**Fish 2.0 Invites Pacific Islands Seafood Businesses to Meet Investors & Trading Partners**

**Applications open for first-ever Fish 2.0 Regional Innovators Forum; participating entrepreneurs get help pitching their business, make key connections to grow trade with Australia**

CARMEL, Calif., Feb. 26, 2019 — Seafood businesses based in the Pacific Islands are invited to participate in [Fish 2.0](https://www.fish20.org/)’s first-ever Regional Innovators Forum, happening April 2–3, 2019, in Brisbane. The event will bring together businesses, investors and experts from Australia and the Pacific Islands to accelerate the region’s rise as a global sustainable seafood powerhouse. Participation is free, but space is limited. Businesses must [apply online](https://www.fish20.org/events/regional-forum), and spaces are filling quickly—first come, first served.

The event marks the kickoff of the Pacific Islands track in the 2018–19 qualifying cycle for Fish 2.0, the global community of seafood innovators. On day one, businesses will learn about investment strategies, communicating value to partners and effective pitching techniques. On day two, they’ll pitch to seafood investors and experts as part of a full-day forum on seafood innovation in the region.

The U.S. Department of State is sponsoring the Pacific Islands track because the region’s fisheries businesses play a vital role in their communities and Fish 2.0 helps drive private sector–led growth in an environmentally friendly, socially inclusive way. At least 75 percent of participants in Fish 2.0 programs have made key business connections.

“Fish 2.0 has demonstrated results for the Pacific Islands,” says Matt Matthews, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands. “Past winners have gone on to leverage outside funding to grow their businesses, while a finalist from Fiji launched a new product for the U.S. market as a direct result of a connection made during the Fish 2.0 Global Innovators Forum.”

**Pacific Islands businesses network with Australian peers**

The Brisbane event will give participants a taste of the Global Forum, which takes place in Silicon Valley this fall. In addition to pitching and making connections, Pacific Islands businesses will gain insights from onstage discussions with experts on value investing in seafood, game-changing innovations in the sector and opportunities for international trade to create positive change in supplier communities. They also get a free ticket to a seafood dinner created by renowned Queensland chef Jake Nicolson, Queensland’s 2018 chef of the year. The menu will feature premium underutilized and regional seafood, and the suppliers will be on hand to talk about their products, allowing Pacific Islands businesses to make new connections in the industry.

“For the first time in the history of Fish 2.0, the Pacific Islands businesses—including alumni from past competitions—will have an opportunity to learn alongside their Australian counterparts, build regional networks, and pitch their business ideas to Australian-based investors, in addition to the opportunities to link with U.S.-based experts and investors through the competition,” Matthews says.

Pacific Islands–based investors and industry experts may also attend, but must [purchase tickets](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/fish-20-regional-seafood-innovators-forum-brisbane-registration-54758587409) for the forum and dinner.

**Fish 2.0 connects seafood innovators with investors, partners and customers**

The Pacific Islands track and Regional Innovators Forum are part of Fish 2.0’s comprehensive system for connecting innovators from around the world to grow the sustainable seafood sector. Any eligible business—workshop and forum participants or others—can take Fish 2.0’s two-part online Readiness Assessment. Those that meet the standard become Fish 2.0 Qualified and will be invited to enter the new Fish 2.0 Connect online hub, where they can connect with investors and partners based on mutual interest.

The top-scoring businesses—the Fish 2.0 Forty—will also earn a spot on stage at the Fish 2.0 Global Innovators Forum Nov. 5–6, 2019, at Stanford University in California, where they’ll present to invited investors and experts from across the U.S. and around the world.

“Pacific Islands businesses will not want to miss this opportunity,” says Fish 2.0 Executive Director Monica Jain. “Prior participants from the islands have been able to open up opportunities they had never imagined. They made valuable connections that helped them grow their business and otherwise would have taken many years to establish.” Several participants from past Fish 2.0 cycles will present at the Brisbane forum.

Entrepreneurs and investors with questions about the Pacific Islands track, the Fish 2.0 Readiness Assessment, or the 2018–19 Fish 2.0 qualifying cycle can contact Fish 2.0 at [Cole@fish20.org](mailto:info@fish20.org).

**About Fish 2.0**

Fish 2.0 is a global community that brings innovators together to grow the sustainable seafood sector. Working through our worldwide network, regional events, online Readiness Assessment, Fish 2.0 Connect online hub, and Global Innovators Forum, Fish 2.0 participants collaborate to drive innovation, business growth, and positive impact. Everyone benefits: Entrepreneurs meet potential investors, partners, and advisors that help them accelerate impact and growth. Investors and experts get early access to investment opportunities and learn about emerging technologies and trends.

**Media contacts**

Thinkshift Communications

Sandra Stewart | [sandra@thinkshiftcom.com](mailto:sandra@thinkshiftcom.com), 415.391.4449

Anya Khalamayzer | [anya@thinkshiftcom.com](mailto:anya@thinkshiftcom.com), 732.614.2318