

Building foundations to equip Indonesians with 21st century skills

Short Term Award

Background

The Government of Indonesia (GoI) recognises the imperative to improve Indonesia's human capital and establish a future workforce equipped with 21st century skills. This includes the urgent need to improve basic education and prepare Indonesian youth to become part of a strong and productive workforce capable of delivering the economic benefits envisaged by Industry 4.0. The OECD 2030 research project, in which Indonesia is a participant, conceptualises 21st century skills in three categories:

- Foundational literacies (i.e. how students apply core skills to everyday tasks: literacy, numeracy, scientific literacy, ICT literacy and financial literacy)
- Competencies (i.e. how students approach complex challenges: critical thinking, creativity, communication and collaboration)
- Character qualities (i.e. how students approach their changing environment: curiosity, initiative, persistence/grit, adaptability, leadership, social and cultural awareness)

Indonesia has already incorporated many of these skills in Pelajar Pancasila¹; however, Indonesia faces many challenges in developing the desired quality of human resources to accelerate economic growth and prepare the workforce for Industrial Revolution 4.0. The major challenge to be addressed is the high percentage of students who are not achieving the minimum competence benchmarks in literacy, including mathematical literacy. The 2018 PISA scores showed that over two thirds of Indonesian students at age 15 were below the minimum competence standard and that the trend from 2003 to 2018 was a flat line. On the 2015 TIMSS Maths assessment of Grade 4 students 70% scored in the low or below-low band and a similar result for maths was seen in the Indonesian AKSI test of Grade 4 in 2016. The particular skills which were not mastered by the majority of students in maths included mathematical reasoning and applying maths. In reading the skills not mastered by the majority included evaluating, comparing, integrating meaning and interpreting meaning. Students who lack these foundational skills have little hope of being able to develop higher order thinking skills.

In 2013 the Indonesian National Curriculum, (K 13) highlighted the importance of higher order thinking skills and 21st century skills by including sample classroom activities and by the requirement for national and school exams to incorporate 20% of test items to assess higher order thinking. In addition, the strategic plans of the Ministry of Education and the National Planning Agency recognised the need to improve both basic skills and develop the broad capabilities needed for successful learning and working in the 21st century. Despite these efforts, there has been little or no improvement in foundational and higher order thinking skills measured by both national and international assessments.

The current National Medium Term Development Plan for Education (2020-2024) also recognises the importance of continuing an emphasis on these skills and outlines nine policy directions for improving the quality of education: strengthening the curriculum, particularly the teaching of mathematics, literacy and science; strengthening literacy education including digital literacy; increasing teachers' competence and professionalism; strengthening the quality of assessment and utilisation of assessment results; increasing the utilisation of ICT in teaching; integrating soft skills in learning; enhancing the quality of religious, character, and civic education; and improving the quality of religious schools, including Pesantren (Islamic boarding schools). Work in each of these areas is currently being planned.

In 2019 the Minister for Education and Culture announced his over-arching policy direction *Freedom to Learn* to empower and support teachers to be innovative in their classrooms, moving away from

¹ <https://www.kompas.com/edu/read/2020/05/07/130140471/mendikbud-nadiem-ini-6-profil-pelajar-indonesia>



teacher-centred instruction and rote learning to providing opportunities for students to explore and experience more relevant and meaningful learning. Key aspects being developed to support this policy direction include a simplified curriculum and standards, more comprehensive resources for teachers to choose from, enhancing school leadership, support for developing and assessing character and non-cognitive skills and replacing the current national exam system with a series of national assessments to monitor the achievement of basic skills and 21st century skills.

Learning objectives

This Short Term Award (STA) brings together policy makers and technical experts from key ministries, provincial and district government officials and practitioners (elementary school teachers and principals) from selected provinces who can make a contribution to Indonesia's development of 21st century skills in education. Applications are also welcomed from academics and CSOs specialising in this sector.

The course aims to provide the participants with an opportunity to explore and benchmark key strategies for improving education foundations and building 21st century skills – especially the development of effective policy; the types of system support that are needed; implementing whole school approaches; teacher and principal development; and successful classroom practices.

The following learning objectives were identified in consultations with the Australian Embassy in Jakarta, the Innovation for Indonesia's School Children (INOVASI) program and selected Indonesian government ministries. The objectives will be refined during the pre-course workshop to match the participants' individual learning objectives. Indonesian government agencies and leading practitioners will be invited to deliver sessions at the pre and post-course workshops.

The participants will apply the knowledge gained from the course in their work through an Award Project, a small group project focusing on a specific course-related topic of their choice. The projects will be focused on selected regions.

