Each year, it delivers on its promise—and the community comes back. Participants aren't just attendees anymore; many are now return speakers, sponsors, or partners.

For many, attending the conference is their first exposure to the real-world tech ecosystem. It gives them not only a sense of what's possible but also a network to support their ambitions. And for the organisers, that's one of the most rewarding parts of the journey, watching young talent get inspired and sometimes even hired.

### Looking Forward

NCIT has come a long way, but its best chapters are likely still ahead. The world is changing fast; AI, cybersecurity, cloud infrastructure, and digital inclusion are all topics that demand urgent attention, and NCIT is well-positioned to lead those conversations in the Pacific.

As someone who has been part of the journey from the beginning, I've watched the event evolve not just in logistics and speakers but in purpose. And that, I believe, is the true strength of NCIT. It's not just keeping up with the times. It's helping shape them.

In the years to come, we hope NCIT continues to be more than a conference. We hope it becomes a legacy, a platform that continues to unite, inspire, and push the digital boundaries for Fiji and our region.

Join us this September in Warwick, Fiji. Bring your ideas. Bring your experience. Bring your vision. Be part of the dialogue that's shaping the Pacific's digital future.



## WHY TRADE TESTS SHOULD BE EMBRACED BY ALL NATIONS

*Maciu Ketedromo | Senior Trade Testing Officer*

The importance of technical and vocational education has never been greater, in a society increasingly shaped by skills, innovation, and the desire for hands-on expertise. Trade Test examinations are a vital, often underappreciated element at the heart of our educational system. These assessments are more than just exams; they function as a link between raw talent and employable skills. Embracing trade testing is not only reasonable but also necessary for nations seeking to stimulate economic growth, improve labour quality, and increase individual empowerment.

### Bridge the Skills Gap

A major global issue is the gap between academic qualifications and the practical skills industries need—especially in trades like construction, energy, and hospitality. While degrees provide theoretical knowledge, they often lack hands-on training. Trade testing helps bridge this skills gap by evaluating and verifying real-world competencies. This is complemented by





short upgrading courses ensuring workers are honestly job-ready. Countries using trade tests can more effectively address labour shortages by identifying and placing skilled workers where they're most needed.

Enhancing the Status of Vocational Professions Vocational and technical education has long been unfairly viewed as inferior to higher academic paths, discouraging many from entering skilled trades. Trade testing helps legitimise and professionalize trade careers by defining the clear skill sets required by industry. When recognised by governments and employers, these certifications elevate the status of skilled workers, attract more talent to critical sectors, and support a more equitable distribution of skills across the economy.

#### **Ensure quality and safety.**

Poorly executed trade work can endanger lives and property, and lead to added costs for repairs, project delays, and potential legal liabilities. Given these risks, it becomes critically important to ensure that only qualified and competent tradespeople are entrusted with such responsibilities.

#### **Increasing economic productivity.**

A certified and skilled labour contributes directly to higher national output. Trade testing can assist in identifying skill levels, decrease recruitment inefficiencies, and promote upskilling strategies. Workers who pass trade tests are more likely to do jobs correctly, eliminate waste, shorten schedules, and positively impact project outcomes.

Furthermore, with recognised trade test credentials, individuals can pursue higher-paying professions both locally and internationally, helping to generate income, remittances, and general economic growth. A highly skilled workforce, particularly in emerging nations, can attract foreign investment, fuel infrastructural developments, and boost the development of small and medium-sized businesses.

#### **Promoting lifelong learning and skill development.**

Quality training and certification support lifelong learning by marking key stages in a worker's career from training assistant to supervisor level, encouraging continuous skill development. It helps individuals to stay relevant in a changing job market and upskill themselves to the new technologies used by industries, making their skills remain competitive and in demand.

#### **Increasing Labour Mobility**

Labour mobility is inevitable, and in today's interconnected global economy, many competent professionals relocate in quest of better job prospects. However, this movement has resulted in a skills drain for the countries that they leave behind, particularly in developing nations that are building capacity for their workforce. While individuals benefit from higher wages and improved living standards abroad, their departure can create critical workforce gaps at home.

#### **Promoting Innovation in the Informal Sector.**

In many nations, there is a sizable share of labourers who work in the informal sector. While these individuals frequently have extensive practical experience, a lack of formal validation restricts their access to funding, markets, and growth possibilities. That is something that trade testing can change.

Governments can integrate informal labourers into the formal sector by conducting standardized exams to recognize their talents. This inclusion boosts innovation, improves working conditions, and broadens the tax base for everyone, all while encouraging fair competition and sustainable development.

#### **Promoting Inclusion and Reducing Unemployment.**

Quality training provides alternate employment paths for people who may struggle in standard academic environments. This is especially

critical for young people, school dropouts, rural populations, and underprivileged communities. When trade skills are tested, individuals get confidence and credentials to enter the labour market.

Furthermore, by providing a low-cost, accessible road to productive employment, trade exams help to reduce unemployment and underemployment. With enough assistance and training infrastructure, countries can empower large portions of the population to become self-sufficient and economically productive.

