

# Australia Awards Short Course Leadership for Youth Interfaith Women Leaders



*Participants meet with the Australian Consul-General Ms Anthea Griffin in Bali at the Post-course Workshop.*

The 'Leadership for Youth Interfaith Women Leaders' short course provided opportunities for 25 women leaders in Indonesia to further enhance their leadership and organisational management skills. The course aimed to empower the participants to be key players in improving economic, social, and cultural development in their organisations and the wider community, and in building global networks for future women leaders. The women represented non-government organisations, faith-based organisations, government agencies and the university sector.

The course consisted of a 3-day pre-course workshop in Yogyakarta, a 2-week course in Melbourne, a 3-day post-course workshop in Bali and monthly mentoring sessions. During the in-Australia course the participants met with Australian women leaders from government, faith-based organisations, non-government organisations, local councils, the media, and community centres for multi-cultural youth. The sessions discussed leadership and organisational management and the participants explored future collaboration with the organisations.

The course was delivered by a three-person team from Deakin University: Dr Rebecca Barlow, Senior Researcher and course designer and leader, Professor Shahram Akbarzadeh, Research Professor and course co-leader and Renee Davidson, course coordinator and Award Project officer. During the course, the participants engaged in one-on-one and small group mentoring to support the development and implementation of high impact Award Projects.

#### The course was delivered in four parts:

- **Pre-course workshop:** 7 – 9 February 2023 (in-person, Yogyakarta)
- **In-Australia course:** 6 – 17 March 2023 (in-person, Melbourne)
- **Mentoring sessions:** 2 March, 6 April, 4 May, & 15 June (online)
- **Post-course workshop:** 4 - 6 July 2023 (in-person, Bali)



## Pre-course workshop

At the pre-course workshop, participants presented their Award Project proposals to the Deakin delivery team. Participants and their projects were organised thematically into the following groups: Women's Leadership, Religions for Peace & Interfaith Dialogue, Empowering Youth in Leadership, Women's Wellbeing & Preventing Violence against Women. The Deakin team took on the role of a mentor for the development and implementation of each project. Participants reflected on their personal leadership journeys and the Deakin team presented on women's leadership and multiculturalism in Australia.

*"I got the chance to visit NGOs in Australia to give me more ideas [on how] to implement similar projects in Indonesia. [I] got to know that there are other female leaders who struggle the same condition as me, [which] gave me courage and motivation to do better in my country."*

*"The program provides 'best practice' sharing from the experts. The guest speakers are very relevant to the knowledge and experience I wanted to gain during the short course."*



Participants with Victoria's inaugural Public Sector Gender Equality Commissioner, Dr Niki Vincent, Melbourne.

## Course Workshop

The course in Australia focused on key learning objectives, such as identifying ways to improve leadership skills and influence change in the face of social and gender barriers; identifying and discussing ways to improve women's economic empowerment; benchmarking and understanding international best practice of encouraging tolerant perspectives in interfaith and multicultural communities; and strengthening the skills of women leaders to think and work politically. The program was delivered using a range of activities, including workshops, case studies, site visits, guest lectures, role plays, and networking events.



Roundtable discussion with Darebin Interfaith Council and Councillors, Melbourne.

Participants noted the beneficial components of course:

- Increased knowledge about gender equality, women's leadership, ethical & values based leadership, interfaith dialogue and multiculturalism.
- High quality and relevance of Australian content experts and site visits.
- Opportunities to network, collaborate, and to share course learnings, knowledge and ideas.
- Sessions devoted to project planning and evaluation, and the way these sessions benefited the development of their Award Projects.
- Linking the importance of women's health and wellbeing with effective and sustainable leadership.

The participants met with women leaders and representatives from leading Australian organisations, including the Australian Gender Equity Council, the Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector in Victoria, Women's Information and Referral Exchange (WIRE), Centre for Multicultural Youth, Darebin City Council, and Fitted for Work & Conscious Closet. Participants were provided with opportunities to network with Australian experts and organisations. These included a networking lunch and roundtable discussion with the Darebin Interfaith Council, a networking afternoon tea event with staff from Fitted for Work, including Ms Donna de Zwart (CEO), and a networking event with keynote speakers including Ms Coral Ross, Founding Director, and Chair of the Australian Gender Equity Council, H.E. Kuncoro Waseso, Indonesian Consul General in Melbourne, and Professor Greg Barton, Chair of Global Islamic Politics at the Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizen and Globalisation (ADI), Deakin University.

*"All the insights about women's empowerment became the fundamental background for my team to build the work or project that we want to do. For example, inspired by the 'ethical and value-based leadership' session in AAI, we develop[ed] one session in our project to invite our participants to reflect on their own power."*

*"I will continue to build good relationships and communication with speakers, mentors and fellow participants so that we can continue to learn from each other and provide new perspectives and deepen our understanding."*

*"I love all the sessions here, especially the session with Dr Rebecca. I learn[t] how to plan [a] strong foundation for our project. By learning [how to] plan and evaluate projects that day, I [have] now improve[d] my project plan and believe that my project would be more successful."*

## Post-course workshop

In the lead up to the post-course workshop, participants engaged in monthly peer group mentoring sessions that provided intensive support for participants' Award Projects. At the workshop the participants reflected on their AAI course experience and presented their projects. The projects covered key areas, such as women's political participation, gender equality, economic empowerment, youth leadership empowerment, promoting tolerance and interfaith dialogue, preventing religious radicalism, and combatting violence against women. In peer groups, participants reflected on best-practices and lessons learned in the development, implementation, and evaluation of their Award Projects.

*"For me, the most awesome thing about this course is interfaith relation itself. Because no matter how much the differences we have but we still one (Indonesian). By joining this course, I not only got knowledge by also a relation[s] and connection[s]."*

## Contact person

### Dr Rebecca Barlow

Alfred Deakin Institute, for Citizen and Globalisation (ADI), Deakin University

Email: [rebecca.barlow@deakin.edu.au](mailto:rebecca.barlow@deakin.edu.au)