

Final Report
Independent Strategic Review
Australia-Indonesia Knowledge Partnership
Platform
(KONEKSI)

A review conducted for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade,
Australian Government

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The SPI team consists of Simon Henderson, Irsan Pawennei, Retno Agustin, Roy Green and Augusto Medina.

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The final content of this report reflects the opinions of the ISR team.

April 2026

Executive summary

The ISR

This document presents the findings of an Independent Strategic Review (ISR) of the Australia-Indonesia Knowledge Partnership Platform – known familiarly as KONEKSI. The ISR took place December 2025-March 2026 and was conducted by a team of Indonesian, Australian and European experts, under a contract with Sociedade Portuguesa de Inovação (SPI). The exercise involved extensive review of program data and consultations with over 100 stakeholders, face-to-face and remotely, in Australia and Indonesia (Kupang, Yogyakarta and Jakarta). The purpose of the ISR was twofold:

1. **Summative review** of the program's performance to date in meeting design expectations regarding effectiveness, efficiency, inclusivity and sustainability;
2. **Formative review** of the opportunities to enhance the program's relevance in the future for both Australian and Indonesian Governments.

The ISR's primary audience is DFAT Senior Management in Jakarta and Canberra. The secondary audience is key Government of Indonesia agencies including MOHEST, BRIN and Bappenas and key Australian agencies including DISR, CSIRO and DOE.

The program

- **Implementation model:** DFAT program designed in partnership with GOI, implemented by a managing contractor
- **Modality:** Dual: Research grants & technical assistance
- **Objectives:**
 - End of Program Outcomes (EOPO) 1: Australian and Indonesian organisations have increased collaboration and mutual understanding through knowledge partnerships
 - EOPO 2: Innovative solutions for inclusive and sustainable policies and technologies are generated by knowledge partnerships
- **Scope:**
 - Research projects in nearly 30 provinces in Indonesia, involving organisations from all Australian States and Territories
 - Technical assistance for advisory and training support to Indonesian Government and research partners
- **Duration:** December 2022 – November 2027 (5 years) with 3-year extension option
- **Allocation (AUD):** \$65 million (with \$15 million allocated for possible extension of up to 3 years) - 100% Official Development Assistance

KONEKSI is Australia's flagship development program supporting research and innovation in Indonesia, premised on tackling shared priorities as the basis for a sustainable partnership. It builds on a decade of collaboration in the knowledge sector between the two Governments. To date, the program has funded or committed funding to 100 collaborative research projects in nearly 30 provinces in Indonesia.

KONEKSI's purpose is to promote increased use of knowledge-based solutions for inclusive and sustainable policies and technologies. To contribute this, the program seeks to achieve 2 EOPOs (see above). KONEKSI is somewhat unusual as a development program, in two respects: first, it targets collaboration as an end in itself (EOPO1) and the generation (but not explicitly application) of solutions (EOPO2); second, the concept of research of mutual interest to both Indonesia and Australia is central to KONEKSI's design and strategic importance. It is a key defining characteristic of the intended partnerships.

Context

There have been significant developments in the operating context since KONEKSI was designed in 2022. The Indonesian government has accelerated reforms designed to consolidate research governance, strengthen links between universities and industry and improve the commercialisation of research outputs. This has been a consistent priority of the new President, and demonstrated in a series of policy documents, machinery of government changes, cross-government coordination initiatives, and new funding commitments, including a 50% uplift to GOI's R&D budget for 2026. Innovation is increasingly framed not only as a knowledge-generation function but as a core driver of industrial upgrading, down-streaming and regional economic transformation.

The role of research and innovation for Australia's long-term prosperity has also received renewed focus in the last few years – most notably with the recent Strategic Examination of Research and Development (SERD), which has recommended bold reforms to research and innovation funding and governance in Australia. At the same time higher education, research and innovation have become prominent elements in Australia's developing bilateral relationship with Indonesia, most notably through the May 2025 Plan of Action for the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) and the Australia–Indonesia Development Partnership Plan (2024–2028). These frameworks place increased emphasis on cooperation in these sectors, and highlight the importance of deepening institutional partnerships, promoting researcher mobility and strengthening collaborative research programs that address shared challenges. This has been accompanied by increased engagement from Australian agencies in Indonesia in the last few years and the governmental commitment to an Indonesia-Australia High-Level Policy Dialogue on Higher Education, Science and Research (CSP Plan of Action).

These developments in the context provide opportunities and challenges for the program and provide the backdrop for this ISR.

Findings

The program is well-regarded by researchers and GOI partners alike and secures high levels of engagement by GOI stakeholders. KONEKSI's combination of research grants and flexible technical assistance support is considered very effective and sets it apart from many other international collaborative research programs operating in Indonesia. The program has developed a strong 'brand' concept: equitable and inclusive partnerships, and its attention (and

support) to the quality of partnerships and the inclusiveness of research is appreciated and perceived as unique.

KONEKSI appears largely on-track to achieve its accountable objectives (EOPOs). Its research grants have undoubtedly increased collaboration: according to BRIN, Australia has risen from 6th to 1st among countries with approved researchers in Indonesia. The program has also generally involved a good diversity of organisations, though private sector engagement is still a work in progress. That said, with most partnerships based on previous relationships, the program's ambitions with respect to "increased collaboration" are not well-elaborated. Some early successes have also been recorded in terms of research impact, with the results of 3 projects taken up and applied by sub-national governments. However, the program's approach to research impact is not clearly developed, which is limiting its engagement with GOI stakeholders on this crucial issue.

KONEKSI's approach to inclusion is a strength: processes and tools to mainstream GEDSI are having some success, and the program has made important contributions through its support to various inclusion-focused research networks – in particular, the Disability Research School, assessed as unique even by international standards. Nevertheless, turning learning into action consistently and integrating initiatives within the wider ecosystem remain challenges.

The program has also recorded important successes in alleviating some bottlenecks to international research collaboration within GOI systems. However, while the gains have benefited the program's projects, they are ad hoc solutions and not institutionalised. The program has not yet developed a clear strategy for engagement on constraints in the wider enabling environment for research and innovation ecosystem development.

In spite of acknowledging the strengths and successes, key stakeholders consistently raised concerns: GOI repeatedly questioned the extent to which research projects were focused squarely on their top priorities and the degree of connection with end-users; GOA stakeholders pointed to insufficient mechanisms to align the program with Australia's main priorities and the limited value-add in strengthening government-to-government (G2G) engagement, from what is Australia's largest international collaborative research program.

Recommendations for the strategic development of KONEKSI

Based on these findings, the ISR identifies great potential for the program and strongly endorses a continuation, building on the progress achieved to date and KONEKSI's core concepts of equitable partnership and inclusion in STI research. However, to maintain its currency and influence, the program should evolve to respond to GOI's agenda and enhance G2G engagement.

Many of the necessary steps can be undertaken within the scope and time remaining for the current phase and extension option (of a recommended 12 months). KONEKSI phase 2 will require some redesign to operationalise G2G ambitions and acknowledge the broadening of

the program's mandate (through new end-of-program outcomes). Specific steps recommended are as follows:

1. Responding to GOI's agenda:

In the short term (within the current phase):

- The program should modify its approach to strengthen the connections between researchers and users in the context of stated GOI priorities
- The program should develop a clear strategy to engage with Indonesia's developing research and innovation ecosystem, including local innovation hubs
- The program should explore the scope to mobilise philanthropic and private sector co-investment for capability-building in research and innovation; and

In the medium term (within the extension period of the current phase):

- The design mission for the next phase should explore with care the opportunities for Phase 2 to support GOI's reforms in the higher education sector.

2. Enhancing G2G engagement:

In the short term (within the current phase):

- DFAT should engage GOA stakeholders regarding the preferred implementation model for phase 2 (potentially establishing an advisory group to take this forward).

In the medium term (within the extension period of the current phase):

- The program should undertake a strategic STI foresight exercise to systematically identify potential areas of collaboration between Australia and Indonesia,
- DFAT should launch a design mission for phase 2 of the program with a view to developing a 5-year program, starting in early 2029 at the latest.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