To sum up, in an era when practical skills are in high demand and economic resilience is linked

to labour competency, trade test examinations stand out as an effective tool for national development. They acknowledge what workers already know and can do, close educational and employment barriers, and provide a road to dignity, recognition, and success.

By accepting trade tests, nations invest not only in individuals but also in their long-term social and economic prospects. It is essential to shift the narrative from viewing trade tests as optional or extra to seeing them as critical components of a skilled, inclusive, and forward-thinking society.







## DRIVING SKILLS, PRODUCTIVITY AND INNOVATION: NTPC'S TRAINING PROGRAMS EMPOWER FIJI'S WORKFORCE

Vicky Narayan | Manager

As Fiji continues to strengthen its economy and compete within an increasingly interconnected global marketplace, the need for a highly skilled, adaptable, and innovation-driven workforce has never been more critical. In support of this national priority, the National Training & Productivity Centre (NTPC), through its Department of National Productivity & Industry Innovation (NPII), is expanding access to more than 250 specialised short courses and a suite of globally recognised Australian qualification programs.

For decades, NTPC has been a leader in professional development, workplace excellence, and industry innovation. Today, the department continues that legacy by delivering cutting-edge training designed to elevate Fiji's workforce, improve organisational productivity, and support industries in meeting international standards.



### A Comprehensive Range of Professional Short Courses

The hallmark of NTPC's NPII Department is its extensive portfolio of specialised short courses; more than 250 programs tailored to the evolving needs of employers, employees, entrepreneurs, government agencies, and community groups. These programs combine theory with practical, real-world skills, ensuring that participants return to their workplaces ready to contribute meaningfully.

#### The training offerings span several key disciplines:

##### 1. Food Safety Management

Fiji's hospitality, food service, and food-manufacturing sectors continue to grow rapidly. With increasing demand for compliance with international food safety standards, NTPC offers specialised courses to equip workers with the competencies needed to maintain safe, hygienic, and compliant food-handling practices. These courses help organisations achieve and retain certifications such as HACCP and ISO-based food safety systems, boosting both consumer trust and export readiness. Some Food Safety courses offered are:

- Food Handlers Training
- Allergen Management
- Implement Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) Systems
- Understand and Implement ISO22000:2018 Food Safety Management Systems
- Food Safety Management Systems Internal Auditing

##### 2. Quality Management

In a competitive marketplace, quality is a major differentiator. NTPC's Quality Management training supports organisations in implementing quality control processes, understanding global standards, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement. Participants learn the principles of Total Quality Management (TQM), Six Sigma methodologies, auditing techniques, and quality assurance

frameworks, essential tools for businesses aiming to reduce errors, minimise costs, and enhance customer satisfaction. Some Quality Management courses offered are:

- Quality Circle
- Organise the Workplace using the 5S Methodology
- Understand and Implement ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System
- Enhance Digital Literacy Skills
- ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System Internal Auditing
- Build High-Performance Teams
- Apply Root Cause Analysis at the Workplace for Continuous Improvement
- Writing Effective Policies and Procedures

##### 3. Accounting & Finance

Strong financial literacy is fundamental to sustainable business. NTPC offers practical accounting and finance programs suitable for employees aspiring to advance their career, small-business owners managing their own finances, or organisations wanting to strengthen their internal controls. Training covers financial reporting, budgeting, cash-flow management, payroll, taxation, and key performance analysis, empowering participants to make informed financial decisions. Some Accounting and Finance courses offered are:

- Finance for Non-Finance Managers
- Manage Procurement & Contract Administration
- Managing Accounts Payable, Vendor Performance & Contract Compliance
- Manage Payroll
- Enhance Inventory Management & Control
- Managing Accounts Receivable & Collection Strategies
- Improve Tax Administration & Compliance
- Detection and Investigation of Financial Fraud
- Manage Micro and Small Enterprises

##### 4. Project Management

With Fiji's infrastructure, community development, and private-sector investment projects on the rise, the need for qualified project managers has increased significantly. NTPC's project management courses provide essential knowledge on project planning,



execution, monitoring, and evaluation. Participants gain practical tools in scheduling, risk management, stakeholder engagement, and resource allocation, preparing them to lead projects of any scale effectively and confidently. Some Project Management courses offered are:

- Project Scope and Time Management
- Project Cost Management
- Project Risk and Quality Management
- Project Leadership
- Microsoft® Project for Project Managers

## 5. Environmental Management & Green Productivity

As the world moves toward sustainable development, Fiji is embracing cleaner, greener, and more resilient practices. NTPC's environmental management programs help industries integrate sustainability into their operations. Areas of focus include waste management, energy efficiency, climate resilience strategies, environmental auditing, and green productivity methodologies. These programs support organisations in reducing their ecological footprint while boosting operational efficiency. Some Environmental Management & Green Productivity courses offered are:

- Understand and Implement ISO 14001:215 Environmental Management System
- Environmental Regulation & Compliance

