



Media Release
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Award winner reduces clothing industry's harm to people and planet

Little Yellow Bird (LYB), a supplier of ethically-made corporate uniforms and business apparel, has achieved New Zealand's highest sustainability accolade, winning the Supreme award at tonight's NZI Sustainable Business Network Awards. Founded by Samantha Jones in 2015, LYB supplies more than 400 organisations with their sustainably made uniforms and branded products.

The fashion industry is plagued by many social and environmental issues including worker exploitation, water consumption and pollution, pesticide use and plastic waste. LYB is committed to ethical manufacturing and to transforming the fashion industry to become part of the circular economy.

All LYB workers in the supply chain are paid fairly for the work they do, from cotton farmers to the factory floor. Profits are re-invested into community development projects around education, sanitary needs, and healthcare of cotton farm communities.

Little Yellow Bird's supply chain is fully transparent. Every item of clothing is tracked from source to sale. The company sources organic rain-fed cotton and promotes its benefits, from reducing reliance on water to eliminating the need for chemical pesticides.

Rachel Brown, Sustainable Business Network CEO, says: "Little Yellow Bird is simply outstanding. It is tackling one of the biggest challenges of our time and showing a home-grown NZ company can make a world of difference. It has a clever revenue growth model, it provides ethically made options, and it is a certified B Corp. A true model for how businesses of the future should be!"

The most hotly contested category 'Going Circular' was won by Medsalv, which reprocesses single use medical devices to reduce both the alarming waste and costs associated with healthcare.

Andrew Fisher has been crowned Sustainability Superstar for his commitment during the past 12 years to turn food waste into stock feed. In a partnership with Pioneer Energy, Andrew has advanced plans for building New Zealand's first commercial anaerobic digestion plant that will extract fuel from food waste.

Fraser McConnell won Millennial on a Mission for his work with Squawk Squad, the social enterprise that protects native birds through a combination of technology, conservation and education.

Garry Taylor, Executive General Manager of NZI, says NZI is proud to have supported the Sustainable Business Network and the Awards for the last 12 years.

"When we first partnered with the SBN, businesses that were focussed on sustainability were fairly niche. Today, it's hard to find a business regardless of size that isn't looking at the role it can play to improve its environmental or social performance.

"Congratulations to all of this year's winners and nominees. We are consistently impressed with the innovation and creativity of the businesses doing their bit for a more sustainable Aōtearoa."

All category winners are listed below.

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Winners and Commendations for 2019 NZI Sustainable Business Network Awards

Sustainability Superstar

Sponsored by Toitū Envirocare

Winner = Andrew Fisher – *Managing Director, EcoStock Supplies*

Commendation = Janette Searle – *Managing Trustee, Take My Hands*

Commendation = Marty Taylor – *Founder & Chief Sustainability Officer, Papa Taiao Earthcare*

Communicating for Change

Sponsored by Cadence Communications

Winner = Tauranga City Council

Commendation = BLAKE & New Zealand Geographic

Commendation = Ethique

Hardwired for Social Good

Sponsored by AlSCO

Winner = Little Yellow Bird

Commendation = ecostore

Partnering for Good

Sponsored by Ministry for Primary Industries

Winner = Auckland Council, TROW Group & Green Way Demolition

Commendation = BNZ & Salvation Army

Going Circular

Sponsored by Auckland Council

Winner = Medsalv

Commendation = Stone Arrow Jewellery

Commendation = The Formary

Efficiency Champion

Sponsored by Ricoh

Winner = Sudima Hotels

Commendation = Iplex Pipelines NZ

Commendation = National Steel

Smarter Transport

Sponsored by NZ Transport Agency

Winner = Fisher & Paykel Healthcare

Commendation = Blue Cars

Revolutionising Energy

Sponsored by EECA

Winner = AUT University

Commendation = Auckland District Health Board

Commendation = Camp Glenorchy

Transforming Food

Sponsored by Yealands Wines

Winner = Chia Sisters

Commendation = Breadcraft

Restoring Nature

Sponsored by Department of Conservation

Winner = Te Whangai Trust

Commendation = AgriSea NZ

Commendation = Rotorua Canopy Tours

Millennial on a Mission

Sponsored by The Spinoff

Winner = Fraser McConnell – *Co-Founder, Squawk Squad*

Commendation = Grace Glass – *Co-founder, Natural Paint Co*

SUPREME AWARD: NZI TRANSFORMING NEW ZEALAND AWARD

Winner = Little Yellow Bird

Finalist = Auckland Council, TROW Group & Green Way Demolition (partnership)

Finalist = Tauranga City Council

Finalist = Te Whangai Trust