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வெளிநாட்டு வளங்கள் திணைக்களம்
Department of External Resources

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கேள்விக்கி கார்ட்டு (3 වැනි මාල), ක.පෙ. 277, කොළඹ 00100, ශ්‍රී ලංකාව
இது, திட்டமிடல் மற்றும் பொருளாதார துவிவிருத்தி துறைக்க
செயலகம் (3 ஆம் மாடி), த. பெ. இல. 277, கொழும்பு 00100, இலங்கை
Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
The Secretariat (3rd Floor), P.O. Box 277, Colombo 00100, Sri Lanka

Website: www.erd.gov.lk

e-mail: info@erd.gov.lk

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எனது இல
My No

TA/AUS/S/01/2024

ඔබේ අංකය
உமது இல
Your No

දිනය
திகதி
Date

19th Dec. 2024

Secretary to the President / Presidential Secretariat
Secretary to the Prime Minister / Prime Minister's Office
Secretary to the Cabinet / Cabinet Office
Secretary / General to the Parliament
Secretaries / All Ministries
Auditor General / National Audit Office
Chairmen / All Independent Commissions
Chief Secretaries / All Provincial Councils
District Secretaries / All Districts

Dear Sir/Madam

Bridging Research to Policy (Australian Awards South Asia & Mongolia)
Preliminary Activity - 17th to 19th February 2025 (in Sri Lanka)
Core Learning Elements - 17th to 28th March 2025 (in Australia)
Applied Learning Activity (online or in the region) - 6th to 28th May 2025 (in Sri Lanka)

This refers to e-mail message dated 12th December 2024 sent by the Embassy of Australia on the above.

Accordingly, Embassy of Australia has requested us to submit nominations from eligible Government officials of Sri Lanka for the above programme.

The application form and the programme details can be downloaded from the following websites;

- <https://oscar.australiaawardssouthasiamongolia.org/>
(for the detail of Scholar Program, please see attached.)
- ERD form: <http://www.erd.gov.lk/>

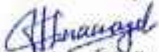
We would highly appreciate, if necessary action can be taken to send suitable nominations from the relevant institutions under the purview of your ministry for the above program with the following documents;

- Nomination letter of the line ministry
- Dully filled application and other required documents with an additional copy of each document
(Printout of the online application)
- Copy of the relevant pages of the passport
- Duly filled ERD Form

Please note that duly completed applications should be submitted to ERD before 2.00 p.m. on 08th January 2024, with the line ministry covering letter and other relevant documents as stipulated above.

Your early response in this regard is highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully


Chandrika K. Senanayake
Deputy Director / Technical Assistance
for Director General

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பணிப்பாளர் நாயகம்
Director General

94-11-2484693

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ஆலயகம்
Office

94-11-2484500
94-11-2484600

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தொலை நம்பி
Fax

94-11-2447633
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Australia Awards

Australia Awards

South Asia & Mongolia

**Concept Note: Bridging Research to
Policy: SRI LANKA**

November 2024



Purpose and Objectives

The learning objectives outlines that the participants should return to their workplace and be able to:

- Describe the optimal processes for good practice policy development; these processes may support agenda setting, stakeholder mapping, the use of evidence, policy formulation, anticipated implementation issues, risk identification and budget considerations;
- Interpret a range of research, identify research gaps, and key findings for policy formulation;
- Utilise analytical and interpretative skills to better use evidence and research;
- Develop timelines, milestones and quality assurance processes for commissioned research to meet policy demands;
- Effectively engage and collaborate with researcher and knowledge procedures through a common agenda to inform sound research based policy;
- Utilise the action plan model and research products associated with the Medium Term Development Plan to effectively feed into the creation of policy briefs across Sri Lanka focus areas;
- Draft a policy recommendation or brief that:
 - ✓ Is accurate and based on a strong research/evidenced based foundation;
 - ✓ Is accessible, concise and well communicated; and,
 - ✓ Is up to date and meets the needs of the range of internal and external stakeholders.

Course Content

This Short Course will increase the competency of Participants to:

- The policy/administrative interface
- Policy design and implementation
- Coordination of public policy
- Understanding research for evidenced-based policy making
- Translating research into policy
- The language of policy.

It is proposed that Participants' Return to Work Plans will focus on developing new ideas/initiatives/proposals on digital innovations for public service that can be trialled in their respective countries.