## 6. Occupational Health and Safety

Workplace safety remains a top priority across Fiji's industries. NTPC's Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) courses provide essential skills to identify hazards, manage risks, investigate incidents, and implement safety systems that protect employees. From basic workplace safety to advanced safety leadership, these programs help organisations comply with national legislation and international safety

standards while fostering a culture where safety is everyone's responsibility. Some Occupational Health and Safety courses offered are:

- Occupational Health and Safety Modules I & II for Safety Representatives and Committee Members.
- OHS Modules III and IV: Implement and Audit ISO 45001:2018 OHS Management Systems
- OHS Modules V - Auditing Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems
- Safe Handling and Use of Chemicals
- Confined Space Entry & Rescue
- Working at Heights Safety
- Accident/Incident Root Cause Analysis (RCA)
- Good Laboratory Practices
- Undertake Manual Handling at the Workplace
- Implement a Work Permit System
- OHS Representative and Committee Refresher Training
- Basic Security Guards Training

## Australian Qualification Programs: Globally Recognised Credentials

In addition to its short courses, the Department of National Productivity & Industry Innovation also delivers three Australian award qualification programs, giving Fijians the opportunity to earn international credentials locally.

### 1. Advanced Diploma of Leadership and Management (ADLM)

This qualification is ideal for senior managers, supervisors, and team leaders seeking to strengthen their leadership capabilities. The program focuses on strategic planning, change management, organisational leadership, and high-level communication skills essential for leading teams and organisations in today's fast-paced environment.

### 2. Diploma of Project Management (DPM)

For those aspiring to professional project

management roles, the Diploma of Project Management provides a comprehensive foundation. Students develop advanced skills in project scope management, budgeting, risk assessment, procurement, and team coordination. This qualification is highly valued across industries such as construction, government, ICT, engineering, and community development.

### 3. Certificate IV in Work Health and Safety

As workplace safety regulations grow more stringent, trained safety officers are in high demand. The Certificate IV in WHS equips learners with the practical and technical skills required to manage health and safety systems, conduct audits, facilitate training, and support compliance efforts within their organisations. By offering these qualifications locally, NTPC ensures that Fiji's workforce can access world-class training without the financial burden of travelling abroad.

### Flexible Training Access for All Fijians

To make training more accessible, NTPC provides its full training schedule online. Interested individuals and organisations can easily view course dates, program requirements, and registration details on the

Fiji National University website. Applications can be completed online via the dedicated FNU portal or by scanning the QR code provided in NTPC promotional materials. Whether learners are based in Suva, Nadi, Labasa, or outer islands, NTPC's blended delivery model ensures that everyone has the opportunity to gain valuable skills that support personal and professional growth.

### A Commitment to National Development

NTPC's mission extends beyond training; its programs support Fiji's broader national goals of enhancing productivity, strengthening industry capabilities, and cultivating a culture of innovation.

By empowering citizens with new knowledge, practical skills, and globally recognised qualifications, NTPC is helping to build a workforce that can drive economic growth, enhance service delivery, and shape a more resilient and competitive Fiji.

As industries evolve, technology advances, and global standards rise, NTPC remains committed to meeting these challenges head-on by providing the tools, expertise, and training needed for success.







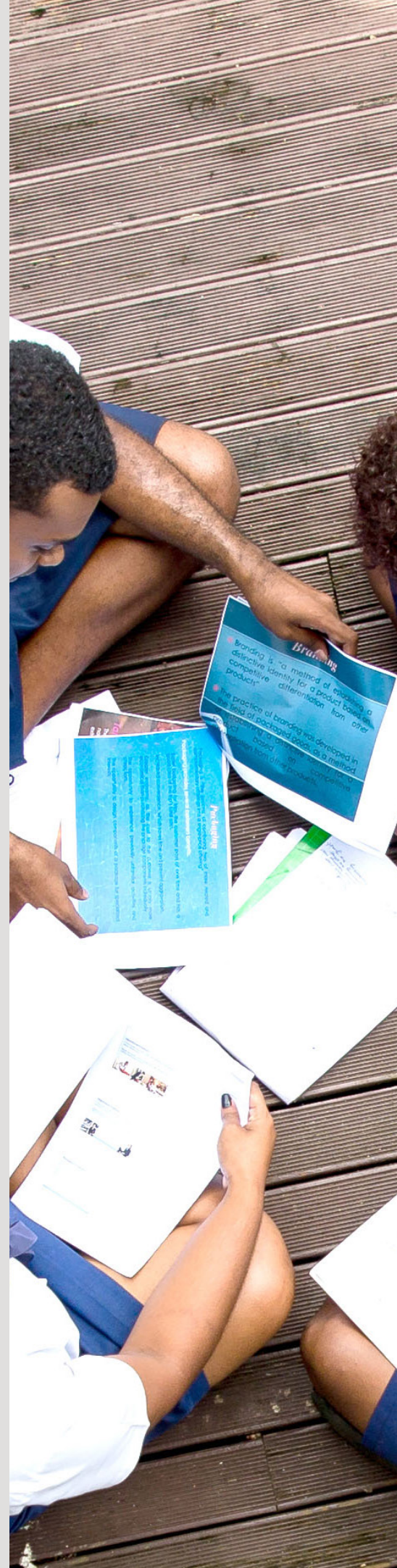
## BUILDING SKILLS, SHAPING FUTURES: DTHT AT NTPC-FNU EXPANDS ACCREDITED TRAINING AND NATIONAL EVENTS

