



Department of Public & International Law,

Faculty of Law, University of Colombo

Sri Lanka

Call for Papers

**Academic Event to mark the 225th Anniversary of
the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka**

1-2 August, 2026

In 1801, the Royal Charter of Justice established the Supreme Court of Ceylon (as Sri Lanka was then known). Since then, except for a brief period in the 1970s, this Court has served as the apex body at the domestic level for the exercise of judicial power. During the 225 years of its existence, the Supreme Court has functioned under different institutional arrangements under several constitutions and statutes. The 225th anniversary of this Court is an opportunity to take stock of its evolution during this time, examine its jurisprudence and current practice as well as consider its future. The Department of Public & International Law of the Faculty of Law is pleased to convene an academic event for these purposes.

This event will be organised broadly along four themes. These themes are intended to guide, rather than limit, the scope of submissions. The descriptions provided under each theme are only indicative of the sub-themes or lines of inquiry that may be explored. We note that submissions may cut across several themes and may be considered from a comparative perspective.

Proposed Themes

1. Institutional History of the Supreme Court

Submissions under this theme may identify and discuss the milestones and/or critical events in the institutional history of the Supreme Court over the past two hundred and twenty-five years. They may situate the origin and history of the Supreme Court within the broader sociopolitical context of Sri Lanka. Submissions may also compare the institutional history of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka with that of similar institutions within the Commonwealth.

2. Jurisprudence of the Supreme Court

Submissions under this theme may analyse the prominent influences, interpretation methodologies, and jurisprudential approaches reflected in the jurisprudence of the Supreme Court over an identified period/s in the past two centuries. These submissions may assess the coherence, consistency, clarity, and predictability of the Supreme Court's jurisprudence. Submissions may also examine the evolution of judicial precedent in Sri Lanka. This may include precedent in any area of law, but we encourage submissions that focus on the key aspects of the Supreme Court's exclusive jurisdiction (Fundamental Rights Applications, Special Determinations on Bills etc.).

3. Judicial Decision-Making

Submissions under this theme may explore the philosophy and practice of judicial decision-making of the Court. The submissions may assess the challenges of balancing established judicial philosophies with the complexities involved in collegial decision-making on a multi-member court.

4. Administration of the Court

Submissions may explore the processes and policies governing any aspect of judicial administration, including case management, granting leave to appeal, budgeting and resource allocation, internal and external communication and technological integration. These submissions may evaluate how administrative choices impact access to justice, the legitimacy of judicial decisions, the work of the court as a public institution, and the rule of law as a whole. Moreover, submissions under this theme may contemplate structural and procedural reforms to improve judicial administration by broadening access to justice, improving transparency and accountability, reducing delay, and fostering public trust.

Submissions

The organising committee invites submissions from law, as well as from adjacent disciplines including history, political theory/science, linguistics and information technology.

Any scholars, practitioners, members of the judiciary, or postgraduate students are invited to submit their work.

Timeline

1. Round I: Interested applicants should submit an extended abstract of their proposed paper and the completed author declaration form by 02nd March 2026 by email to conf.pil@law.cmb.ac.lk. This extended abstract should be of 1000- 1200 words in length (excluding references). (See Annex 1 and Annex 2 for submission guidelines and author declaration respectively.)
2. Round II: Selected applicants will be invited by mid-March 2026 to submit draft papers of 4000 - 6000 words in length (excluding footnotes/references) by first week of July 2026.

Proposed plans for academic publication of papers presented will be notified in due course.

Submissions and queries should be sent to conf.pil@law.cmb.ac.lk.

Submission Guidelines for Extended Abstracts

The Organising Committee invites extended abstracts for the purpose of assessing the originality, scholarly significance, and feasibility of the author's proposed paper. The extended abstract should clearly state the research problem and the central thesis, situate the author's work within the existing literature, and provide a brief roadmap of the arguments being made. For this purpose, limited footnotes and references may be included.

General Specifications

- **Word Count:** 1000-1200 words (excluding footnotes and bibliography)
- **Keywords:** 3-5
- **Anonymisation:**
 - Author names, affiliations, acknowledgements/contribution statements, and references to the author's previous publications in a manner that would reveal the identity of the author should be excluded.
 - Author details and affiliations will be collected separately via the author declaration form (see Annex 2).
- **Academic Integrity:** Authors are expected to adhere to the highest academic standards applicable to academic research, writing and publication.
 - **Originality:** The submission must be the author's original work which has not been published or currently under consideration for publication elsewhere.
 - **Intellectual Property:** Any copyrighted material or other content owned by a third party should not be included without obtaining the required permissions.
 - **Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI):** Any substantive use of GenAI (e.g., for drafting, translating, transcribing) must be disclosed in a short statement at the end of the submission.

Annex 1

- **Conflicts of Interest and Funding:** Authors are expected to disclose any funding received for the research and must declare that they have no conflicts of interest separately, via the author declaration form (see Annex 2).
- **Ethics Approval:** If the author's research involves dealing with human participants, personal data, or other sensitive information, ethics approval must be obtained from a relevant body.

Formatting Guidelines

- **Page Layout:** A4 size, 2.5 cm margins, double spaced, justified, pages numbered
- **Font:**
 - **Title:** Times New Roman, 16pt, Bold
 - **Headings:** Times New Roman, 14pt, Bold, Italicised
 - **Body:** Times New Roman, 12pt
 - **Footnotes:** Times New Roman 10pt
- **File Type:** Microsoft Word (.docx)
- **File Name:** Submissions must be renamed as "Author Surname_Short Title_Date"

Language and Referencing

- Submissions should follow British English spelling and language conventions.
- Capitalisation should be consistent throughout the submission. Only the first word in a sentence and proper nouns should have their first letter capitalised.
- Abbreviations must be set out in full when being introduced for the first time.
- Submissions should adhere to OSCOLA (Oxford Standard for the Citation of Legal Authorities) 4th edition for all citations and the bibliography.
- Footnotes should be limited in quantity and informational/source-based rather than discursive.
- A bibliography should be included at the end of the submission.

Annex 2

Author Declaration

If the submission is co-authored, each author must fill out and sign a declaration.

Title of Submission:

First name:

Last name:

Institutional affiliation:

Designation:

Email address:

Phone number:

1. *I declare that the submission is my/our own work and that I/we have acknowledged relevant sources.*
2. *I declare that the submission does not contain plagiarised material, including any self-plagiarised material.*
3. *I declare that I/we have duly acknowledged the use of Artificial Intelligence where relevant.*
4. *I declare that this submission has not been published or is under consideration for publication.*
5. *I declare that I have no conflicts of interests.*
6. *I have duly acknowledged funding for this work, as relevant.*

Date:

Signature: