

20/02/2017

Dear Committee members,

The Australian Technology Network of universities (ATN) would like to thank you for allowing us the opportunity to submit to the Joint Standing Committee on Trade and Investment Growth's inquiry into Australia's trade and investment relationship with Indonesia.

The ATN is a national collaborative group of five major universities including QUT, University of Technology Sydney, RMIT University, University of South Australia and Curtin University. ATN Universities are all young, innovative, and have genuine linkages to industry as an inherent part of both our teaching and research.

Individually, and as a consortium, ATN members have been engaged with Indonesia over a number of years. There is a significant level of engagement with Indonesian higher education institutions and government agencies at the national, provincial and regional levels. Much of the intent of ATN's Indonesian activities is providing high quality research training to qualified students from Indonesian universities with the aim of developing ongoing research collaboration between the ATN and selected Indonesian universities. Selected Indonesian students will enrol in a designated Masters or Doctoral (PhD) program at one of the ATN universities and upon completion they will receive degrees from the enrolling ATN University.

Through maintaining an on ground presence the ATN has been able to nurture relationships with key stakeholders. This has ensured ATN members are strongly positioned at relevant academic forums (seminars, conferences, and research activities) and allowed members to be able to join in a consortium-based activity initiated by relevant government agencies, such as the Research excellence showcase, an ATN RISTEKDIKTI coloration which presented ATN academics in late 2016.

The ATN Universities have a very positive relationship with Indonesia. However, there are two areas where agreement at the national government level between Australia and Indonesia may help facilitate even deeper engagement, both relating to visa processing.

Streamlining and simplifying the process for prospective Indonesian students could have clear and immediate benefits such as increasing the number of Indonesian students in Australia as a result of easier visa access. We would welcome strengthened communication between relevant agencies.

For Australian researchers traveling to Indonesia for conferences, research assignments and delegations, ensuring there is consistency between information sources when applying for visas would remove any ambiguity. We would encourage freedom of movement for academics to further deepen ties between our two nations.

Please do not hesitate to contact the ATN Directorate to discuss any elements of the submission further.

Yours sincerely,

Renee Hindmarsh
ATN Executive Director