*Sheileshni Nair | Head of Training – Tourism, Hospitality and Travel*

The Department of Tourism, Hospitality and Travel (DTHT), housed under the National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC) of the Fiji National University (FNU), is taking bold strides to cement its role as a leading provider of vocational training for the tourism and service industry. With a vision to develop skilled recruits who meet both national and regional workforce demands, the department continues to expand its accredited program offerings while also spearheading signature national events that bring industry and students together.

### Accredited Programs to Enhance Employability

DTHT has recently secured accreditation from the Educational Quality and Assessment Programme (EQAP) for ten micro-credentials that address key operational areas of hospitality and tourism. These micro-credentials are designed to provide hands-on, industry-specific training that equips learners with practical skills for immediate employment.



### The accredited micro-credentials include:

1. Demonstrate Baking & Patisserie Skills
2. Demonstrate Advanced Culinary Skills
3. Manage Front Office & Customer Relations
4. Provide Restaurant Service in a Hospitality Environment
5. Deliver Housekeeping and Accommodation Services
6. Plan and Promote Hospitality Sales and Marketing
7. Apply Leadership and Management Skills in the Hospitality Industry
8. Provide Hospitality and Tourism Services
9. Manage Rooms Division
10. Perform Ayurveda Massage and Facial Treatments

Each of these programs is tailored to meet the growing demands of the service industry, covering everything from culinary expertise and customer service to wellness treatments and leadership. The EQAP accreditation ensures that these programs are regionally certified, giving graduates the flexibility to work not only in Fiji but across Pacific Island nations where tourism and hospitality remain core economic drivers.

### Launch of Certificate III in Beauty Therapy

Complementing its micro-credentials, the department has also launched the Certificate III in Beauty Therapy, another program accredited by EQAP. This certificate responds to the rising demand for wellness and beauty services, preparing students in areas such as facial treatments, massage, skincare, and salon operations.

By introducing this program, DTHT aims to diversify its portfolio beyond traditional hospitality training, tapping into the global wellness market while providing graduates with skills that are highly sought after by employers. Notably, the regional certification ensures that successful graduates can seek employment opportunities throughout the Pacific, broadening career pathways.

### A Department Focused on Developing Skilled Recruits

As part of NTPC, DTHT's mandate is clear: to

train and produce skilled, work-ready recruits who can immediately contribute to the hospitality and service industries. With Fiji's tourism sector positioned as a key pillar of the economy, the department plays a crucial role in ensuring that hotels, resorts, restaurants, airlines, and wellness centers are staffed with competent professionals.

The hands-on training delivered at DTHT aligns closely with industry expectations. By working in simulated environments and guided by experienced trainers, students gain not only technical knowledge but also the confidence and professionalism needed in customer-facing industries. This practical approach, combined with recognized accreditation, has made DTHT a trusted partner for both learners and employers.

### National-Level Platforms for Talent and Industry Exchange

Beyond its training programs, DTHT has established itself as a key driver of industry collaboration and talent promotion through two major national-level events it hosts annually.

#### 1. National Hospitality Conference

This flagship conference brings together hospitality leaders, industry experts, and international speakers to discuss emerging trends, best practices, and opportunities for growth. Students and professionals alike gain exposure to global perspectives while networking with top employers and thought leaders. The conference also reinforces Fiji's reputation as a center of hospitality excellence.

#### 2. Hospitality Art Fair

A vibrant platform that showcases student creativity and skill, the Hospitality Art Fair is one of the most anticipated events in the industry calendar. Here, students demonstrate their culinary artistry, design talents, and service skills before an audience that includes recruiters, human resource specialists, and industry stakeholders. Beyond the excitement and energy the event generates, it provides direct recruitment opportunities, as employers scout for fresh talent to join their teams.



Together, these two events create hype and visibility for the hospitality sector while offering students invaluable learning, exposure, and employment opportunities.

### Diversifying the Future

DTHT is not stopping here. The department has expressed its commitment to introducing more award programs in the future, reflecting both global industry demands and Fiji's unique position in the Pacific. By continually updating and expanding its curriculum, the department ensures that it remains responsive to the evolving needs of employers and students alike.

This forward-looking approach supports NTPC's broader mission to enhance national productivity through training and skills development, while also positioning FNU as a leader in vocational education across the Pacific region.

### Driving Growth in Hospitality and Service Sectors

The work of DTHT is more than just about providing qualifications—it's about driving sustainable growth in Fiji's economy. By supplying highly skilled recruits to the hospitality and service sectors, the department strengthens the very industries that fuel national development, create jobs, and showcase Fiji to the world.

