



Australia Awards South Asia

Candidate Profile and Selection Criteria for Short Course

Business Incubation Management, 2021 – Sri Lanka

Course Context

Business incubators (BICs) are designed to provide the foundation for business start-ups in the initial innovation stage until it becomes a successful enterprise that can finally operate independently. Globally, it is evident that business incubation is on a steady incline and Sri Lanka is no exception.

With the nation's entrepreneurship ecosystem booming, BICs have become more important, not just in the form of business capital, mentoring and workspaces but also to keep the momentum of revamping these services to meet the innovative needs of the entrepreneur.

In Sri Lanka, business incubation services are provided by the government, academic institutions and the private sector. Each business incubator is unique, with unique influencers, sectoral focus and resource availability. Assistance may take many forms, including fully fledged incubators, business accelerators, co-working spaces and angel investors. Established incubators vary in levels of maturity with some just starting, through to those that have been successful in their sector.

However, in ensuring a BICs success a number of factors or constraints presently exist such as:

- A low participation and engagement with female entrepreneurs
- Poor accessibility to, or a lack of knowledge of existing business incubation centres
- Lack of information exchange within the industries in which the entrepreneur and Business Incubator operate
- Management capacity to adequately identify, select and support prospective ventures
- Limited capacity to facilitate and maintain sustainable linkages
- Human resource management and development practices within BICs

In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic brought about many challenges for Sri Lanka's new and small and medium enterprises, not only in respect to availability of funding through BICs but also to the very survival of these enterprises.

While many BICs are only recently established, many have adapted to global trends and best practices. Enhancing the ability of key participants to adopt effective management practices within existing BICs, creating innovative enterprises and the promotion of female leadership and entrepreneurship, are key objectives of this short course.

This short course will bring together personnel from all public and private sector Business Incubation Centres, offering the opportunity for the cross-fertilisation of ideas and experiences, to promote gender equity and inclusion in the start-up space. Moreover, this short course aims to create an ecosystem of dedicated and successful business incubators in Sri Lanka.

Objectives

The short course aims to support a culture of entrepreneurship, to build capacity in effectively managing Business Incubators (BIs) and drive innovation, coupled with a focus on gender equity and women in entrepreneurship. The short course will achieve this through its key themes below:

- Innovation & enterprise development – creating innovative enterprises
- Management – managing a business incubator
- Inclusive entrepreneurship – accelerating women's participation in business and work.

Participant Profile

Participants will come from public and private sectors and will be personnel who hold positions of responsibility for managing or developing Business Incubators, Start-ups or Technology Incubator centres in Sri Lanka.

There will be a maximum of 20 – 25 participants in the cohort.

General Eligibility Criteria

Candidates must:

- be **Sri Lankan** citizens and currently residing in **Sri Lanka**
- not have applied for or hold permanent residency in Australia or New Zealand
- obtain the necessary study and travel approvals from their employer to participate fully in the requirements of the Short Course, including, if possible, one or more in-country face to face workshops
- meet the specific eligibility criteria specified for this short course and adhere to the application process detailed in this document
- complete a Return to Work Plan with their supervisor
- demonstrate digital literacy including experience with online learning and meeting platforms
- be available to participate in the short course for the entire duration in accordance with the dates specified below
- Previous experience in peer-to-peer coaching/ mentorship is desirable

Specific Eligibility Criteria

Candidates who have the potential to apply the knowledge and experience gained through course participation are encouraged to apply. Selected candidates will be required to complete a negotiated 'Return to Work Plan' which will involve the implementation of observations and learnings obtained throughout the short course.

Female applicants, people with disability and people from traditionally marginalised groups are strongly encouraged to apply.

To be eligible candidates must:

- Be currently working in a relevant area and will be mid-level or senior managers with relevant experience and currently employed in BICs, Start-ups or Technology Incubator centers
- Have occupied their current position for **at least 6 months**.
- Not be **retiring or being considered for transfer** for at least **one year** from the conclusion of the short course
- Not have attended any previous Australia Awards Fellowships or Short Course
- Have stable internet connectivity as well as laptop/computer availability in order to access course content for download, webinar participation and live sessions
- Demonstrate a high level of English proficiency to be able to participate in this course by providing a letter from employer confirming English language proficiency
- Be committed and available to participate in each of the three major components of the short course by ensuring release from usual professional duties during the course delivery phases due to its demanding subject matter.
 - Pre-liminary activities will require 2 hours per week for a total of 4 weeks (14 June – 9 July 2021)

- The Core learning elements module will require an average of 5 hours per week for a total of 8 weeks (26 July – 17 September 2021)
- Applied learning activities will require an average of 1 hour per week for a total of 12 weeks. (21 September to 10 December 2021).

Application Process

To apply for the short course, applicants must follow the subsequent procedure.

- All candidates are required to complete their applications online at: <https://apps.australiaawardssouthasia.org/register> and complete the upload of required documentation by **7 May 2021**. Only completed applications submitted online will be considered.
- Final selected candidates will be notified by **1 June 2021**.
- For more inquiries, call 0115772980 or email inquiries@australiaawardssrilanka.org