



Australia-Indonesia Institute

Submission to the Economics and Industry Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia

Inquiry into Western Australia's Bilateral Trade Relationship with the Republic of
Indonesia

September 2022

INTRODUCTION

The Australia-Indonesia Institute (All) of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) thanks the Economics and Industry Standing Committee (Committee) of the Western Australia Legislative Assembly for the opportunity to make a submission to its inquiry into Western Australia's Bilateral Trade Relationship with the Republic of Indonesia.

Indonesia is one of Australia's closest neighbours and one of our most important partners in the region. Strengthening trade and other engagement opportunities, including people connections and cultural exchanges, is key for fostering closer ties between the two countries. Given its proximity to Indonesia, Western Australia has a particularly significant role to play in deepening this bilateral relationship. Therefore, the All welcomes the Committee's inquiry as an opportunity to contribute to the discussion on how to enhance two-way trade and people connections with Indonesia.

OVERVIEW OF THE AUSTRALIA-INDONESIA INSTITUTE (All)

The All was established by the Australian Government under an order-in-council on 27 April 1989 to foster people and institutional links between Australia and Indonesia by increasing cultural awareness and mutual understanding and promoting cooperation and exchange. The role of the board and a list of the current board members is provided at **Attachment A**.

The goals of the Institute are:

- To promote in each country increased exposure to the other through media, educational, cultural, sporting and professional activities.
- To create in Indonesia a nucleus of people with expertise in Australian affairs, especially current and future opinion leaders.
- To create within Australia a wider range of people with knowledge about Indonesia, especially current and future opinion makers.
- To portray Australia as culturally diverse, educationally, scientifically and technologically advanced and economically enterprising.
- To increase understanding of and to improve access for Australians to the cultural diversity of Indonesian society.

FLAGSHIP PROGRAMS

The All operates a number of flagship programs and awards that contribute to building mutual understanding and long-lasting relationships between Australia and Indonesia:

- Australia-Indonesia Muslim Exchange Program (AIMEP)
- Australia-Indonesia Youth Exchange Program (AIYEP)
- Australia-Indonesia Senior Editors' Program
- Elizabeth O'Neill Journalism Award, and

- Australia-Indonesia Institute Indonesian Studies Awards.

[In line with your request, this submission will focus on the programs specifically identified, however, information on the remaining All flagship programs is provided at **Attachment B.**]

The Australia-Indonesia Youth Exchange Program (AIYEP), established in 1982, makes a significant contribution to strengthening cultural awareness between youth. The program supports young Australians and Indonesians between the ages of 21 and 25 to participate in an exchange of cultural activities, professional work placements and homestays with local families. Over 1300 youth from Australia and Indonesia have taken part in AIYEP since its commencement 40 years ago, and they form a vibrant alumni group, whose members have often gone on to work in areas involved with the bilateral relationship. The program celebrates its 40-year anniversary this year (2022).

AIYEP has recruited an average of two participants from Western Australia in each iteration of the program over the last five years.

The Australia-Indonesia Muslim Exchange Program (AIMEP) recognises the importance of building cultural awareness and understanding between our countries. The program supports young Indonesian Muslim community leaders to visit Australia and to meet with Australian community figures and Muslim leaders. Australian delegates undertake a similar program in Indonesia.

Fostering greater understanding of Islam in Indonesia and Australia builds connectedness, counters misconceptions and allows us to work together, constructively, empowered by our shared knowledge. It also reaffirms Australia as a modern, inclusive and diverse society that is proactive in its ambition to build cultural and interfaith understanding with our close neighbours.

The AIMEP has generated significant goodwill in both Indonesia and Australia and has an active alumni cohort of over 290 emerging and established leaders, who share a very real sense of community. The AIMEP is celebrating its 20 years of engagement this year (2022) and will be actively engaging with, and spotlighting, alumni and their achievements in advancing the bilateral relationship since their participation in the program.

In 2021, the All established the Australia-Indonesia Institute Indonesian Studies Awards to recognise the achievement and contributions of Indonesian language teachers, researchers, and leaders in Indonesian cultural outreach in Australia. The contribution of teachers and academics is invaluable to boosting Australia's Asia capability and literacy (language, business knowledge and cultural understanding) and will be fundamental to Australian economic success in the region.