With its accredited programs, national events, and commitment to future growth, the Department of Tourism, Hospitality and Travel continues to build a pipeline of talent that supports not just local employers but the entire Pacific region.

### Conclusion

As the tourism and hospitality industries evolve, the need for skilled professionals has never been greater. The Department of Tourism, Hospitality and Travel at NTPC-FNU is rising to this challenge, providing accredited training, hosting industry-defining events, and nurturing the next generation of hospitality leaders. By combining education, industry collaboration, and regional certification, DTHT is shaping a future where Fiji's workforce is recognized, respected, and ready to excel both locally and across the Pacific.

Dr. Isimeli Tagicakiverata, Pro Vice-Chancellor TVET/NTPC, emphasized the department's pivotal role:

"Our priority at NTPC is to ensure that every graduate is not only job-ready but regionally competitive. Through EQAP-accredited programs and national events like the Hospitality Conference and Art Fair, we are building platforms that connect learning with real industry opportunities. This is about more than training—it's about empowering individuals, strengthening industries, and supporting Fiji's economic growth."

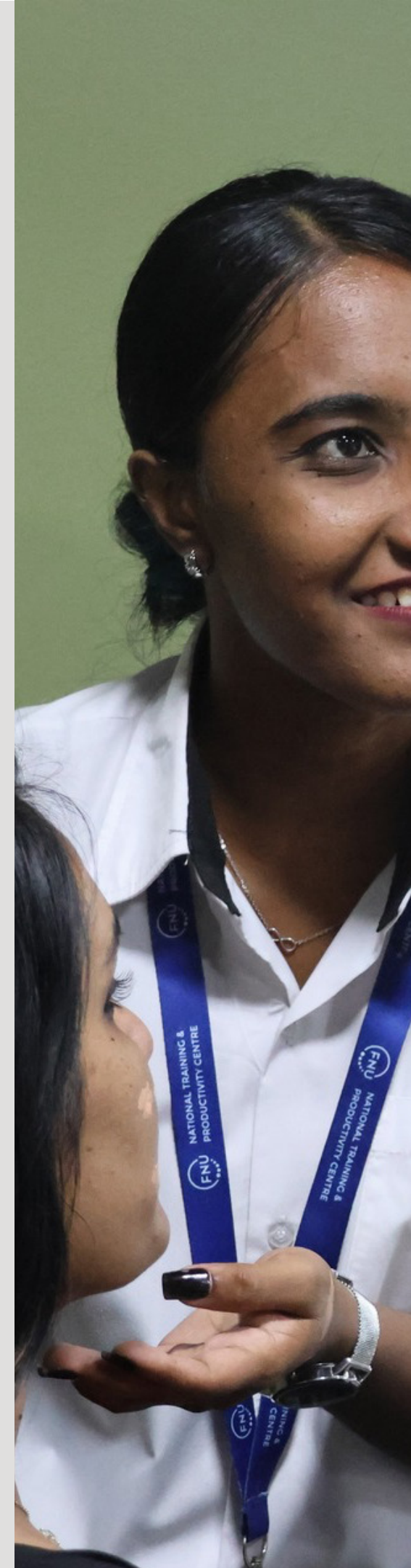


## HOSPITALITY ART FAIR RETURNS TO FNU: A WEEKLONG SHOWCASE OF TALENT, TASTE, AND CREATIVITY

*Zaid Hasnain Dean | Training Instructor*

The Fiji National University's (FNU) National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC), through its Department of Tourism, Hospitality, and Travel (D-THT), is proud to announce the return of its much-anticipated Hospitality Art Fair. Scheduled to take place from 14th to 18th July 2025 at the FNU Nadi Campus, the event promises to be an unforgettable celebration of skill, flavor, and flair.

Under the captivating theme "Interactive Fair of Enchanting Skills and Exquisite Flavors," the 2025 edition builds on the success of last year's fair, which was enthusiastically received by the public and generously supported by sponsors such as the Sheraton Marriott Group. This year's fair adopts a bold pink and black color theme, symbolizing the blend of creative elegance and professional sophistication that defines the hospitality industry.





## A Platform for Rising Talent

The Hospitality Art Fair is more than an event—it's a platform designed to highlight the creativity and practical skills of students pursuing studies in hospitality and tourism at FNU. It gives them a real-world opportunity to compete, collaborate, and shine in front of industry professionals, faculty, family, and the wider community.

“The fair has grown significantly in both scope and scale,” says Ms. Sheileshni Nair, Head of Training at D-THT. “It offers our students a unique opportunity to demonstrate their expertise, creativity, and passion for hospitality in a competitive yet supportive environment.”

## A Full Week of Competitions

The weeklong celebration will feature a diverse and engaging schedule of competitions, covering various aspects of the hospitality industry—from the elegant art of cocktail mixing to the refined nuances of telephone etiquette. Each day of the fair has been carefully curated to spotlight different disciplines within the field.

