

INNOVATION FOR ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

ADB

19 JUNE 2025

09:00 AM – 12:45 PM

COLOMBO TIME

11:30 AM – 03:15 PM

MANILA TIME

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ZOOM REGISTRATION

ABOUT THE EVENT

The “Serendipity Knowledge Program” (SKOP) is ADB’s knowledge program dedicated to Sri Lanka, designed to respond effectively to the country’s needs in line with the vision of ADB as a knowledge solutions bank. SKOP seeks to share knowledge on issues relevant to Sri Lanka and facilitate discussion among stakeholders.

Innovation is recognized as a major factor contributing to economic transformation. It drives global competitiveness and inclusive and sustainable economic growth. Innovation leads to higher growth through productivity gains and transforms economies by shifting resources to produce more complex goods in productive sectors. High value production facilitates access to global and regional value chains and diverse markets, creates better jobs, changes economic structures, and improves living standards. This SKOP event will focus on bringing new perspectives to support the government to define and strengthen its role and capacity to drive the development of the national innovation ecosystem. It will also explore the role of universities as hubs of innovation. The event will seek to catalyze a long-term engagement among the government, international experts, and other stakeholders to support strengthening the national innovation ecosystem.

The event will feature a keynote message by Prof. Mariana Mazzucato, Professor at University College London (UCL), and Founding Director of the UCL Institute for Innovation & Public Purpose (IIPP). She is the author of the highly acclaimed books *The Entrepreneurial State*, *The Value of Everything*, *Mission Economy*, and *The Big Con*. The keynote will be followed by panel discussions, and networking opportunities with experts from both public and private sectors. This event will be attended by stakeholders including senior government officials, including the Honorable Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, who will deliver opening remarks; leading private sector representatives; think tanks; other development partners; civil society; and ADB staff.



HARINI AMARASURIYA
Honorable Prime Minister and
Minister of Education
Sri Lanka



MARIANA MAZZUCATO
Professor in the Economics of Innovation and
Public Value and
Founding Director of Institute for Innovation and
Public Purpose, University College London



LEAH GUTIERREZ
Director General
Sectors Department 3
ADB



TAKAFUMI KADONO
Country Director
Sri Lanka Resident Mission
ADB



NALAKA KALUWEWA
Secretary
Ministry of Education
Higher Education and Vocational Education



GOMIKA UDUGAMASOORIYA
Senior Advisor to the President of
Sri Lanka on Science and
Technology



K. L. WASANTHA KUMARA
Vice Chairman
University Grants Commission
Sri Lanka



GI SOON SONG
Director
Human and Social Development
Sectors Department 3
ADB



SHIRANTHI RATHNAYAKE
Director General
Department of National Planning
Ministry of Finance
Planning and Economic Development.



LERWEN LIU
Associate Professor of Entrepreneurship
Nanyang Technological University
Singapore



RAJENDRA MOOTHA
Head
New Initiatives
IITM Pravartak Technologies Foundation



DAMITH PALLEWATTE
Managing Director
Chief Executive Officer
Hatton National Bank



C. S. LEWANGAMAGE
Project Director
Science and Technology Human Resources
Development Project



JEEVAN GNANAM
Co-Founder
Hatch



HEMINDA JAYAWEERA
Executive Director TRACE
Cofounder 3H



UNIKA SHRESTHA
Social Sector Economist
ADB



SAVITHRI RODRIGO
MC



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Program	MC: Savithri Rodrigo
09:30 - 09:35 AM	Welcome Remarks Takafumi Kadono Country Director for Sri Lanka, ADB
09:35 - 09:55 AM	Opening Remarks Harini Amarasuriya Honorable Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Sri Lanka
09:55 - 10:00 AM	Video “Education for Innovation”- outcomes of the Science and Technology Human Resources Development Project
10:00 - 10:20 AM	Keynote Speech “Innovation for Economic Transformation – The Role of the Government” Mariana Mazzucato Professor in the Economics of Innovation and Public Value and Founding Director of Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose, University College London
10:20 - 11:10 AM	Panel discussion 1- Building the Innovation Ecosystem Panel members Lerwen Liu Associate Professor of Entrepreneurship, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore Gomika Udugamasooriya Senior Advisor to the President of Sri Lanka on Science and Technology Damith Pallewatte Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, Hatton National Bank Jeevan Gnanam Co-Founder, Hatch Heminda Jayaweera Executive Director TRACE / Cofounder 3H Moderator: Takafumi Kadono, Country Director for Sri Lanka, ADB
11:10 - 11:30 AM	Question & Answer Session

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11:30 - 12:15 PM

Panel discussion 2 – Aligning Education to Support Innovation

Panel Members

Nalaka Kaluwewa

Secretary, Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education

Gi Soon Song

Director, Human and Social Development, Sectors Department 3, ADB

Rajendra Mootha

Head - New Initiatives, IITM Pravartak Technologies Foundation

K. L. Wasantha Kumara

Vice Chairman, University Grants Commission, Sri Lanka

C. S. Lewangamage

Project Director, Science and Technology Human Resources Development Project

Moderator: Unika Shrestha, Social Sector Economist, ADB

12:15 - 12:30 PM

Question & Answer Session

12:30 - 12:35 PM

Feedback from Participants

12:35 - 12:45 PM

Closing Remarks

Leah Gutierrez

Director General, Sectors Department 3, ADB.

Shiranthi Rathnayake

Director General, Department of National Planning; Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

