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Media Release

Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia Wins 2015 Ethical Enterprise Award

Just announced: Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia, an Australian charity dedicated to providing free treatment for Ethiopian women with devastating childbirth injuries, has been announced the winner of the 2015 Ethical Enterprise Award.

The award recognises enterprises for its innovative and ethical practices that delivery positive social and economic impact.

Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia makes a difference by selling ethically sourced gifts from Africa through its shop and online store. Lead by Dr Catherine Hamlin, these funds are raised by volunteers exclusively for the Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital. The hospital has five regional centres containing wards, operating theatres, surgical teams, physiotherapy department and pathology services to support women with complicated childbirths. The main hospital has a 120-bed capacity but at times has two patients in some beds.

Now in its third year, the award will bestow a national recognition of the winner's efforts in addition to a variety of prizes, including \$10,000 in cash to contribute towards their vision for positive change and business development and promotional opportunities.

Cora Clough, Industry Engagement Manager at Centre for Workplace Leadership and judge of the 2015 Ethical Enterprise Award, believes the Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia charity is a fantastic example of the power of ethical enterprise for making genuine positive change.

“Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia employs ethical practices to source and sell all their products. Not only does this assist women in medical need but fair-trade also has a flow-on effect in the African community.”

Phil Vernon, Managing Director of Australian Ethical and award judge, believes the award raise awareness of social conscious leadership and ethically oriented business.

“This award celebrates the importance of informed ethical leadership and demonstrates how organisations that seek an ethical, sustainable offering can also provide great financial returns.”

Vernon continued, “Conservative figures place the number of social enterprises in Australia at around 20,000, demonstrating an admirable commitment to innovative and ethical practices.”

The runner up for the award is The Social Studio, a social enterprise based in Collingwood, including a retail space, cafe, printing studio, manufacturing team, catering business and TAFE school, that aims to use fashion and creativity as a vehicle for providing education and employment pathways to talented individuals from migrant/refugee backgrounds. With a focus on environmentally responsible and socially aware business practices, participants are given access to certified training and industry experience across retail, hospitality and manufacturing.

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About Moral Fairground:

Moral Fairground is a Melbourne-based social enterprise and organiser of the annual Fair@Square, Australia’s largest ethical and fair-trade festival. Having been operating with the ethical sector since 2009, Moral Fairground’s aim is to create positive social impact by increasing economic opportunities and fairness within society – achievements met by creating avenues for enterprises to become more effective in delivering their social mission. Learn more at moralfairground.com.au

About Australian Ethical:

Managing Director at Australian Ethical Investment. Phil has over 30 years of experience in financial services. He has been at the forefront of many developments in financial markets over that time and is passionate about encouraging new models for business and investment that recognise their stewardship roles in protecting the planet and its inhabitants. He is a Director of the Responsible Investment Association of Australia, Investor Group for Climate Change, Planet Ark, and Beyond Zero Emissions.