

With entrepreneurs being identified as an essential pillar to solve unemployment and help strengthen economic development in a country, the CA Sri Lanka Business Plan Competition, will kick off season 3 next month, in an effort to nurture entrepreneurial skills among the country's student population.

The Business Plan Competition - 2019 organised by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka (CA Sri Lanka), for the third consecutive year, is calling for applications from schools from across the country, to compete at the competition, which will commence in January 2019.

The competition is open to students sitting for the GCE Advanced Level examination in 2019/2020 from the commerce stream. Schools interested to participate in the competition can submit their applications to the Institute from October to December 2018. Each participating team must comprise of four students, who must present a business plan to the panel of judges in English at both the regional and national levels.

QUT Business School of the Queensland University of Technology (QUT), Brisbane has once again come onboard as the Strategic Partner of the 2019 competition, which is organised in association with the Sri Lanka and Australia Chamber of Commerce (SLACC). The winner of the grand finale of the Sri Lankan competition, will fly to Brisbane, Australia to take part in the BlueShift Case Competition organised by the QUT Business School of the Queensland University of Technology, which will be held in May 2019.

Speaking at a press conference, President of CA Sri Lanka Mr. Jagath Perera said that it is the collective responsibility of professional bodies such as CA Sri Lanka to ensure Sri Lanka transitions towards an innovation-driven economy which can be spearheaded by entrepreneurs with unique vision. "In an era of disruption, where even traditional value chains have diminished, we need to think out of the box and embrace innovativeness, and this is why it's important to inculcate the importance of these skills from a very early stage," he said.

Assistant Dean (International) of the QUT Business School Mr. Andrew Paltridge said QUT has been committed to developing business skills in students at all levels through the use of competitions for many years. He said the university runs the largest international case competitions in Australia at both Bachelor and Master levels, and also the largest high school competition in BlueShift. "Once again the QUT Business School is looking forward to partnering

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with CA Sri Lanka and SLACC to run the CA Business Plan Competition. This is the third year that QUT has been involved and once again we will sponsor the winning Sri Lankan school to come to Australia to compete in the BlueShift Business Case Competition for high schools," he said.

He said that the previous two winners of the CA Business Plan competition, the Mahamaya Girls School and the Ananda Boys College, have both been worthy winners of the local competition and had the opportunity to travel to Australia where they have undertaken a series of social and professional development activities in addition to competing in BlueShift.

President of SLACC Mr. Kalum De Silva said that the Chamber is thrilled to partner with CA Sri Lanka and QUT in launching the CA Business Plan Competition for Sri Lankan schools for the third year in a row. "This time the competition has grown to another level with over 130 schools from around Sri Lanka expected to be taking part. We believe this will not only help showcase the potential of our future generation but will also enable us to foster greater relationships between Sri Lankan and Australian educational institutions. We are excited to see what is in store this year," Mr. De Silva said.

Chairman of the Media & Communication Committee Mr. Laknath Peiris said that Sri Lanka has a severe dearth of entrepreneurs, even though the country is blessed with talented individuals. "With Sri Lanka transitioning into upper middle-income status, there is an increasing need to create more entrepreneurs who can be the change makers and steer Sri Lanka in its ambition of becoming a global player," he said. With this objective in mind, Mr. Peiris said that the Institute is taking every effort possible to create visionary entrepreneurs, who will ultimately lead Sri Lanka to reach its true potential.

### **CAPTIONS:**

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CA Sri Lanka President Mr. Jagath Perera addressing the media.



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Assistant Dean (International) of the QUT Business School Mr. Andrew Paltridge.



Head Table (From Left to Right) - CA Sri Lanka Secretary Mr. Prasanna Liyanage, Assistant Dean (Int