Participant Profile & Selection Process

It is recommended priority be given to selecting up to 20 middle managers/emerging leaders from the public or private sector, particularly those who hold strategic roles in policy development (not technical roles) in their respective agencies and organisations. Ideally Participants will have a minimum two years of experience in their current or a related role, and not be planning retirement for at least 12 months after completing the Short Course (to maximise knowledge transfer within their organisation).

Regardless of their mode of selection (determined by participating Posts), all candidates will need to submit an online application, including their responses to selection criteria (exploring their motivation for joining the Short Course) and a CV outlining the roles and responsibilities of their current role, as well as any other relevant experience or qualifications.

Bridging Research to Policy

Context

Sri Lanka is recovering from concurrent crises – political, economic and social – after the country defaulted on its debt and depleted its foreign currency reserves in 2022. Macroeconomic instability and poor fiscal and monetary policy decisions led to severe food, fuel and basic supply shortages as well as high inflation across the country.

Sri Lanka has made significant progress in stabilising the economy and undertaking institutional reforms following the IMF support package approved in March 2023. Reformers view the crisis as an opportunity to build back better through important economic governance structural reforms. Several important pieces of legislation aimed at embedding structural reforms have either been revised (such as the Central Bank of Sri Lanka Act, the Banking Special Provisions Act, Anti-Corruption Act and the Economic Transformation Act). The government has also put in place an ambitious FTA agenda to attract foreign investment, support technology transfer, integrate the economy into global supply chains and diversify Sri Lanka's export base to boost economic growth.

Sri Lanka sees Australia as the gold standard in policy analysis and development and has approached Australia to support its economic governance reform agenda. Australia supported Sri Lanka's crisis response, including humanitarian and development assistance in 2022, and there is now an opportunity to support Sri Lanka's economic governance reforms over the long term. The assistance will strengthen Sri Lanka's governance, economic stability and help build the foundations for sound policy choices. Australia is recognised for its strong institutions and good governance, and this activity would support Sri Lanka to access those systems and capabilities.

The proposed support aligns with Australia's goal for a **stable, prosperous and resilient Sri Lanka**, and the Australia- Sri Lanka Development Partnership Plan objectives of i) **more effective and accountable governance, and economic growth that is sustainable and inclusive**, and ii) **enhanced community and institutional resilience to internal and external challenges**. It also complements other key economic stabilisation and growth enhancing governance reforms that Australia is supporting. Australia's Governance for Growth investment supports the World Bank, a range of international NGOs, and Sri Lankan and Australian institutions to promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth working with all levels of Sri Lanka's government. This includes economic reform support at the national level, work at the subnational level on strengthening service provision, and twinning between Australian and Sri Lankan institutions. Through our partners, Australia is contributing to improved evidence-based policy and decision-making, better service delivery, and improved voice and agency particularly for marginalised groups.

- Presentations on progress of RWPs outcomes and impacts by individual Participants is a key focus of the Applied Learning Activities
- Participants will be provided support to improve their RWPs.

Return to Work Plan

A Return to Work Plan (RWP) is the key output of the Short Course. It enables Participants to develop a project that operationalises the information and learning gained from the course. The RWP should describe how each Participant will apply newly acquired skills and knowledge to a specific work-based project or set of activities.

Using a mentoring approach, Participants will be supported throughout each of the course components to develop and implement their RWPs. Each Participant will be:

- Encouraged to develop their initial thinking and approach to individual RWPs through direct engagement with the Provider's delivery team during the **Preliminary Activities**
- Expected to fully develop the RWP during the **Core Learning Elements**
- Expected to implement their RWP with support from mentors and colleagues and to review progress as part of the **Applied Learning Activities**.

Each RWP will include measures to reduce the likelihood of discrimination against women and ethnic minority groups as it may relate to digital governance.

The Program may also undertake selected reviews of progress and outcomes with RWP implementation post-course.

Aligned Australian Counterparts

- Australian Productivity Commission
- Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC)
- Australian Public Service Commission (APSC)
- Treasury
- Department of Finance
- Australian Taxation Office
- The Grattan Institute
- Lowy Institute

Women's Leadership, Inclusion and Gender Equity

The Australian Government identifies gender equality as a critical cross-cutting theme across the Australian Aid program. The [Gender equality and women's empowerment strategy](#) makes it clear that gender equality and women's empowerment are a core part of the foreign policy, economic diplomacy and development work of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). The Government is committed to strengthening our ability to engage in policy dialogue about gender issues in the Indo-Pacific region and globally and advancing our international reputation as a global leader on gender equality and women's empowerment.

