GCF Research Conference 2026

GCF – Research Grants Round 2

Day 1

Agenda

Date: December 18, 2026
Time: 8.30 am – 3.00 pm
Venue: BMICH

8.30 am - 9.00 am Registration and Refreshments (Venue: Lobby)

Plenary Session (Venue: Jasmine Hall)

9.00 am – 9.10 am Opening Remarks
Dr. Harsha Aturupane, Honorary Chairperson, GCF

Concurrent Technical Sessions

9.15 am – 1.15 pm
1. Session 1 (Jasmine)
2. Session 2 (Lavender)
3. Session 3 (Orchid)

1.15 pm – 1.30 pm Group Photo (Venue: Jasmine)

1.30 pm – 3.00 pm Lunch (Venue: Cinema Lounge)

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Session 1			
Session Chair: Dr. Dushni Weerakoon			
Venue: Jasmine			
Time	**Research Topic**	**Research Team**	**Designation & Affiliation**
9.15 am – 10.15 am	Post-Crisis Structural Transformation in Sri Lanka: Sectoral Shifts, Remittance Dynamics, and Productivity Recovery	Dr. Achinthya Koswatta (Team Leader)	Senior Lecturer, Department of Social Studies, The Open University of Sri Lanka
		Ms. Chathurika Hansamali	Lecturer, Department of Economics, Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo
		Dr. Vinesha Peiris	Research Associate, Curtin Centre for Optimisation and Decision Science, Curtin University
		Mr. Navaratnam Balamurali	Senior Lecturer, Department of Social Studies, The Open University of Sri Lanka (Jaffna Regional Centre, Kokuvil, Jaffna)
10.15 am – 11.15 am	Fiscal Policy for Inclusive Growth: Revisiting Tax Efficiency and Expenditure Multipliers in Sri Lanka	Dr. Roshan Anne Perera (Team Leader)	Team Lead / Centre for Poverty Analysis
		Ms. Janani Udagampala	Research Fellow, Centro Levi Cases, University of Padova
		Ms. Thashikala Mendis	Econometric Analyst, Research Unit, Commercial Bank of Ceylon
11.15 am – 12.15 pm	Impact of Personal Income Tax Reform on Labor Supply in Sri Lanka	Dr. Tamara Jayasundera (Team Leader)	Senior Lecturer, Department of Social Sciences, Kotelawala Defense University
		Prof. Anoma S.P. Abhayaratne	Emeritus Professor in Economics, University of Peradeniya
		Ms. Gayathri Oshani Ranasinghe	Lecturer, Lyceum Campus (Private) Ltd.
		Ms. Kumudini Weerasinghe	Lecturer, Faculty of Management, Social Sciences and Humanities, Kotelawala Defense University
12.15 pm – 1.15 pm	Sustainability Standards Adoption by Small and Medium Enterprises in Sri Lanka: An Economic Analysis of Export Market Readiness	Prof. Priyanga Dunusinghe (Team Leader)	Professor in Economics, Department of Economics, University of Colombo
		Mr. Anushka Wijesinha	Economist & Co-Founder/Director, Centre for a Smart Future
		Mr. Senith Abeyanayake	Research Associate, Centre for a Smart Future

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Session 2			
Session Chair: Snr. Prof. Christina Shanthi De Silva			
Venue: Lavender			
Time	**Research Topic**	**Research Team**	**Designation & Affiliation**
9.15 am – 10.15 am	The Dark Side of Public Transportation in Sri Lanka: A Study of Financial Losses, Underutilization, and Service Inefficiencies in State-owned Transit Systems	Prof. Priyantha Lalanie	Senior Lecturer, Department of Business Economics University of Sri Jayewardenepura
		Dr. M.P.K. Withanawasam	Senior Lecturer, Department of Business Economics, Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, University of Sri Jayewardenepura
10.15 am – 11.15 am	Turning Waste into Wealth: Assessing the Economic and Environmental Potential of Biodiesel from Used Cooking Oil and Waste Food in Sri Lanka	Prof. Lalith Chandralal (Team Leader)	Professor in Marketing Management, Department of Marketing Management, Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, University of Sri Jayewardenepura
		Prof. Sumudu Perera	Professor in Business Economics, Department of Business Economics in the Faculty of Management Studies & Commerce of University of Sri Jayewardenepura
		Prof. Vilani Sachitra	Professor, Department of Commerce, Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, University of Sri Jayewardenepura
		Dr. Nuwan Asanka Weerasekara	Senior Lecturer, Department of Civil and Environmental Technology, Faculty of Technology, University of Sri Jayewardenepura
		Mr. Mohammed Irfan Nizar	Multitasking Executive, Wincanton PLC, Bristol, England
11.15 am – 12.15 pm	Governing the Green Energy Transition in Sri Lanka: Economic, Legal, and Policy Barriers to Sustainable Renewable Energy Development	Dr. Malraj B. Kiriella	Founder, South Asia Multidisciplinary Advisory Services

