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## MEDIA ADVISORY - ECONOMIST OF THE YEAR COMPETITION

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Date:** 1 June 2026

### **Economist of the Year Competition: Economic forecasting in a complex and volatile world where black swan events are becoming the norm**

**Pretoria, South Africa** - As the global and South African economies continue to face heightened volatility and complexity, economic forecasting has become more challenging and more critical than ever. Against this backdrop, the Bureau of Market Research (Pty) Ltd (BMR), in collaboration with Unisa, will announce the winner and two finalists of the 2025 BMR/Unisa Economist of the Year (EoY) Competition at an awards ceremony on **4 June 2026**.

Since its inception, the competition has aimed to recognise excellence in economic forecasting by providing a competitive platform for South Africa's top economists. The 2025 edition saw 39 of South Africa's leading economists submitting monthly forecasts across ten core economic indicators, such as economic growth (GDP), inflation, interest rates, household consumption expenditure and employment growth.

The results of the 2025 competition underscore the increasing difficulty of identifying consistent trends in an environment marked by unforeseen disruptions and heightened uncertainty. Participants were required to navigate rapidly changing economic conditions and adjust their forecasts as new information emerged. Despite this, a select group of economic forecasters demonstrated exceptional accuracy and insight, particularly those who were able to generate early and consistent forecasts amid evolving macroeconomic conditions. These outstanding forecasters have distinguished themselves through their ability to interpret economic signals with precision and resilience. The winner and two finalists will be recognised at the awards ceremony on 4 June 2026.

#### **Keynote Address: Alan Knott-Craig**

The event will feature a keynote address by Mr Alan Knott-Craig, a successful entrepreneur, author, and founder of fibertime™, a company that provides affordable fibre internet access to township communities. Mr Knott-Craig, the author of the recent publication *Chasing the Internet: From Backyards to Boardrooms*, will deliver a presentation entitled "The Hidden Trillion: Unlocking the Informal Economy".

### **The Role of Economic Forecasting in Turbulent Times**

Despite the challenges posed by an increasingly uncertain global environment, accurate economic forecasting remains indispensable to governments, businesses, investors and the broader public. Research on forecasting excellence suggests that the most successful forecasters combine rigorous analysis, diverse perspectives, probabilistic thinking and a willingness to adapt their views as new information emerges. The economists participating in the BMR/Unisa Economist of the Year Competition exemplify these qualities, reinforcing the critical importance of sound economic analysis in shaping strategic and policy decisions.

The achievements of the 2025 finalists underscore the value of rigorous economic analysis and forecasting excellence in an increasingly uncertain world. These qualities continue to define the ongoing 2026 BMR/Unisa Economist of the Year Competition and underscore its contribution to advancing economic discourse in South Africa.

#### **Issued by:**

Bureau of Market Research (BMR) - Host of the Economist of the Year Competition

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