



# The University of Fiji

## Secondary School Waste Management Campaign

The University of Fiji in collaboration with the Australian National University and the Science Circus Pacific launched the Secondary Schools Waste Management Campaign with the theme “Waste creators to waste managers” on October 19, 2021.

While launching the event, Australian High Commissioner John Feakes said it provided an opportunity to better understand ways to manage the recycling and reusing of waste, and developing innovative new waste management techniques.

“In the ever-changing world we live in and the rapid technological changes happening, STEM skills are more crucial than they ever were,” said Mr Feakes. “Environment education on waste management is important for our children as it allows them to understand the financial and ecological burdens of waste. It will also teach them to apply an ecological lens on matters relating to food diversion in their own homes and communities. It is the young people who are often the most vocal demographic when it comes to protecting the environment.”

Dr Graham Walker from the Australian National Centre for the Public Awareness of Science at the Australian National University said that the partnership between UniFiji and Science Circus Pacific involves shared goals, particularly around sustainability, environmental education and communicating that to the public.

“The partnership is an important idea for caring for the environment, which is the heart of the competition. Issues like sustainability and climate change are things that we need to cooperate on and that can be cooperation between countries, between communities; and it is really what has founded the competition today. The competition is about recycling and waste management being a key part of how humanity is going to address issues like climate change,” said Dr Walker.

Professor Shawkat Ali, School of Science and Technology, welcomed all the attendees and explained how the School offered advice about the programmes offered and where the graduates were now placed in the industry.

“People cannot fill up the world with dust,” said Professor Ali.

“We should keep our world better and liveable for everyone. That’s our aim. A competition means to add some value to the community and then they will take the drive to build our community,” he said.

The objective of the project is to educate Fiji’s young minds on the importance of waste management and to introduce waste sorting at home. Another objective is to encourage youths to come up with innovative ways to make use of their waste, and students to share their ideas of waste reduction with their families and communities. Students and their teachers will be invited to participate in the campaign.

Over 190 registered participants from various schools throughout Fiji aged between 14 – 19 years are part of the competition.

They have a chance to win in two major competitions- Digital Poster Competition and Recycling Innovative Video Competition. The prizes are sponsored by the Australian National University and include seven-inch tablets, hard drives, power banks and earphones