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12.15 – 1.15 p.m.	Transition to EVs: Evaluating Policy, Infrastructure, and Synergies for Electric Mobility in Sri Lanka	Dr. Bilesha Weeraratne (Team Leader)	Research Fellow/Head Migration and Urbanization, Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka
		Prof. Lalithasiri Gunaruwan	Professor, Department of Economics, University of Colombo
		Dr. Asanka Wijesinghe	Research Fellow, Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka
Session 3			
Session Chair: Dr. Nisha Arunatilake			
Venue: Orchid			
Time	**Research Topic**	**Research Team**	**Designation & Affiliation**
9.15 am – 10.15 am	Internalizing Environmental Costs in Sri Lanka's Agriculture: Assessing the Economic Viability of Ecological Management	Dr. T.P.S.R. Guruge (Team Leader)	Senior Lecturer, Department of Agribusiness Management, Faculty of Agriculture and Plantation Management, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka
		Dr. P.C. Abeysiriwardana	Director, Ministry of Science and Technology, Sri Lanka
		Dr. Inna Koblianska	Associate Professor, Department of Economics, Entrepreneurship, and Business Administration, Sumy State University, Ukraine
10.15 am – 11.15 am	Unlocking the Potential of Carbon Credits in Sri Lanka: Market Analysis, Scheme Benchmarking, and Evaluating Community-based Reforestation Programme	Dr. Erandathie Pathiraja	Research Fellow, Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka
		Ms. Sulochana Silva	Research Officer, Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka
		Ms. Nishamini Ihalagedara	Research Officer, Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka
11.15 am – 12.15 pm	Building Economic Resilience: A Community-centered Framework for Drought Management in Sri Lanka	Prof. F. Ruzaik (Team Leader)	Professor, Department of Geography, University of Colombo
		Dr. U.T.G. Perera	Senior Lecturer, Department of Geography, University of Colombo
		Dr. Rohitha Abayasekara	Senior Lecturer, Department of Economics, University of Colombo

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Agenda

Date: December 19, 2026
Time: 8.30 am – 3.00 pm
Venue: BMICH

8.30 am - 9.00 am Registration and Refreshments (Venue: Lobby)

Plenary Session (Venue: Jasmine Hall)

9.00 am – 9.10 am Opening Remarks
Dr. Harsha Aturupane, Honorary Chairperson, GCF

Concurrent Technical Sessions

9.15 am – 1.15 pm
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Session 1			
Session Chair: Prof. Sunil Chandrasiri			
Venue: Jasmine			
Time	**Research Topic**	**Research Team**	**Designation & Affiliation**
9.15 am – 10.15 am	Contribution of Sri Lanka's Co-operative Sector to Employment, Livelihoods, and GDP	Prof. Neavis Morais (Team Leader)	Chairman, Marga Institute
		Dr. Ahilan Kadirgamar	Senior Lecturer, Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, University of Jaffna
		Dr. S. Sivarajasingham	Professor (Retired), Department of Economics, University of Peradeniya
10.15 am – 11.15 am	Sustainable Tourism Competitiveness: Balancing Growth with Environmental Resilience in Sri Lanka	Dr. H.K. Sarath (Team Leader)	Senior Lecturer, Department of Economics, University of Ruhuna
		Dr. B.M Sumanarathne	Senior Lecturer, Department of Economics, Faculty of H&SS, University of Ruhuna
		Prof. Suranjith Gunasekara	Senior Lecturer. Department of Sociology, University of Ruhuna
		Dr. Darshana Bandara	Senior Lecturer. Department of History and Archaeology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna
		Ms. E.D.V. Dilhani	Senior Lecturer, Department of Economics, Faculty of H&SS, University of Ruhuna
		Ms. Virasha Godakanda	Assistant Lecturer, Department of Sociology, Faculty of H&SS, University of Ruhuna
11.15 am – 12.15 pm	Pathway to enhance the socio-economic and environmental benefits of SMEs using biomimicry practices	Prof. Rukmal Weerasinghe (Team Leader)	Professor in Entrepreneurship, Department of Entrepreneurship, Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, University of Sri Jayewardenepura
		Dr. Kinkini Hemachandra	Lecturer, Huddersfield Business, School, University of Huddersfield, UK
		Prof. Emeritus Ranjith Dissanayake	Emeritus Professor, University of Peradeniya
12.15 pm – 1.15 pm	Enabling Digital Transformation in Sri Lankan Small Industries: Opportunities, Challenges, and Policy Imperatives	Prof. Muditha Karunarathna	Professor in Economics, Department of Economics and Statistics, Faculty of Arts, University of Peradeniya

