

## Ascor once again crowned as the cream of the financial adviser crop

The awards recognise and honour business practice and client service excellence in the financial planning community in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East and the United Kingdom.

Consistency paves the way to success, as Ascor Independent Wealth Managers has once again proven by being voted South Africa's best independent financial adviser practice.

Ascor, the Pretoria-based independent wealth manager, scooped three out of the six awards at the 2018 International Adviser Best Practice Adviser Awards ceremony held in Cape Town on 21 November 2018.

Inaugurated in 2016, the awards are managed by International Adviser, a global information and research platform for independent financial advisers, and Old Mutual International. The awards recognise and honour business practice and client service excellence in the financial planning community in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East and the United Kingdom. Ascor gained recognition as regional winner of the categories Excellence in Client Service, Excellence in Professional Development and the very coveted Best Regional Adviser Firm.

Receiving the awards, CEO Wouter Fourie said: "I am extremely proud of our team. Instead of putting themselves first, they consistently put the well-being of our clients' wealth, retirement, health and financial planning at the forefront of what we do every day.

*"We would not have been able to claim three years of excellence if we did not engrain a single-minded client focus in our DNA since the formation of Ascor in 2005. We believe in the talent of our team, meticulous planning, business consistency, focus on service excellence and our commitment to help raise industry standards."*

In 2017, Ascor won the Excellence in Investment Planning award and in 2016 won no less than four awards – Excellence in Social Media, Excellence in Use of Technology, Excellence in Marketing and Communication and the overall regional award as Best Adviser Firm.

All categories are judged by an independent panel of judges in the industry. In a world that has seen unprecedented change in the financial planning industry, judges are scouting for those firms with sustainable business models in order to remain relevant and profitable and, more importantly, to provide their clients improved and more consistent service.

"This year's accolades represent the results of continued training and investment we make in our human capital and our clients every day," says Fourie. Ascor outclassed its peers in the Excellence in Professional Development category, which recognises Ascor's professional development strategy that has been established to



IA Best Practice Adviser Awards 2018 Winners. From left, Excellence in Business Strategy - Carrick Wealth - Craig Featherby, Chief Executive Officer, Excellence in Marketing - Capta Financial Services - Bronson Friedman, Wealth Strategist, Best regional adviser firm - Ascor Wealth Managers, Wouter Fourie, CEO and Excellence in Operational Efficiency & Excellence in Investment Planning - Private Client Holdings - Andrew Ratcliffe, Director

create top qualified professional staff to help make an adviser firm successful. Excellent client service is integral to the success of any Independent advice practice. Providing advice customised for every individual is challenging but achievable. This is evidenced by the fact that Ascor was recognised for its efforts by winning the Excellence in Client Service category.

Fourie says: "The team values this award as the firm focuses on building long-term relationships with its clients built on trust and exceptional service." As the winner of the region, Ascor will compete for the overall global category for Best Practice.

Ascor is a multi-disciplinary, fee-based independent financial adviser group that offers a comprehensive range of wealth management services. The company was established in 2005 and became one of South Africa's first accredited practices to receive the Financial Planning Institute (FPI) Professional Practice Certification. In 2015, Wouter Fourie received the coveted FPI Financial Planner of the Year Award. ■