

GUIDELINES FOR PIPSO'S MARKETING SUPPORT FUND (MSF)



1. Background

The Marketing Support Fund (MSF)¹ was established to assist, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) of the Forum Island Countries² (FIC), which are characterised by limited financial resources, a lack of access to capital, and often an undue reliance on debt. The Fund aims to assist these enterprises with an injection of direct financial assistance targeted at specific market and product development projects.

2. Objective

To facilitate and enhance economic development of the private sector through capacity building in product development, market research and promotional activities. These would be consistent with Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation's (PIPISO) strategic goals in:

- a) Capacity Building
- b) Partnerships and
- c) Technical Assistance

3. Types of Assistance available

The MSF grants are offered on a cost sharing basis, with the grant paying for the airfares and conference fees while the participant will pay for their per diems. The payment of the airfares, conference fees and other associated costs will be made directly to suppliers e.g. travel agent for air fares, conference host for meeting fees etc. Applications will be assessed by the PIPISO office after the submission of the relevant supporting documents and a completed application form which has been verified and endorsed by the applicant's member country National Private Sector Organisation³ (NPSO). NPSO representatives endorsing the application must declare if there is a '*conflict of interest*' on their part regarding any application.

The MSF offers assistance in the following categories:

- a. Market Research (maximum of FJD 5,000): - This component assists applicants with the gathering of information such as consumer demographics, product demands, product specification, packaging and labelling specifications and prospective markets through research. This can apply to new products or existing products. The research can be conducted either internally or externally and results of the research must be included in the report upon completion of the project. The assistance should cover airfares for one (1) person, costs associated with the research and report writing. Per diems will be covered by the participant.
- b. Exploration Visits (maximum of FJD 5,000 within the region⁴ and up to FJD 8,000 outside the region): - This component aims to encourage applicants to explore opportunities for their goods and/or services in target markets. Applications for this component must include evidence of research that was conducted on the market that will be visited, and a confirmed schedule of meetings with prospective customers. The meeting outcomes must be included in the final report submitted to the PIPISO office. The assistance should cover the cost of airfares of one (1) person. Per diems will be covered by the participant.

¹ The MSF facility was previously facilitated by Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), however in July 2009 it was transferred to PIPISO.

² FIC members include: Cook Islands, Federal States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu & Vanuatu.

³ For a list of NPSOs please contact PIPISO info@pipso.org.fj or visit our website www.pipso.org

⁴ FIC member countries

- c. Exhibition/Conference Participation (maximum of FJD 5,000 within the region and up to FJD 8,000 outside the region): – This component allows the applicants to participate at exhibitions and/or trade conferences where they can promote their products and network with prospective buyers. Documents relating (formal invitations) to the applicant's participation at a conference or exhibition must be included. The assistance should cover the cost of airfare of one (1) person, and up to 60% of airfreight charges, conference or exhibition fees. Per diems will be covered by the participant.
- d. Promotional Material (maximum of FJD 5,000): – This component provides the means for the applicants to produce promotional material such as brochures, posters, advertisements or websites which are crucial to the promotion of a product or business. The assistance should cover the cost of design, layout and printing, and is offered for new material⁵ (no reprints) and as **one time only**.

The following acknowledgement statement must be included in all printed material that is produced under the MSF, ***“Assistance for this project was provided by the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation”***. Reports for this component must include four (4) copies of the printed material.

4. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for the MSF, a business/enterprise must meet **each** of the following conditions:

- (i) Must be registered and conducting business in one of the fourteen (14) FICs,
- (ii) Must be a member of their respective National Private Sector Organization
- (iii) Has been trading for not less than twelve (12) months from the date of submitting their application; and
- (iv) Has not been assisted under the MSF/IDTP⁶ from PIPSO/PITIC Auckland/PITIC Sydney/PIC Tokyo/PIFTO Beijing within 24 months from the date of the current application, i.e. applicants can only reapply after a period of two (2) years from when they were first assisted.

5. Funding Request

All MSF funding are distributed on approved applications only. Applicants are required to complete the application form and forward to your local NPSO office for endorsement along with all the relevant supporting documents. Application forms are available from PIPSO website or from the PIPSO Office. The endorsed application is to be sent to the PIPSO Office in Suva, Fiji, via this email address info@pipso.org.fj or fax (+679) 322 0293. Requests must be submitted to the PIPSO Office at least one (1) month before the commencement of the activity.

6. Post-Project Report

Upon completion of the project, the applicant is required to submit a comprehensive report to PIPSO Office within two weeks. Training/Conference fees and other related fees receipts must be submitted together with report. The format of the post-project report is attached in Appendix 1.

7. Information/Contact

For further information with regards to the MSF guidelines, please:

- a) Contact the NPSO Office in your country, or;
- b) Pacific Islands Private Sector Organization (PIPISO) Office,
P. O Box U30, Suva, Fiji, Fax (679) 3220293, Phone (679) 3312600,
E-mail: info@pipso.org.fj Website: www.pipso.org

A list of NPSO's and their contact details can be obtained by contacting the PIPISO office.

⁵ Product which funds are being sought for must be a brand new publication.

⁶ Industrial Development Training Programme: a funding scheme administered by PIPISO for the FICs.