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Session 2			
Session Chair: Dr. R. M. K. Ratnayake			
Venue: Lavender			
Time	**Research Topic**	**Research Team**	**Designation & Affiliation**
9.15 am – 10.15 am	Economic Contribution and Resident Satisfaction in Local Government: An Evaluation of Pradeshiya Sabhas in Sri Lanka.	Prof. Wasantha Athukorala (Team Leader)	Director, Postgraduate Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences (PGIHS), University of Peradeniya
		Prof. Suresh Kanesh	Professor in Economics, Department of Economics and Statistics, Faculty of Arts and Culture, Eastern University of Sri Lanka
		Prof. Abdul Majeed Mohamed Mustafa	Professor in Business Economics, Department of Management, Faculty of Management and Commerce, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka
10.15 am – 11.15 am	Political Economy of Agricultural Policy in Sri Lanka: Assessing the Impact of Political Involvement on Rural Development and Economic Outcomes	Prof. G.C. Samaraweera (Team Leader)	Professor in Business Economics, Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna
		Mr. K.K.S. Udayakantha	Senior Lecturer, Department of Economics, University of Ruhuna
		Mr. I.R. Priyantha	Senior Lecturer, Department of Public Policy, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna
		Mr. W.A.N.D. Wijesinghe	Senior Lecturer, Department of Economics, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna
		Ms. N.S.W. Gunasekara	Visiting Lecturer, Department of Economics, University of Ruhuna
11.15 am – 12.15 pm	A Study on Building a Sustainable Organizational Base of the Poor for Poverty Alleviation: Experiences from Hambantota District, Sri Lanka	Prof. K.A.S. Kandauda Wickrama (Team Leader)	Professor Emeritus, Department of Human Development and Family Science, The University of Georgia, USA
		Prof. Jayani Jayawardhana	Associate Professor, Department of Health Management & Policy College of Public Health, University of Kentucky
		Dr. Herath Vidyaratne	Visiting Lecturer, Consultant and Freelance Researcher
		Mr. W.M. Leelasena	Freelance Consultant

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Time	Research Topic	Research Team	Designation & Affiliation
12.15 pm – 1.15 pm	Revitalization of Village Tank Cascade Systems through Payments for Ecosystem Services: A Framework for Enhancing Climate-Resilient Rural Livelihoods	Prof. Sisira Rajapakshe (Team Leader)	Department of Environmental Management, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka
		Dr. Menuka Udugama	Department of Agricultural Economics and Business Management, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka
		Dr. Paul Hudgson	Department of Geography and Environment, University of York, UK
		Ms. H. Udeni Kaushalya Dilanjani	Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Faculty of Management Studies, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka
Session 3			
Session Chair: Dr. Anil Perera			
Venue: Orchid			
Time	**Research Topic**	**Research Team**	**Designation & Affiliation**
9.15 am – 10.15 am	Financial Inclusion and Economic Growth in South Asia: Intermediating Role of Financial Sector Development	Dr. A.M.P. Adikari (Team Leader)	Senior Lecturer, Department of Economics, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka
		Dr. U.S. Thathsarani	Senior Lecturer, Department of Economics, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka
		Ms. M.N. Vineeshiya	Senior Lecturer, Department of Social Studies, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, The Open University of Sri Lanka
10.15 am – 11.15 am	Development Banking in Sri Lanka: A Review of Evolution, Performance and Structural Challenges	Prof. K. Amirthalingam (Team Leader)	Senior Professor in Economics, Department of Economics, University of Colombo
		Mr. Eranda Roshan Fernando	Economist, National Development Bank
		Mr. Gamini Herath	President, CEFE NET Sri Lanka
11.15 am – 12.15 pm	How Do Remittance Flows Shape Household Economic Behaviour and Contribute to Sustainable Economic Development in Sri Lanka?	Dr. Charith B. Gamage	Vice President, Research at First Capital Holding

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