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Department of External Resources

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Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
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Date

06th February 2026

Attn: Officer In-charge of Foreign Training

Secretary to the President / Presidential Secretariat
Secretary to the Prime Minister / Prime Minister's Office
Secretary/ Office of the Cabinet of Ministers
Secretary General/ Sri Lanka Parliament
Heads/ All other Special Spending Units
Secretaries / All Ministries
Chief Secretaries / All Provincial Councils

Call for Nominations: GRO GEST 2027 – Fully Funded Postgraduate Programme in Iceland

We are pleased to inform you that the International Centre for Capacity Development, operating under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of Iceland, has invited nominations for the five-month, full-time Postgraduate Diploma Programme on GRO Gender Equality Studies and Training (GEST) – 2027 Cohort, hosted by the University of Iceland.

02. The programme is designed for junior professionals and young researchers engaged in gender equality related work in policy, practice, or research. It combines advanced academic instruction with applied project or research components. Participants may pursue one of the following admission tracks:

- Project Track - for candidates developing practice-oriented gender equality projects to be implemented in their home country with formal institutional endorsement.
- Research Track - for candidates undertaking academic research intended for publication in peer-reviewed journals.

03. If this programme aligns with the mandate and the functions of your Ministry or any affiliated institutions under its purview, it presents a valuable opportunity to enhance institutional capacity. Participation would contribute significantly to the professional development of relevant officers.

04. In this regard, you are kindly requested to circulate this information among prospective candidates within your Ministry/Organization and its affiliated institutions, and to encourage eligible officials to submit applications in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the attached *Information Booklet*. Applicants are advised to carefully review the eligibility criteria and related information prior to submission. Comprehensive details and access to the online application form are available at:

<https://www.grocentre.is/gest/capacity-development-gest/postgraduate-diploma-programme-1/admission>

05. We would appreciate it if arrangements could be made to submit nominations online on or before 10 March 2026, and to forward the following documents to this Department thereafter:

- Nomination letter from the Line Ministry
- Proof of online application submission
- Duly completed ERD Form (available at www.erd.gov.lk)

06. Please note that shortlisted nominees will be invited to submit a full individual application. Accordingly, this Department should be informed of online submission details for any further facilitation required. Selection letters for domestic administrative purposes will be issued only in respect of applications received by this Department on or before the stipulated deadline.

07. Further, it has come to our attention that there has been a recent trend of candidates withdrawing their candidatures for various reasons after being selected for foreign training courses. While these opportunities are secured for the benefit of the country, such withdrawals not only tarnish the country's image but also result in the loss of valuable training slots allocated to us. Moreover, this practice is unfair to other deserving candidates who were not selected. In order to minimize such inconveniences, we kindly request both the candidates and the Ministry/organization to ensure that applications are submitted with a firm commitment. Once selected for the scholarship program, candidates are expected to honor their acceptance and not withdraw their candidature except under circumstances that are exceptionally unexpected and unavoidable.

08. We warmly encourage all suitably qualified officials to consider availing themselves of this exceptional opportunity, which not only allows for the enhancement of academic and professional competencies but also provides invaluable international exposure, networking opportunities, and practical experience in the field of gender equality.

09. Your kind cooperation and timely attention to this matter would be highly appreciated.



Tharanga Liyanage
Additional Director General
for Director General

Copies:

1. H E Ambassador, Embassy of Sri Lanka in Sweden Stockholm - with appreciation for your kind facilitation
2. Director General (Europe & North America), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism

Enclosure: Information Booklet