Abbreviation / acronym	Description
ACIAR	Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research
ANU	Australian National University
AUD	Australian dollars
BaKTI	Eastern Indonesia Knowledge Exchange Foundation (Bursa Pengetahuan Kawasan Timor Indonesia)
Bappenas	National Development Planning Agency (Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional)
BIO-EC	Bio-economy research call - joint with BRIN
BRIN	National Agency for Research and Innovation (Badan Riset Inovasi Nasional)
CBM	CBM Australia (Christian Blind Mission)
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (Australian Government)
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSP	Indonesia–Australia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australian Government)
DISR	Department of Industry, Science and Resources (Australian Government)
DOE	Department of Education (Australian Government)
DT	Digital transformation research call
ECC Ext	Environment and climate change extension research call
ECC pilot	Environment and climate change pilot research call
EJET	Equitable and just energy transition research call - joint with MOHEST
EOPO	End of program outcome
EV	Electric vehicle research call
G2G	Government-to-government
GEDSI	Gender equality, disability and social inclusion
GOA	Australian Government
GOI	Government of Indonesia
HEI	Higher education institution
IO	Intermediate outcome
IP	Intellectual property
ISR	Independent Strategic Review
Kemkeno PMK	Coordinating Ministry for Human Development and Cultural Affairs (Kementerian Koordinator Bidang Pembangunan Manusia dan Kebudayaan)
KIE	Knowledge and Innovation Exchange
KONEKSI	Australia-Indonesia Knowledge Partnership Platform (The Program)
KRQ	Key review question
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation and learning
MOHEST	Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (Kemdiktisaintek)
MOU	Memorandum of understanding

Abbreviation / acronym	Description
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
ODA	Official development assistance
OPD	Organisation for people with disabilities
PHC	Partnership health check
PI	Principal Investigator
PSC	Program Steering Committee
PTC	Program Technical Committee
PTN BH	Group of 24 top tier universities in Indonesia
QUAL ED	Quality education research call
QPU	Quarterly progress updates
RPJMN	National Medium-term Development Plan (Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Nasional)
RPJPN	National Long-term Development Plan (Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Panjang Nasional)
SAPDA	Advocacy centre for women, people with disabilities and children (Sentra Advokasi Perempuan, Difabel Dan Anak)
SERD	Strategic Examination of Research and Development (Australian Government)
STI	Science, technology and innovation
SPI	Sociedade Portuguesa de Inovação
TA	Technical assistance
UQ	University of Queensland
UTS	University of Technology Sydney
VFM	Value for money

1. Introduction

1.1 ISR background and purpose

DFAT periodically reviews all major Australian development assistance projects. These reviews fulfil necessary accountability requirements, contribute to improving individual programs and inform DFAT's thinking about what assistance may be effective in the future.

In 2025, DFAT commissioned Sociedade Portuguesa de Inovação (SPI) to conduct an Independent Strategic Review (ISR) of the Australia-Indonesia Knowledge Partnerships Platform – familiarly known as KONEKSI.

The ISR took place from late November 2025-March 2026, including fieldwork in Indonesia January-February 2026. The ISR was implemented by the SPI team comprising:

- Simon Henderson (Team Leader, Evaluation specialist)
- Irsan Pawennei (Indonesian Science, Technology and Innovation specialist)
- Retno Agustin (Indonesian GEDSI specialist)
- Roy Green (Australian Science, Technology and Innovation expert) and
- Augusto Medina (International Science, Technology and Innovation expert)

The overall purpose of the ISR was twofold:

1. **Summative review** of the program's performance to date: how well is it meeting its design expectations regarding effectiveness, efficiency, inclusivity and sustainability?
2. **Formative review** of the opportunities to enhance the program's relevance to both partner Governments in the future.

With the current phase of KONEKSI due to complete at the end of 2027, the ISR is a timely contribution to DFAT's planning processes.

The ISR's primary audience is DFAT Senior Management in Jakarta and Canberra. The secondary audience is key Government of Indonesia agencies including MOHEST, BRIN and Bappenas¹ and key Australian agencies including DISR, CSIRO and DOE.

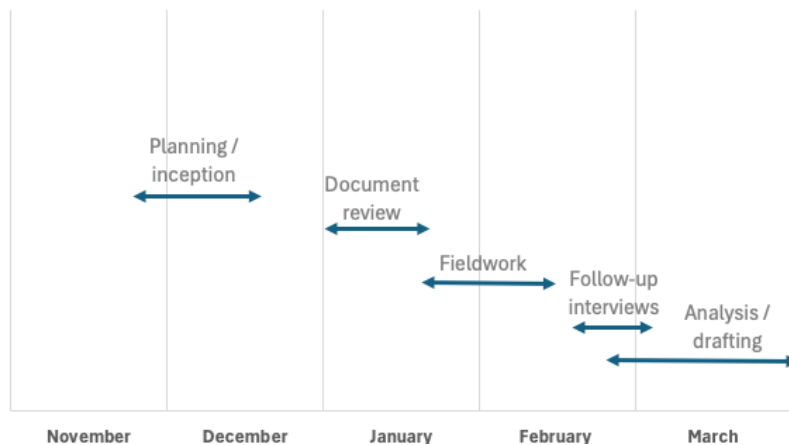
The ISR report and DFAT's management response is published on DFAT's website in accordance with the Transparency Charter and public accessibility requirements.