Here's what attendees can look forward to:

### Monday, 14th July

- 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM – Hair and Beauty Competition

Participants will showcase hairstyling and makeup artistry, demonstrating contemporary techniques that reflect both local flair and international trends.

- 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM – Floral Competition

Floral arrangement artists will craft stunning centerpieces, combining colors, textures, and fragrances into works of living art.

- 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM – Cocktail Mixing Competition

Always a crowd favorite, this competition will see students mix, shake, and garnish drinks that dazzle the senses and highlight innovative flavor pairings.

### Tuesday, 15th July

- 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM – Telephone Etiquette Competition

This competition emphasizes the importance of soft skills and customer service professionalism, which are essential qualities in any hospitality setting.

- 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM – Baking and Patisserie Competition

A delicious display of pastries, breads, and sweets, where students will present mouth-watering creations judged for both flavor and presentation.

### Wednesday, 16th July

- 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM – Culinary Skills Competition

The centerpiece of the fair, this competition will challenge students to prepare gourmet dishes under time constraints, showcasing their technical mastery and creative plating.

### Thursday, 17th July

- 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM – Baking and Cookery Finals

Finalists from earlier rounds return to the kitchen to battle for top honors. Expect intricate desserts, innovative entrees, and standout performances.

### Friday, 18th July

- 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM – Cocktails and Awards Night

The grand finale of the fair will be an elegant evening of celebration, complete with crafted

cocktails and the announcement of winners across all categories. This is where students will be recognized for their dedication and excellence in front of esteemed guests, faculty, and industry leaders.

## Interactive, Inclusive, and Inspiring

What sets the Hospitality Art Fair apart is its interactive nature. Attendees are encouraged to engage with student competitors, observe techniques up close, and even sample some of the creations during specific events. For students, it's an opportunity to not only display their talents but also receive valuable feedback and exposure that could lead to internships or job opportunities in the industry.

In previous years, the event attracted representatives from major hotel chains, restaurants, and service providers. With continued support from institutions like Sheraton Marriott, the fair is cementing its reputation as a launchpad for young professionals in the hospitality sector.

## How to Participate or Attend

Members of the public, industry stakeholders, and potential employers are warmly invited to attend the fair and support these future stars of hospitality. Entry to most competitions is free and open to all, while certain events may require registration.

Students who wish to compete in the various competitions are urged to register early to secure their spots. To register or for more information, please contact:

### Ms. Kajol Samsen

Phone: 6725730 Ext: 6327

Email: kajol.samsen@fnu.ac.fj

Office: NTPC H Block, FNU Nadi Campus

### Sponsorship Opportunities Available

If any organization or business wishes to sponsor this year's Hospitality Art Fair and be part of this prestigious celebration of future industry leaders, please contact:

### Ms. Sheileshni Nair (Head of Training)

Phone: 9990725

Email: hot-thft@fnu.ac.fj

Sponsorship support helps enrich the student experience, provide better resources, and expand the reach and impact of the fair. It's also an excellent opportunity for businesses to connect with emerging talent and build visibility within the hospitality and tourism industry.

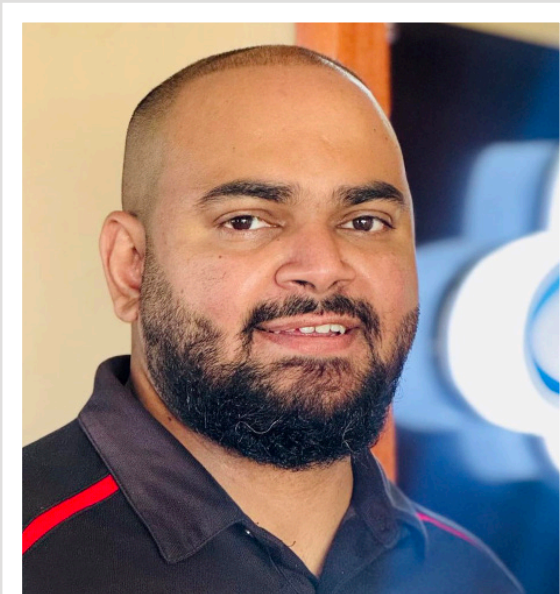
## Looking Ahead

The 2025 Hospitality Art Fair is not just an event—it's a testament to the high standards and practical learning embedded within FNU's hospitality programs. With its engaging competitions, professional networking opportunities, and vibrant atmosphere, the fair continues to elevate the standards of hospitality training in Fiji.

As the pink and black banners rise at the Nadi campus this July, FNU invites the public to witness a spectacle of innovation, precision, and culinary passion—a true celebration of Fiji's future hospitality leaders.







## LEVERAGING SOUTH KOREA'S HEALTHCARE INNOVATIONS TO BOOST PRODUCTIVITY IN FIJI

*Ravitesh Singh – Chief Executive Officer, Zens Medical*

The healthcare sector is evolving rapidly, requiring constant innovation, efficiency, and strategic transformation to meet growing patient demands. As part of my professional development, I had the privilege of attending the Multicountry Observational Study Mission on Productivity Enhancement in the Healthcare Sector, organized by the Korea Productivity Center (KPC), NPO Fiji, and the Asian Productivity Organization (APO) from 30 September to 2 October 2024, in Seoul, South Korea.