The strategy establishes three priorities that guide DFAT's work on gender equality:

- enhancing women's voice in decision-making, leadership, and peace building
- promoting women's economic empowerment
- ending violence against women and girls.

Participant Profile & Eligibility Criteria

Up to 20 participants from Sri Lanka will be selected, particularly those who hold strategic roles in policy development (not technical roles) in their respective agencies and organizations.

The primary target group will be emerging leaders and middle management level officers from the public, private and the civil society sectors.

Women, people from diverse ethnic backgrounds and people with disabilities who are working in relevant areas are strongly encouraged to apply.

Selected participants for this Short Course should be able to meet the following criteria:

- Be a citizen of Sri Lanka and currently residing in Sri Lanka.
- Not be applying for or hold permanent residency in either Australia or New Zealand, or be married, engaged to, or a de facto of a person who holds, or is eligible to hold, Australian or New Zealand citizenship or permanent residency. This criterion applies at any stage of the application, selection or mobilisation phases of the course.
- Be able to provide attested documents for processing a visa application to enter Australia for the duration of the Australian component of the course and satisfy all requirements of the Department of Home Affairs for an Australian Student Visa (Subclass 500).
- Not be a currently serving military personnel.
- Obtain the necessary study and travel approvals from their employer and be available and committed to participate in the course based on the anticipated course schedule outlined below.
- Not have undertaken an Australia Awards Short Course in the last two years.
- Have access to the internet and be computer literate.

Specific Eligibility Criteria

Participants will have the following qualifications, skills and experience:

- Hold strategic roles (not technical roles) in their respective agencies.
- Have a minimum of 2 years relevant work experience in their current or a related role.
- Not planning/scheduled to retire in the next 12 months after completing the Short Course.
- Be assessed as having a strong level of English to be able to participate in this course.
- Be able to commit to completing a Return-to-Work Plan (RWP).

Time Commitment Required

Selected participants must be committed and available to participate in the activity both in-person and online (as required) and must obtain the necessary study leave approvals from their organizations.

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| • Preliminary Activity: | 17-19 February 2025 Sri Lanka |
| • Core Learning Elements (in-Australia): | 17-28 March 2025 Australia |
| • Applied Learning Activity (Online or in the region): | 26-28 May 2025 Sri Lanka |

All dates and locations are tentative, and more information will be provided at the time of selection.

Application Process

To apply for this Short Course, applicants must follow the subsequent procedure:



Australia Awards

Australia Awards South Asia & Mongolia

Selection Criteria for Regional Short Course

Bridging Research to Policy: SRI LANKA

Purpose and Objectives

The Bridging Research to Policy Short Course seeks to align with Australia's goal for a stable, prosperous and resilient Sri Lanka and the Australia-Sri Lanka Development Partnership Plan objectives. This includes effective and accountable governance and economic growth that is both sustainable and inclusive and an increased institutional and community resilience to internal and external challenges. It will also complement other key economic stabilization and growth enhancing governance reforms that Australia is supporting.

The overarching aim of this Short Course is to foster stronger links between research, evidence-based policy design, implementation and development outcomes. Additionally, it will look to build the capacity of Sri Lankan professionals to drive positive change within their organisations.

Learning Outcomes

By undertaking this course, participants will develop strategies to

- describe the optimal processes for good practice policy development
- interpret a range of research, identify research gaps and key findings for policy formulation
- utilise analytical and interpretative skills to better use evidence and research
- develop timelines, milestones and quality assurance processes for commissioned research to meet policy demands
- effectively engage and collaborate with researcher and knowledge procedures through a common agenda to inform sound research-based policy;
- utilise the action plan model and research products associated with the Medium-Term Development Plan to effectively feed into the creation of policy briefs across Sri Lanka focus areas
- draft a policy recommendation or brief

In addition, this course will increase the competency of participants to:

- implement and execute policy design.
- understand research for evidence-based policy making.
- translate research into policy.
- understand the language of policy.

Development of a Return-to-Work Plan (RWP) that applies the skills and knowledge gained in this Short Course is a key deliverable. The RWP will describe how Participants will apply their newly acquired skills to a specific project or set of activities.

- All applicants are required to complete their applications online on the Australia Awards South Asia and Mongolia Short Course portal at: <https://oscar.australiaawardssouthasiamongolia.org/> and upload the required documentation by **10 January 2025**. Only completed applications submitted online will be considered.
- All applicants must highlight their motivation for joining the Short Course, upload a CV outlining roles and responsibilities with relevant experience and qualifications, a signed and endorsed Head of Agency Endorsement Letter and a Letter of Nomination from their Organization (both of which templates are available on the Australia Awards Short Course portal).
- For more inquiries, contact the Australia Awards Sri Lanka office by emailing inquiries@australiaawardssrilanka.org

- Presentations on progress of RWPs outcomes and impacts by individual Participants is a key focus of the Applied Learning Activities
- Participants will be provided support to improve their RWPs.