In 2021, two out of seven All Indonesian Studies Award recipients were from Western Australia:

- Emeritus Professor David T. Hill AM, Asia Research Centre, Murdoch University
- Ms Laura Wimsett, Indonesian Teacher, Wesley College

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Building awareness and cultural understanding is critical for strengthening our economic partnerships and trade and investment relationships. The more we understand of a culture the more we are able to see connections and opportunities. Particularly for Australia, the greatest trade and economic opportunities over the next 30 years lie in Southeast Asia. This is especially the case for Indonesia, which is projected to become the fifth largest economy in the world by 2030.

It is in this way that the All supports Australia's economic ambitions with Indonesia, including bolstering the *Indonesia-Australia Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (IA-CEPA)*, which came into force in July 2020. This is also supported through the All's grants round, typically run annually, which actively supports initiatives that drive economic engagement and resilience (particularly in the COVID context) through investment and trade initiatives.

AII GRANTS ROUND

The All funds an annual Grants Round to contribute to a more broadly based and enduring relationship, and to support people connections and institutional links between Australia and Indonesia. Each year approximately \$450,000 is available for funding grants at a minimum contribution of \$15,000 and a maximum of \$50,000.

The All grant rounds are open to Australian citizens, permanent residents and organisations, as well as to Indonesian citizens and organisations. The grant rounds are published on GrantConnect and the DFAT website, and promoted by DFAT's domestic and overseas social media channels.

Annual All grant rounds prioritise applications that focus on that year's priority areas, as agreed by the All Board.

The 2021-22 Grants Round prioritised the following areas:

- Economic Resilience
- Health
- Science and Technology
- Business Engagement
- Language and Indonesian Studies
- Arts and Culture

Each funding round is highly competitive due to the high number of applications received from Indonesia and from all states and territories in Australia, including Western Australia.

2021-22 grants round

For the 2021-22 Grants Round, the All received a total of 107 applications, including seven grant applications (i.e., 8% of total) from Western Australia. Out of 13 grant recipients, two funded projects (i.e., 15% of total) were from Western Australia:

- **Building innovative capability and economic resilience in MSMEs**

A project from Edith Cowan University aiming to build the innovative capability and economic resilience of the people in Bali who have been heavily affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This allows them to upskill and reskill themselves and remain in the tourism and hospitality sectors, or shift towards entrepreneurial micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in creative digital technology.

- **Ubud Writers & Readers Festival Perth, 2022**

Writing WA proudly supports a highly regarded literary festival, bringing it to the Perth CBD. Since its foundation in 2004, the Ubud Writers & Readers Festival (UWRF) has evolved into Indonesia's leading platform for showcasing its writers, artists and diverse Indigenous cultures. Under the direction of Janet DeNeefe, UWRF has also grown into one of the world's most celebrated literary events – an annual pilgrimage for lovers of literature and conversation.

2020-21 grants round

For the 2020-21 Grants Round, the All received a total of 238 applications, including 21 grant applications (i.e., 9% of total) from Western Australia. Out of 18 grant recipients, two funded projects (i.e., 11% of total) were from Western Australia:

- **A contemporary cross-cultural collaboration: Weaving the Harmony of Diversity**

Weaving the Harmony of Diversity is a film project produced by the West Australian Ballet Company Inc. for contemporary Indonesian and Australian audiences, celebrating the heritage of traditional Indonesian dance and Classical Ballet styles, and the strong cultural identity of Indonesia and its' people. Australia's Ambassador to Indonesia strongly endorsed this grant activity and remains connected with the Ballet Company.

- **Australia-Indonesia Remote Football Development Program**

Football West Limited conceived of a program to promote Australia's football development expertise to Indonesian clubs, peak bodies and community groups, Football West will run a female football mentoring project using our high-performance women's programs.

2019-20 grants round

For the 2019-20 Grants Round, the All received a total of 142 applications, including seven grant applications (i.e., 5% of total) from Western Australia. Out of 10 grant recipients, two funded projects (i.e., 20% of total) were from Western Australia:

- **Australia Indonesia Film & TV Fast Track Skills Program**

Run professional development workshops that showcase Indonesian and Australian talent. The grant provided seed funding to fill an identified gap in the Indonesian market. It contributes to Screenwest's existing programs and delivers powerful results for the industry.

- **Lintas Laut: Eastern Indonesia-Western Australia Writing Exchange**

A four-week residency over three years, one writer from Indonesia and Western Australia will reside at the Centre for Stories and Rumata ArtSpace respectively culminating in publication, appearances and participation in those cities' literary festivals.

