

**The Feminist Leadership, Movement Building, and Rights Institute –
South Asia
Sri Lanka**

15-22 February 2025

Last Date to Apply: 22 November 2024

The Institute

CREA's **Feminist Leadership, Movement Building, and Rights Institute – South Asia** is a residential programme designed to strengthen feminist solidarity, leadership, advocacy and strategies for building collective power for social transformation. The Institute engages feminists from across the region to build a substantive understanding of our present with all its challenges and possibilities. It interrogates concepts and structures that have a bearing on our strategies by embedding patriarchy and gender in concepts of nation, identity, religion, polity and development. To make meaning of what feminist struggles have transformed and how new forms of patriarchy are part of existing inequalities.

About the Institute

The Institute is designed on the premise that feminist leadership can be strengthened and have greater impact when women's rights activists and advocates have greater conceptual clarity and strategic approaches that go to the roots of inequality rather than dealing with its symptoms alone. The Institute aims to encourage and enable participants to:

Interrogate

Concepts such as nation, identity, power, and development affect our struggles and strategies by reshaping the discourse and practices of patriarchy and gender.

Explore

Different forms of leadership through feminist journeys, histories, and standpoints across generations.

Build

New and collaborative modes of resistance in the face of emerging configurations of power. A team of feminist activists from the global South will teach at the Institute using classroom instruction, group work, theatre, simulation exercises, films, music, and case studies. The process of learning is based on four core pedagogic principles.

Location

Locate our every day, 'micro' individual and organizational practices in the macro context of the larger women's movement and of other struggles for gender equality and justice.

Reflection

Deepen curiosity and self-reflexiveness among participants by facilitating conversations that traverse geographies, generations, and diversity of concerns and political standpoints.

Expansion

Build solidarity across borders by bringing into focus the shared sense of being South Asian. This including a deeper understanding of our common heritage, historical interlinkages as well as ruptures

and differences. The idea is to explore together what constitutes South Asian Feminist practice -- both as an assumption and an aspiration.

From this, participants will be able to critically assess women's movements in South Asia and explore concrete strategies to strengthen links between women's movements and other social justice movements to advance women's human rights more collectively.

Institute Pedagogy

A team of feminist activists from the Global South will teach at the Institute using classroom instruction, group work, theatre, simulation exercises, films, music, and case studies. The process of learning is based on four core pedagogic principles:

- The Institute emphasises linking theory to practice;
- Participants will learn to critically analyse policy, research and their own programme interventions using a rights-based approach;
- The Institute is not a training or workshop, and attempts to recast the idea of collective and experiential ways of learning;
- The Institute emphasises learning led by world-class faculty.

Faculty

Core Faculty

Dipta Bhog is a creative facilitator, who has over three decades of experience of working on issues of gender and education, women's rights, and development. She is a founder member of Nirantar, a Centre for Gender and Education in New Delhi. Identity and caste are new areas of interest, while in the past she has worked with rural women and grassroots women leaders, building on their leadership and organisational strength. She helped set up *Khabar Lahariya*, the first rural and Dalit women-led newspaper in 2002.

She conceptualized and coordinated a study titled, ***Textbook Regimes: A Feminist Analysis of Nation and Identity***, in partnership with four leading Women's Studies Departments in four Indian state universities, that analyzed language and social science textbooks from elementary and secondary schools. She has developed a curriculum, textbooks, creative reading material, comic books, and digital installations to communicate feminist ideas and insights. Recently, she conceptualized **The Third Eye**, a feminist learning portal, working on the intersections of gender, sexuality, and technology.

Paromita Chakravarti is a professor in the Department of English, at Jadavpur University (JU) and has been director, of the School of Women's Studies, and a convenor of the Cell against Sexual Harassment at JU. She teaches drama, women's writing, queer, and film studies and has worked on gender representation in school textbooks, sexuality education, women's higher education, women and HIV and AIDS. Closely associated with the women's movement in Kolkata, she is active in the queer, sex worker, homeless and single women's movements. She has introduced one of the first postgraduate courses in Queer Studies in the Department of English at JU. Her book, *Women Contesting Culture*, co-edited with Prof. Kavita Panjabi was published in 2012. Dr. Chakravarti is also the founder member of the NGO "ebong alaap" which works on critical pedagogies and serves as a board member of "Anjali" an NGO which works on mental health.

Visiting Faculty

The course will also have facilitation from activists, academicians, practitioners and researchers carrying expertise in different subjects as visiting faculty members.

Who we are

Founded in 2000, CREA is a feminist human rights organization based in New Delhi, India. CREA works at community, national, regional, and global levels and is one of the few international feminist organizations based in the global South. CREA focuses on building feminist leadership, strengthening movements, expanding sexual and reproductive freedoms, promoting rights-based approaches to reducing gender-based violence, and advancing the human rights of structurally excluded people.¹

Application Criteria

FLMBaRI South Asia is for activists, service providers, community organizers, researchers, and human rights practitioners, working on issues of sexuality, sexual and gender diversity and diversity of sex characteristics / LGBTIQ rights, sexual rights, sexual and reproductive health and rights, rights of persons with disabilities, HIV/AIDS, public health, violence against women / gender-based violence, health, and/or gender, nationally, regionally or globally. 30 participants will be selected to attend. Participants should be embedded in human rights and/or feminist movements or civil society, or be working closely with them. **Full-time students are not eligible. All applicants must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and willing and able to undertake travel to Sri Lanka.** Only individuals from the Global South are eligible to apply. We invite members of structurally excluded groups from the Global South to apply, regardless of their current location.

Application Deadline and Selection Process

Applications are due on or before 22nd November 2024. Applications will be evaluated. CREA staff will review each application carefully. We will only contact applicants who have been selected to attend. **Early applications are given priority.**

Logistics

The Institute will be held from 15th – 22nd February 2025 in Sri Lanka, for 8 full days. Participants will be expected to arrive on 14th February 2025 and are expected to be present throughout the entire duration of the Institute and leave on the morning of 23rd February 2025.

Travel & Accommodation

CREA will cover boarding and lodging and participants' international and local travel expenses. Accommodation is on a twin-sharing basis. All your local travel and visa fee will be reimbursed on the submission of the receipts.

Note: The process of selection will begin with the application of participants. You are requested to send the filled-in application form as early as possible.

¹ CREA uses the term 'structurally excluded' to draw attention to the ways in which societal architecture prevents certain people from enjoying the full spectrum of rights and from meaningfully and effectively participating in their communities and decision-making spaces. Our work focuses on preventing individual harms, dismantling the structures that construct and sustain those harms, and creating pathways to justice for persons excluded because of their real or perceived genders, sexualities, identities, or chosen forms of labor. At present, CREA works with structurally excluded women and girls, persons of diverse sexualities, genders and sex characteristics, persons with disabilities, and sex workers. CREA will continue to practice and advocate for broader inclusion and solidarity.

For any queries, you can mail to flmbari-sa@creaworld.org