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Media release

Wednesday 24 June 2020

Bundaberg Rum creates \$11.5 million fund to support Australia's hospitality industry

- **Called 'Raising the Bar', the fund will support the recovery of our bars, pubs, and clubs as they start to welcome back their patrons**
- **Australian bars, pubs, and clubs contributed \$17.2 billion in revenue pre-COVID-19**
- **More than 500,000 people were employed by licensed venues pre-COVID-19**

Iconic Queensland brand **Bundaberg Rum**, owned by parent company and leading drinks producer **Diageo**, today announces its creation of 'Raising the Bar', an \$11.5 million fund that will support Australia's bars, pubs, and clubs as they rebuild following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Any licensed venue in Australia, whether they're regional or metro, and regardless if they're a Bundaberg Rum or Diageo stockist, can apply for support through the 'Raising the Bar' initiative that will fund a two-year programme rolling out from July 2020.

'Raising the Bar' will directly support jobs, recovery, and innovation in the Australian hospitality industry. Pre-COVID-19 Australian pubs, bars and clubs employed more than 500,000 Australians and contributed \$17.2 billion in revenue¹.

Angus McPherson, Managing Director at Bundaberg Rum's parent company Diageo Australia said: 'Our hospitality industry sits at the heart of our community and Australian culture. The joy of being able to connect with friends and family down at the 'local' has been sorely missed throughout this pandemic, while the economic impact on the industry has been unprecedented.

'Many in the hospitality industry are small businesses that employ thousands across the country and as we start to recover and rebuild, Bundaberg Rum wants to stand by their side and support them in getting back on their feet just like any Australian would do for a mate.'

Both Government and industry have come out in support of the fund and how it will help this critical industry that accounts for 8 per cent of Australian jobs, get back on its feet.

Hon. Michaelia Cash Senator and Minister for Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business said: 'Small businesses are the backbone of our economy and our communities. Seeing the resilience, innovation and spirit amongst Australian small business operators, including in the hospitality sector, as they have faced the challenges this year has been nothing short of inspiring.

¹ Bankwest Future of Business: Focus on Hospitality 2018



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'Businesses and workers in the hospitality industry have shown great ingenuity by innovating and adapting as the devastating effects of COVID-19 have impacted us all.

'I welcome the introduction of the 'Raising the Bar' initiative. These support measures will provide additional support to Australia's bars, pubs and clubs which have all been severely impacted by the social distancing measures required to stop the spread of COVID-19.'

Hon. Cameron Dick MP Queensland Treasurer said: 'Bundaberg Rum, through their parent company Diageo, stepped up for Queensland when we needed it most, generously donating 100,000 litres of ethanol to produce hand sanitiser to ensure our front-line workers were kept safe at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in Queensland.

'Once again, Bundaberg Rum has proven their commitment with the 'Raising the Bar' recovery fund for Australia's hospitality sector, which has been so hard hit by the pandemic.

'Like the Queensland Government, Bundaberg Rum knows how important it is to support and create jobs, and we thank them, once again, for investing in Queensland.'

Hon. Dominic Perrottet MP NSW Treasurer said: 'Doing business in a post-COVID world is a new challenge for every industry and it is initiatives like this that will allow more businesses to keep their doors open during these challenging times.

'These support measures will allow more pubs and bars to open safely, directly supporting tens of thousands of jobs across the country as we move from the response to recovery phase during this pandemic.

'The hospitality is a key contributor to the NSW and national economy and it is important businesses continue to adopt innovative approaches such as these, which I have no doubt will provide not only short-term gains but long-term benefits.

'The NSW Government is doing everything we can to support all sectors of the economy to keep more people in jobs and businesses in business.'

John Whelan, Chief Executive Officer of Australian Hotels Association NSW said: 'The AHA welcomes this announcement of support for the hospitality industry by Bundaberg Rum and Diageo. Our hotels have been hit hard by this pandemic and the economic impact is going to be felt for a long time to come. Support like the 'Raising the Bar' initiative is exactly what we need to help our Australian hotels get back on their feet, employing people and contributing to the Australian economy.'

Josh Landis, Chief Executive Officer of Clubs NSW said: 'This is a wonderful initiative from Bundaberg Rum and Diageo. It will help support clubs, in what will be a long road to recovery for the industry.

'We thank Bundaberg Rum and Diageo for this significant investment and will work with clubs to ensure they understand how to access this funding.'

Karl Schlothauer, President of the Independent Bars Association of New South Wales said: 'This is great news for our industry and with Bundaberg Rum opening their arms to everyone, customer or not. This will really help operators get back on their feet with the community at the forefront.'



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From 24 June 2020, venue operators can register their interest for 'Raising the Bar' funding via <http://www.diageobaracademy.com>. The industry can also register to receive regular updates on best practice training and resources and be able to participate in global surveys to share insights, as they build back their businesses.

This announcement is part of a broader commitment by Diageo to invest US\$100 million globally in 'Raising the Bar' programmes that will support venues as they recover from the impact of COVID-19.

The impact of COVID-19 on the hospitality sector has been widespread, with the closure of venues the world over. As governments begin to ease lockdown measures, the public want to come together again to connect with their community and socialise safely. Through the establishment of 'Raising the Bar', Bundaberg Rum and Diageo aims to help any licensed venue anywhere in Australia open its doors again and welcome back their patrons.

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About Bundaberg Rum (Facebook [BundabergRum](#))

Bundaberg Rum is a unique, authentically Australian icon unlike any other. Our story started in 1888 when a couple of mates came together to start an ingenious (and delicious) way to use up excess molasses from sugar production to form the Bundaberg Distillery Company to make rum.

For more than 130 years the Bundaberg Rum Distillery has proudly created the smooth golden liquor made from the finest sugar cane in tropical Queensland, surviving two fires and two floods as an enduring testament to the Australian spirit.

About Diageo (Instagram [@Diageo](#))

Diageo (pronounced *Dee-ah-jee-oh*) is a global leader in beverage alcohol with an outstanding collection of brands including Bundaberg Rum, Johnnie Walker, Smirnoff, Captain Morgan, Lagavulin, Talisker and The Singleton whiskies, Cîroc and Ketel One vodkas, Baileys, Don Julio, and Gordon's and Tanqueray gins.

Diageo is a global company, and our products are sold in more than 180 countries around the world. The company is listed on both the London Stock Exchange (DGE) and the New York Stock Exchange (DEO). For more information about Diageo, our people, our brands, and performance, visit us at www.diageo.com. Visit Diageo's global responsible drinking resource, www.DRINKiQ.com, for information, initiatives, and ways to share best practice.

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