



## **Ekaterine Kiknadze appealed to the Public Defender against Tea Tsulukiani and the Museum Directorate to establish discrimination**

As it is known to the public, after the appointment of Tea Tsulukiani as the Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, the reorganization of the institutions subordinated to the Ministry began with large-scale changes. As a result, many employees have been dismissed from their positions by this time. Among those dismissed is Ekaterine Kiknadze, who was first demoted from the position of museum manager to the position of laboratory assistant without her consent and then dismissed altogether. Ekaterine has already applied to the Tbilisi City Court on this issue.

On January 28, 2022, LEPL - Shota Rustaveli Georgian National Science Foundation published a list of winning projects in the competition. Among the 13 winning projects

of the Georgian National Museum are a joint project of Ekaterine Kiknadze and other (already former) employees of the Museum of Art.

After it became publicly known that Ekaterine Kiknadze's project had received funding from the Rustaveli Foundation, to prevent critical (former) staff from conducting research at the museum, the Minister developed a mechanism to exclude specific individuals from research projects due to differing views. In particular, the statute empowers the directorate to apply to the sponsor for funded projects and request a grant. The directorate was also authorized to determine for itself whether it would allow a researcher at the museum to carry out a research project.

Following the adopted amendments, the majority of the directorate enforced the discriminatory intent of the Minister. In particular, on February 9, 2022, Nika Akhalbedashvili, a member of the directorate, wrote to the Rustaveli Foundation in writing about the inexpediency of allocating funding for 13 winning projects, thus effectively suspending the implementation of scientific projects, including the winning project of Ekaterine Kiknadze and her colleagues.

On February 22, 2022, Ekaterine Kiknadze filed a complaint with the Public Defender, requesting that the Minister, LEPL - of the Directorate of the Georgian National Museum and its four members establish the fact of discriminatory treatment due to different views and eliminate discriminatory treatment.

It is noteworthy that Ekaterine, along with other colleagues, is the signatory and organizer of the petitions prepared in August and December 2021, which were related to the most important issues surrounding the Art Museum. The persecution of the petitioners by the new administration of the museum became evident in the results of the reorganization.

GYLA represents the interests of Ekaterine Kiknadze in the Tbilisi City Court and the Public Defender's Office.