### **Collaboration of Asian Productivity Organization (APO) with NPO Fiji – National Training and Productivity Centre of Fiji National University**

The Asian Productivity Organization (APO) is an intergovernmental organization established in 1961 to increase productivity in the Asia-Pacific region through cooperation. The APO contributes to the sustainable socioeconomic development of the area

through policy advisory services, acting as a think tank, and undertaking smart initiatives in the industry, agriculture, service, and public sectors.

Fiji joined APO in 1984 and has benefited immensely from APO membership over the last forty years. This is aptly demonstrated by the growth of the productivity movement in Fiji, which led to the success and popularity of productivity-related programs such as Business Excellence and Quality Circles, Green Productivity, and 5s. The National Training & Productivity Centre (NTPC), which is the National Productivity Organisation (NPO) for Fiji, is the leading organization in providing in-service training for industries and offering specialized consultative services to assist industries in achieving their productivity goals. Through the collaboration with APO and FNU NTPC, the Multicountry Observational Study Mission on Productivity Enhancement in the Healthcare Sector provided valuable insights into cutting-edge technologies, workforce strategies, and process improvements aimed at enhancing healthcare productivity.

### **South Korea's Healthcare Productivity Model**

The study mission opened with expert discussions on South Korea's healthcare industry growth, fueled by pharmaceutical and biotechnology innovations. A key highlight was the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) diagnostics and telemedicine, which significantly improve efficiency and patient outcomes.

One of the most remarkable site visits was to Noul, a healthcare startup pioneering portable diagnostic devices. Their Milab device showcases the potential for accessible, cost-effective diagnostics, particularly in resource-limited settings like Fiji.

The second day focused on optimizing healthcare workforce productivity. Experts emphasized reducing burnout through

workload balancing, digital workflow automation, and AI-assisted diagnostics. A visit to Bumin Hospital highlighted the role of robotic surgical techniques and preventive care strategies, demonstrating the effectiveness of technology in reducing human error and enhancing precision.

The final day featured a visit to Inbody, a leader in body composition analysis technology. This session reinforced the importance of preventive healthcare measures, which can help reduce long-term treatment costs. Additionally, the K-Hospital+Health Tech Fair showcased the latest healthcare advancements, reinforcing South Korea's leadership in medical technology innovation.

### **Enhancing Healthcare Productivity in Fiji**

Reflecting on the study mission, it is evident that South Korea's healthcare sector thrives on technology-driven solutions, workforce efficiency, and data-driven decision-making. These insights can provide a framework for enhancing productivity in Fiji's healthcare system.

One key area of improvement is digital transformation. South Korea's integration of AI and telemedicine has proven to be an effective way of increasing accessibility and reducing the burden on healthcare facilities. Fiji can benefit from expanding telemedicine services to reach remote communities, enabling patients to receive consultations and early diagnoses without traveling long distances.

Another crucial factor is workforce upskilling. Equipping healthcare professionals with training in digital health technologies such as electronic medical records, AI-assisted diagnostics, and automated processes will improve efficiency and reduce administrative burdens, allowing for more focus on patient care.

The adoption of affordable diagnostic tools is also essential. Technologies like Noul's Milab





device present an opportunity to enhance early disease detection in Fiji, reducing costs associated with late-stage treatments. Investing in scalable and portable medical devices can significantly improve access to essential healthcare services.

Additionally, fostering public-private partnerships will be instrumental in driving healthcare advancements. Collaborations between government agencies, healthcare providers, and private investors can help fund and implement innovative solutions tailored to Fiji's needs.

Finally, prioritizing preventive healthcare will reduce the long-term strain on the healthcare system. Educational programs, routine health screenings, and community wellness initiatives will encourage early detection and

management of chronic diseases, ultimately leading to improved public health outcomes. By embracing these strategies, Fiji can build a more efficient, accessible, and patient-centered healthcare system, ensuring that advancements in medical technology and workforce development contribute to long-term sustainability and enhanced productivity. My appreciation goes out again to the National Training & Productivity Centre under the Fiji National University for this training opportunity. Special thanks also to the NPO Team based at NTPC for the logistics and travel arrangements that enabled participants like me to be able to travel and attend these professional development trainings provided by APO to member countries to improve productivity, innovation, and smart transformation in a wide variety of work sectors.



## PRODUCTIVITY MEASUREMENT & ITS IMPORTANCE FOR SME'S

*Rajneel Prasad – Quality Service Officer*

The National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC) is committed to enhancing the capabilities of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Recognizing the vital role SMEs play in economic development, NTPC supports their growth through productivity improvement initiatives, sharing of best practices, and strategic capacity-building programs. SMEs play an increasingly important role in Fiji's economy in terms of their contributions to GDP and employment and remain the core engines for productivity and economic growth.

