



# Australian High Commission

MEDIA RELEASE

---

8 November 2017

## Australian High Commissioner congratulates Australia Awards recipients

Australian High Commissioner Bryce Hutchesson hosted a reception in Colombo on 7 November to congratulate 30 Sri Lankans who have been offered Australia Awards scholarships to study at Australian universities in 2018.

The recipients will undertake masters degrees at Australia's top universities in a range of fields including public policy, international trade and development, human resource management, engineering management, clinical psychology and international business.

"Australia is a leading provider of tertiary education, demonstrated by the increasing numbers of students studying there. Currently there are 708,000 international students enrolled in Australian universities, up from 640,000 last year. This includes a growing number of Sri Lankan students," said Mr Hutchesson.

High Commissioner Hutchesson reflected on the importance of education over the 70 years of the bilateral relationship, which has been celebrated this year.

"The personal links between Australians and Sri Lankans are the bedrock of our warm relations; and education has long been an important connector. Australia has awarded over 1,000 scholarships to Sri Lankans for study, dating back to the Colombo Plan in the early 1950s."

The recipients this year represent some of the rich diversity of Sri Lanka. There are awardees from the private, public and community sectors and from all across the country. Different ethnic and religious backgrounds are also represented.

"In offering Australia Awards, we strive to be inclusive. We seek out individuals with great attitudes and commitment. We want scholars who reflect Sri Lanka's diversity because we know that diversity brings new ideas, innovation and a wider outlook" said Mr Hutchesson.

The Hon Vasantha Senanayake, State Minister of Foreign Affairs, attended the event as Chief Guest.

The Australian Government offers Australia Awards scholarships to Sri Lankans on an annual basis.

The next round of Australia Awards Scholarships will be open for applications from 1 February 2018 until 30 April 2018. Please visit the Australia Awards website [www.australiaawards.gov.au](http://www.australiaawards.gov.au) or [www.australiaawardsrilanka.org](http://www.australiaawardsrilanka.org) for further information.