CONCLUSION

The All commends the Western Australian Government's commitment to deepen the bilateral relationship with Indonesia, and would welcome the opportunity to collaborate in advancing this key partnership.

The Institute would also like to take the opportunity to suggest to the Committee to consider the following in their recommendations for strengthening Western Australia's trade and people connections with Indonesia:

- providing greater support for Indonesian language programs at all levels of education
- providing greater support for Indonesian studies at tertiary level
- working with Indonesian diaspora communities to promote Australia's image and reputation in Indonesia as a modern, inclusive and multicultural society
- forging Sister City relations between various Western Australian and Indonesian cities/towns to foster mutual understanding and respect, promote different regions, and encourage mutual cooperation in variety of areas, including culture, education, and trade.
- exploring additional cultural exchange and sports diplomacy opportunities.

Australia-Indonesia Institute – Function and Board Members

The Order that constitutes the All provides that the Board of the Institute shall consist of a Chairperson, the Secretary of the DFAT or their representative as an ex-officio member, and not fewer than four and not more than 12 other Members. The Chairperson is appointed by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Members, other than the Chairperson, and the ex-officio member, are appointed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Board members serve on a part-time basis.

The All Board members are drawn from a number of sectors, representing the depth and diversity of engagement between Australia and Indonesia.

CHAIR



Emeritus Professor Greg Fealy AM
Department of Political and Social Change
Australian National University

BOARD MEMBERS



Ms Lydia Santoso
Senior Associate,
Nicholas George Lawyers



Professor Nicholas Anstey
Head of Global Health Division,
Menzies School of Health
Research



Ms Elena Williams
PhD Candidate,
Australian National University



Ms Franchesca Cubillo
Executive Director,
First Nations Arts and Culture,
Australia Council for the Arts



Ms Amanda Hodge
South East Asia correspondent,
The Australian



Ms Noni Purnomo
President Director (CEO),
Blue Bird Group



Ms Tracey Hayes
Executive Director, Northern
Australia Business Development,
AAM Investment Group



Ms Armina Rosenberg
Portfolio Manager,
Grok Ventures



Ms Michelle Chan (*Ex-officio*)
Deputy Secretary, Southeast Asia
and Global Partners Group, DFAT

All Flagship Programs

The All administers ongoing youth, interfaith and media exchange programs that connect and contribute to fostering mutual understanding between Australian and Indonesian communities. These exchange programs provide opportunities to project Australia to Indonesian program participants as a culturally diverse, educationally, scientifically and technologically advanced and economically enterprising country:

- ***Australia-Indonesia Youth Exchange Program (AIYEP)***, which supports young people from Australia and Indonesia to participate in an exchange of cultural activities, professional work placements and homestays with local families.
- ***Australia-Indonesia Muslim Exchange Program (AIMEP)***, which fosters greater understanding of Islam in Indonesia and of multiculturalism in Australia by supporting young Indonesian Muslim community leaders to visit Australia, to meet with Australian community figures and Muslim leaders; and Australian delegates undertake a program with similar focuses in Indonesia.
- ***Australia-Indonesia Institute Indonesian Studies Awards***, which recognise the achievement and contributions of Indonesian language teachers, researchers, and leaders in Indonesian cultural outreach in Australia.
- ***Australia-Indonesia BRIDGE School Partnerships Program***, which uses technology to build links between Australian and Indonesian teachers and students.
 - Over the past 13 years, the Australia-Indonesia BRIDGE has established 200 BRIDGE School Partnerships across all states and territories of Australia and 18 provinces of Indonesia, engaging 400 schools and over 800 educators. 168 Indonesian schools and 32 Indonesian madrasahs are involved in the program.
- ***Elizabeth O'Neill Journalism Award***, which fosters greater understanding of Australia and Indonesia through accurate and informed media coverage. The program supports one Indonesian and/or one Australian journalist to undertake a two-week exchange to meet with government, business, community and media representatives.
 - The latest (2019) Elizabeth O'Neill Journalism Award recipient from Australia was Ms Sinead Mangan, a Western Australian-based ABC journalist.
- ***Australia-Indonesia Senior Editors Program***, which facilitates contact between senior media editors from Australia and Indonesia, and encourages editors to expand their knowledge and analytical reporting of each country. The program generally runs for one week, and takes place in either Australia or Indonesia.