For SMEs to navigate today's volatile and uncertain environment, embracing productivity measurement is not just an option – it's a necessity. Measuring productivity enables businesses to improve efficiency, track performance, and sustain growth over time.

The NTPC has been at the forefront of productivity enhancement in Fiji. With a mandate to deliver in-service training for various





industries and provide specialized consultative services, the NTPC has played a pivotal role in helping both private and public sector organizations achieve their productivity goals.

The Fiji National University (FNU), through its National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC), is once again set to host 3rd Round of Productivity Measurement Training, one of the most anticipated trainings with Singapore Consultant Mr George Wong, on 11 -12 June 2025 at FNU Nabua Campus. This training will equip participants with tools and techniques to effectively measure productivity, identify inefficiency, and make informed decisions that drive business success.

Productivity measurement is a process of identifying the appropriate measures or metrics to be used and computing their results to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of the business/work process.

Productivity Measurement: A Way Forward for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

In today's ever-changing global economy, SMEs face increasing pressure to optimize their operations and remain competitive. One of the most effective strategies for achieving sustained growth and profitability lies in productivity measurement. Through Productivity Measurement, SMEs can consistently track productivity, discover inefficiencies, optimize resources, and make data-driven decisions to ensure their long-term survival and success.

### Understanding Productivity Measurement

Productivity measurement refers to the process of quantifying the efficiency with which an organization transforms inputs (such as labor, capital, and materials) into outputs (goods and services). For SMEs, Productivity is not just about producing more in less time but also about maximizing value creation with limited resources.

Standard productivity metrics include output per employee, revenue per hour worked, or cost per unit produced. These indicators help SMEs monitor their organizational performance and benchmark against industry standards or competitors.

### Challenges in Measuring Productivity for SMEs Despite its benefits, SMEs may face challenges in adopting productivity measurement:

- Resource Constraints: Time and budget limitations. This can restrict the ability to implement productivity measurement systems.

- Lack of Expertise: SMEs lack professionals who can interpret results or measurement tools to analyze productivity data

- Poor Data Quality - Inconsistent or incomplete data can lead to misleading productivity assessments.

### Why Productivity Measurement Matters for SMEs

1. Optimise Resources: Productivity measurement enables better resource allocation, ensuring that every hour of work and every dollar spent contributes optimally toward business goals.

2. Gain Competitive Advantage: Tracking Productivity helps SMEs identify bottlenecks and areas of waste. Addressing these issues can lead to faster production cycles, improved output quality, and, ultimately a stronger market position.

3. Boost Employee Engagement: Transparent productivity tracking fosters a culture of accountability and motivation among employees, as they see the direct impact of their efforts on business success.

4. Adaptability: In an environment marked by frequent market shifts, SMEs with a precise grasp of productivity metrics can respond

quickly to changing customer demands or operational challenges.

5. Improve Decision-Making: Accurate productivity data equips managers with insights needed to make informed decisions regarding hiring, training, investment in technology, or process improvements.

### Benefits of Productivity Measurement

Using productivity measurement in your organization helps as a communication tool to share performances relative to goals/standards/benchmarks. Secondly, it provides information

on how effectively and efficiently resources are managed. Thirdly, it offers an objective basis to recognize and reward contributions to "Productivity" through productivity gainsharing schemes.

### Take the First Step towards Growth

In today's dynamic business environment, productivity measurement is a strategic imperative. Adopting productivity measurement can convert challenges into opportunities, foster a culture of innovation, and establish a strong market presence.







# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We wish to acknowledge the following authors.

Richard Gaunavou  
Pauliasi Mawa  
Kalaveti Tuiyabayaba  
Rashri Lata  
Sheileshni Nair  
Meenu Mohan  
Setareki Valenitabua  
Viliame Waqalaivi  
Josaia Sumasafu  
Devika Ram  
Helen Ieli  
Romeeta K. Chand  
Vicky Vinesh Narayan  
Ashwin Kumar  
Shafina Shabnam  
Elenoa Naivalu  
Amit Kumar Lal  
Nishaant Dulare  
Pramesh Chand  
Sumesh Kumar  
Bhim Sharma  
Joseva Lesivakadua  
Neeraj Kumar  
Shehana Hussein  
Yashwant Samir  
Setoki Buka  
Ashutosh Maharaj  
Josefa Salobo  
Aitish Chand  
Jiuta Lewanituva  
Maciu Ketedromo  
Zaid Hasnain Dean  
Ravitesh Singh  
Rajneel Prasad

We also wish to acknowledge the

- The Vice-Chancellor  
(Prof Unaisi Nabobo-Baba)
- Senior Leadership Management  
Team
- Division of Marketing and  
Communication
- Support Services at FNU

**Disclaimer:**

The articles in this book were first published in the Fiji Sun in 2025. The opinions expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of The Fiji National University.







**TVET PASIFIKA**

TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION  
AND TRAINING FOR THE PACIFIC

[www.fnu.ac.fj](http://www.fnu.ac.fj)

Follow Us:      