The course will focus on the following learning objectives:

- Understand the development of foundational skills and 21st century skills in basic education and identify successful approaches, benchmarks, and practices from Australia and other countries relevant to Indonesia
- Examine character education policies, resources and assessment in different regions and countries (particularly relevant policies in Indonesia) and identify how these are applied and adapted at school level
- Explore how local initiatives and success stories from schools can influence policies (particularly teacher training, curriculum and assessment) and encourage open discussion between teachers, principals and different levels of government about how to better develop school students' 21st century skills
- Develop strategies for enhanced inter-agency collaboration for innovations, funding, M&E and oversight between line ministries, provincial and local governments and schools to improve schools' abilities to develop students' 21st century skills
- Explore effective online/distance learning strategies and approaches and benchmark methods to build students' character through online learning

To achieve these outcomes, the proposed short course offers a structured learning process for participants that will utilise a range of learning methodologies, such as classroom sessions; case studies; site visits to schools, teacher training institutions and relevant government agencies; workshops, discussions, and planning sessions; simulations and role plays; networking events; and an in-depth individual course project (Award Project). The Award Project model is used across all Australia Awards in Indonesia Short Term Awards (participants develop a project, conduct required analyses, present the

project at pre-course workshop, further develop the project during the in-Australia course and present the implemented project at the post-course workshop).

Dates and location

The course will be delivered over a **2-week period in Australia in the second half of 2021, subject to COVID-19**. A pre-course workshop will be held online and the post-course workshop will be delivered 3-4 months after the in-Australia course (subject to COVID-19). The proposed schedule is:

- Pre-course workshop online: March 2021, dates TBC.
- In-Australia course: in the second half of 2021, subject to COVID-19 travel and health restrictions.
- Post-course workshop in Indonesia: end of 2021, subject to COVID-19 travel and health restrictions.

Course participant profile:

To be selected for this course, you **MUST**:

- Be Staff to Echelon III level (for civil servants) from one of these targeted agencies:
 - The Ministry of Education and Culture - Research and Development Agency (Balitbang), the Directorate General of Teachers and Education Personnel (Ditjen GTK) and the Director General of Early Childhood Education, Primary and Secondary Education (Ditjen Paudasmen);
 - The Ministry of Religious Affairs;
 - The Ministry of National Development Planning (Bappenas);
 - Selected provincial and district governments in NTB and NTT;
 - Selected teachers preferably from MoEC “Guru Penggerak” program in NTB and NTT;
 - Universities including lecturers from Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar (PGSD - primary teacher education faculties) preferably in NTB and NTT;
 - Relevant Civil Society Organisations in the Education sector preferably in NTB and NTT;
 - Educators for People with Disability preferably in NTB and NTT;
- Hold a strategic role or responsibility in education, particularly in relation to teaching or policy development relating to 21st century skills;
- Hold a bachelor's degree (preferably);
- Be endorsed by the supervisor;
- Be committed to prepare and implement an Award Project, an individual or small group development project as part of the course;
- Be committed to engage actively and foster networks with multiple stakeholders including in Australia and Indonesia and facilitate the transfer of learning from the course with colleagues and peers;
- Have professional working proficiency in English. The applicants' English language competency is part of the selection process; however, there will be no official language test. The assessment of language competency is based on a virtual interview and any additional evidence provided by the applicant (for examples: proof of studies or living in an English-speaking country or working in an English-speaking environment; completion of studies in English, language course or language tests; or proof of attendance or certificate of international conference). The course material will be made available in English. Language interpretation or language assistance is **not** provided.

Steps of Application

Participants will be identified through a competitive process whereby applicants submit their responses to selection criteria (3-4 questions) and their CV outlining their roles and responsibilities in the sector through an online application. The application will be reviewed by Independent Panel Reviewers, Australia Awards and the Australian Embassy to explore motivation and other demonstrated competencies to ensure commitment and interest in the study program.

- All candidates should complete an online application form which explores their motivation, role, experience in the relevance to this course. (Deadline **10 January 2021**)

Online application link:

<https://www.australiaawardsindonesia.org/id/21stcenturyskillsApplication>

- An Information Session will be held virtually by Australia Awards in Indonesia on **26 November 2020 at 1PM WIB**. This session aims to guide applicants on the application procedures, including the online application system, selection scheme and interview process.

RSVP before 24 November at:

<https://www.australiaawardsindonesia.org/id/21stcenturyskillsinfosession>

- Shortlisted candidates will be invited for a phone interview in **the end of January 2021 (TBC)**. Further instructions and phone interview invitation will be emailed to shortlisted candidates a few days before the interview. If candidates fail to join the phone interview, their applications will not be considered by the selection panel.

The selection panel will convene to select up to 25 participants. The successful participants will be informed of the outcome in **early February 2021**.