

# British High Commission Singapore renews commitment to its #GenderPledge

On this International Women's Day 2022, the British High Commission (BHC) Singapore is renewing its commitment to gender equality across the organisation, from our culture and values, to hiring policies, partnerships and collaborations, and communications.

BHC Singapore has updated its #GenderPledge – first taken in 2019 – to further integrate gender equality and inclusion objectives into business planning, and commits the BHC's management board to regularly review the pledge.

The #GenderPledge will continue to set out for the BHC and its staff key actions, measures and best practices – such as ensuring events have a balanced gender representation; avoiding gender stereotyping in public communications; and supporting employees with flexible work arrangements; among others measures.

The #GenderPledge campaign was initiated by the High Commission of Canada in Singapore in 2019.

Now in its second iteration, it seeks to raise awareness and demonstrate how organisations, businesses and individuals can incorporate – or have incorporated – measures to promote gender equality and women's empowerment into daily operations, policies and practices.

Along with renewing their commitments to the #GenderPledge for 2022, both High Commissions are also encouraging other foreign embassies, companies and organisations to initiate their own pledges or to re-affirm an existing one.

The BHC's #GenderPledge aligns with the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office's '3 Es' framework – to educate girls, empower women, and end violence. This will comprise a new strategy for Women and Girls this year that sets out the UK's ambition, combining diplomacy and development levers.

Through the #GenderPledge, the BHC seeks to promote women's leadership and agency to ensure their voices are heard at all levels, and ensuring women can participate fully and fairly in the economy.

The UK has a strong global reputation in standing up for the rights of women and girls around the world. Our work is transforming lives and helping to build longer term prosperity, stability, and a fairer and freer world that will benefit everyone.

We hope that you will join the campaign by making your own #GenderPledge or renewing an existing one!

Your pledge can be anything you want it to be, and include as many items as

you'd like.

Be sure to use the #GenderPledge hashtag in your post, and any additional hashtags that you like to use relating to the empowerment of women and girls.

## **Our Gender Pledge:**

### **Workplace Culture and Hiring Practices**

- The British High Commission (BHC) is mindful of gender balance within divisions/departments, sections, and job grades. Where a serious imbalance exists, the BHC will ensure that in recruitment, applicants from the underrepresented sex are encouraged to apply.
- In job specifications, we will avoid language that might indicate gender stereotyping.
- We will raise awareness and take firm action to prevent and address sexual abuse and harassment. Employees are encouraged to report sexual harassment and are provided with a confidential mechanism to do so. We are committed to ensuring no staff member experiences bullying, harassment or discrimination in the workplace.
- We support staff who require flexible work arrangements.
- We support short-term resourcing gaps with 'returnships', which help to re-integrate back into the BHC those who have taken a career break (e.g. parents who have taken a few years out to raise their children).
- We are a family-friendly workplace and have a relaxation/breastfeeding room.
- We have an active Respect Committee with a Diversity Charter in place that fosters and promotes the best practices of accepting, respecting, and valuing differences, including gender, among staff.
- We will seek training opportunities to equip staff with the tools needed to integrate gender equality into their work.
- Gender equality and inclusion objectives will be mainstreamed within our country business plan.
- A Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Analysis will be completed for all Overseas Development Assistance Projects.

## **Events management and VIP visits**

- We will ensure all public events organised by the BHC have balanced gender representation.
- We will challenge event organisers to strive for balanced gender representation and decline to participate on speaker panels where good faith efforts have not been made to that end.
- We will aim to ensure equitable allocation of speaking time and roles between men and women.
- The BHC advocates for all official UK delegations to Singapore to have balanced gender representation.
- Where the BHC is organising and funding a delegation's travel to Singapore, it will strive for balanced gender representation on those delegations.

## **Partnerships and business collaborations**

- We will regularly engage institutions, partners, and businesses to promote gender equality in their workplaces.
- We will support events that promote gender equality.
- We will organise or support at least two events per year focused solely on gender equality awareness.

## **Communications**

- We will highlight the UK's commitment to gender equality in communication materials.
- We will ensure visuals and photos in communication materials have appropriate gender balance.
- We will avoid unnecessary gendered terminology in our communications and avoid stereotyping.
- We will communicate gender equality milestones on social media platforms

as and when appropriate.

### **Gender equality champions**

- A gender equality champion will be responsible for providing guidance on enhancing gender equality at the Mission and tracking progress on the implementation of the gender pledge.
- The British High Commission Management Board will regularly review our Gender Pledge Commitments in consultation with our Core Values Committee and BHC staff.