Return to Work Plan

A Return to Work Plan (RWP) is the key output of the Short Course. It enables Participants to develop a project that operationalises the information and learning gained from the course. The RWP should describe how each Participant will apply newly acquired skills and knowledge to a specific work-based project or set of activities.

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Each RWP will include measures to reduce the likelihood of discrimination against women and ethnic minority groups as it may relate to digital governance.

The Program may also undertake selected reviews of progress and outcomes with RWP implementation post-course.

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The strategy establishes three priorities that guide DFAT's work on gender equality:

- enhancing women's voice in decision-making, leadership, and peace building
- promoting women's economic empowerment
- ending violence against women and girls.

Delivery Approach

The program will be delivered through in-Australia and in-Sri Lanka components.

This approach will maximise opportunities for Participant familiarisation, contextualisation of materials and learning as well as information exchange and interaction with key stakeholders and counterparts in the region and Australia.

Preliminary Activities (in – Sri Lanka)

The following preliminary services are in addition to the mandatory Preliminary Activities detailed in the *Australia Awards South Asia & Mongolia, Short Course Handbook*:

- **Environmental Scan**
The Provider will be required to conduct an environmental scan to understand the operating and regulatory environment in Sri Lanka, including exploration of the challenges and opportunities so that the course content can be tailored to assist Participants to respond to these factors. A brief summary of the findings of the environmental scan will be included as a component of the Preliminary Activities Report.
- **Learning Needs Analysis**
The Provider will conduct a Learning Needs Analysis (LNA) of Participants to build an understanding of their needs and expectations. It is anticipated that an assessment of English language competence and any adjustments to enable equitable access to learning within the Short Course, will be conducted at this stage. The LNA will be validated and enhanced through online meetings/platforms.
- **Introductory modules**
A minimum of two modules will be developed by the Provider, with the aim of introducing the key objectives of the course including conceptualising Participants' Return to Work Plans.

Core Learning Elements (in- Australia)

It is expected the Core Learning Elements will:

- incorporate a mix of interactive panel discussions with subject experts (Australian and international)
- explore contemporary discourse, case studies and articles that provide evidence and examples of strategies to counter radicalisation, contextualised to the local environment
- provide virtual events and interactions to facilitate structured networks with Australian (and other) experts
- if relevant, virtual site visits

A schedule outlining delivery sequence, methodologies and time allocations will be prepared by the selected Provider.

Applied Learning Activities (in - Sri Lanka)

The Applied Learning Activities will be designed to explore and reinforce the value and importance of the transfer and application of learning achieved through Participants' Return to Work Plans.

- Participants will provide an update on the implementation progress of their RWP's
- Share learning and explore solutions to common challenges by the group allowing for further learning for Participants



Practical approaches to the promotion of women as leaders and active participants in decision-making will be explored throughout this Short Course. Gender-sensitive perspectives will complement relevant theory through the development of individualised Return to Work Plans. Consideration of the needs of those from traditionally marginalised groups, including people with disabilities, will also be included in the course.

Public Diplomacy and Communications

The Course Provider will develop Communication and Social Media Plans, outlining an appropriate approach to media and communications for promoting the Short Course and Australia Awards. The Course Provider will be supplied with *Guidelines for Course Providers – Promoting Short Course Awards* and a Promotions Pack containing templates to help support the development of a Communications Plan.

The Plan must take into consideration the Australian Government's Public Diplomacy Objectives and the Australia Awards Global Strategy. Communication channels used in promotions should include both traditional channels and social media, as both are effective tools in promoting Australia Awards Short Courses.

Adherence to clearance protocols outlined in the *Guidelines for Course Providers – Promoting Short Course Awards* will be required. This includes ensuring that the Program receives the opportunity to approve content intended for external distribution prior to publishing and dissemination.

The Australian Government's contribution will be recognised throughout promotions, enabling participants to identify that they are a recipient of a prestigious Australia Award.

Key Dates

Preliminary activities – Online / in-country	:2 – 3 days – Late February 2025
Core learning activities – in-Aust)	:2 weeks – End March /early April 2025
Applied learning activities – in-country	:2-3 days - Late May 2025