



Monash to become first foreign university in Indonesia

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In 2021, Monash University aims to become the first overseas higher education institution to open a campus in Indonesia. Offering postgraduate and doctoral programs, the new campus will become a vehicle for greater Australia-Indonesia collaboration. Changes to Indonesia's foreign investment rules and the [Indonesia-Australia Free Trade Agreement](#) will help unlock potential.

Established in 1958, Monash is one of Australia's most global universities. Based in Melbourne, it has four campuses in Australia and a campus in Malaysia, as well as overseas alliances in China, India, Indonesia, Italy and the United Kingdom. Monash has earned a reputation for world-class research. Today, it is regularly ranked one of the top five universities in Australia.

Indonesia is an historic focus of the university's international relations. According to Professor Abid Khan, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice President (Global Engagement), Monash University has direct links with the country stretching over half a century.

'We've been working with Indonesia since the 1960s and have graduated more than 11,000 Indonesian students,' he says. 'We are heavily engaged in joint research projects in Indonesia that address development goals.'

For example, Monash hosts the Australian Indonesia Centre (AIC), which is funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). Established in 2014, the AIC is a consortium of seven Indonesian and four Australian universities that advances people-to-people links in science, technology, education, innovation and culture.

Other projects include the long running World Mosquito Program and the Revitalisation of Informal Settlements and Environment (RISE) program, which aims to improve water sanitation and benefit community health outcomes.

A new way to nurture talent

In 2015, Monash University refreshed its Indonesia strategy. One of its objectives was to work closely with Indonesian partners and stakeholders to explore new areas of collaboration in key areas, such as health, infrastructure, technology and public policy.

In 2016, the university established the Monash Indonesia Representative Office (MIRO) – just as the Government began to open up the higher education sector to overseas institutions.

'The time was right to imagine a bigger presence for Monash in Indonesia,' says Professor Khan. 'We wanted to collaborate with industry and other organisations, and this led to discussions about graduate and doctoral programs in areas that are important to Indonesia's economic and urban growth.'

The Australian Embassy chips in

As Monash navigated regulatory complexities in Jakarta, the Australian Embassy's overseas officials from Austrade, the Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE) and DFAT provided advice, guidance and support.

'The Ambassador and broader Australian Embassy team has been with us all the way,' says Professor Andrew MacIntyre, Senior Pro Vice-Chancellor (Southeast Asia Partnerships) who has been leading campus establishment work.

'By bringing stakeholders together at the Ambassador's residence, the team have also helped us to access and work with key decision-makers.'

Professor MacIntyre also reports that Australian Embassy officials were able to explain the political context to education policies, and work with regulatory authorities in Indonesia.

'The Embassy team provided insight and advice on Indonesia's regulatory and commercial landscape,' he says. 'They facilitated networking events, liaised with Government of Indonesia officials, and helped to develop and promote new course offerings.'

'We want our research and innovation hub in Jakarta to be exceptionally well-connected to industry,' he adds. 'Austrade have helped us build those relationships with industry partners, so that our campus will immediately stand out.'

A stunning new campus

Monash University anticipates opening the new campus in October 2021. Plans include being co-located with global and national companies to build strong education and research links.

With superb technology and tried-and-tested teaching models, Monash can commence in either physical or virtual mode – or both to offer flexibility – depending on the state of the coronavirus pandemic.

'We have good bona fides in terms of delivering virtual education,' says Professor MacIntyre. 'We hope to offer a mix of short courses and professional-development programs. Our research will be focussed on topics that impact Indonesia, and promote sustainable development.'

Indonesia–Australia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement

According to Professor MacIntyre, the new Indonesia-Australia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (IA-CEPA) improves the prospects for Monash University in Indonesia.

'IA-CEPA will help us achieve our long-term objectives,' he says. 'The Agreement identifies themes for cooperation that are close to our heart. It opens up the commercial and scientific environment to more intense collaboration.'

It is expected that IA-CEPA will trigger greater mutual investment and opportunities for collaboration in health care. This is important for Monash as it has a leading global capability in medicine and health-related disciplines. For example, med-tech is a particular focus that draws on the strengths of Monash Australia and Monash Malaysia.

'We are working to develop med-tech with global health companies in Australia and Malaysia and IA-CEPA will help us grow cooperation in Indonesia,' he says. 'Also we want to pursue similar opportunities in manufacturing and food.'

IA-CEPA is also expected to enhance professional collaboration and compatibility in technical fields. 'As part of IA-CEPA, there are teams of people working on mutual recognition of accreditation and standards,' says MacIntyre. 'The Agreement creates a framework for co-operation, and a launch pad for us to engage in an unparalleled way.'

Upskilling professionals in Indonesia

Monash is committed to the long-term mission of supporting professions of the future. It will offer ongoing professional up-skilling in Indonesia.

Professor MacIntyre says the planned campus has the potential for a significant impact on skills through working with some top industry partners.

'We want to keep building capability and capacity in areas such as urban development, public policy, information technology, and business innovation,' he says. 'We have a huge opportunity to support Indonesia's development objectives and make a positive difference to our region.'

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