¹ MOHEST: Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology / Kemdiktisaintek; BRIN: National Research and Innovation Agency / Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional; Bappenas: Ministry of National Development Planning/ Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional; DISR: Department of Industry, Science and Resources; CSIRO: Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation; DOE: Department of Education.

1.2 ISR approach and methodology

A summary of ISR activities and timeline is provided in figure 1.1 below. The overall analytical approach to the ISR was qualitative. This was appropriate given its purpose and the timeframe and resources available. However, within that overall approach, the team drew on a mix of qualitative and quantitative data and methods to address the key review questions (KRQs).

Figure 1.1 ISR Implementation Timeline



The ISR collected primary data from interviews (individual and group), consulting over 135 stakeholders (68 female; 71 men), representing Government, academic and civil society partners from both Indonesia and Australia and all members of KONEKSI's senior leadership team who manage the program. Consultations were conducted face to face in Jakarta, Jogjakarta, Kupang and Australia as well as remotely. The ISR also drew on secondary data, in the main from KONEKSI's own reports and data and DFAT administrative data and monitoring records. A summary of data sources and collection methods is provided in Appendix 1.

Interviewees were selected through a combination of purposive and convenience sampling, reflecting both the objectives of the ISR and logistical and timeframe constraints. Selection aimed to achieve a situationally (if not statistically) representative sample. In the end, the ISR interviewed representatives from all main government partners and program strategic partners, as well as researchers from half of the research projects for which there was information available at the time of the ISR design.

As far as possible, group discussions were structured to avoid mixing 'senior' and 'junior' respondents (in terms of the relevant social hierarchy in the context). Semi-structured interview guides were developed for all individual and group discussions and open, non-leading questioning methods were used to encourage respondents to express and elaborate their own views.

During the planning/inception phase, the ISR team and DFAT agreed on a set of key review questions (box 1.1). These questions guided the overall direction of the ISR's enquiries. The summative part of the review focused on KRQs 1- 7 and was conducted as a conventional

backward-looking review exercise. This generated valuable information about the strengths and weaknesses of the program to date.

Box 1.1 Key Review Questions (KRQs)

Summative Element

KRQ 1 Is KONEKSI meeting (or on track to meet) its intermediate and end of program outcomes?

KRQ 1.1 And will these outcomes be sustainable beyond the life of the program?

KRQ 2 To what extent is KONEKSI's design and modality delivering its outputs and outcomes efficiently?

KRQ 3 To what extent is KONEKSI well aligned to Gol current priorities and interests in science, research and innovation?

KRQ 4 How effectively has KONEKSI with other DFAT and whole-of-government programs in the university sector?

KRQ 5 How has KONEKSI added value to Australia's university sector engagement with Indonesia?

KRQ 6 How can KONEKSI better use its monitoring and evaluation tools to explain and promote its impact?

KRQ 7 What lessons can be drawn from KONEKSI's performance to date that can be applied to future programming?

Formative Element

KRQ 8: What are the options and opportunities for KONEKSI to better support Indonesia's policy priorities in higher education, science, research and innovation in the future?

KRQ 9 What opportunities and challenges exist to further enhance GOI-GOA collaboration in these sectors, including whole-of- government eco-system exchanges and institutional peer-to-peer engagement, using available ODA and non-ODA funds from both governments?

KRQ 10 How can KONEKSI better support commercial, technology and policy outcomes to help advance Indonesia's economic development?

KRQ 11 What options exist for greater philanthropic and private sector funding and collaboration in KONEKSI's work?

KRQ 12 How much of the above (under Part B) can be achieved under current EOPOs?

The formative element of the ISR (KRQs 8-12) built on this understanding and entailed structured consultations to identify and test stakeholders' views about the opportunities and challenges for the program in the future. This information, combined with the knowledge and experience embedded in ISR team members, provided the basis for the recommendations for strategic development of the program going forward.

1.3 Limitations

Notwithstanding the context-aware selection of interviewees, the range of interviewees consulted, and efforts to minimise bias during interviews/group discussions, there are limitations to the ISR.

- First, the respondents sampled were not selected randomly and hence data gathered are subject to an unknown degree of selection bias and sampling error cannot be formally estimated. That said, the ISR team is sufficiently confident in the reliability of the information collected, not least because of the consistency of responses among the different stakeholders consulted.
- Second, among researchers, the ISR did not interview those who had applied unsuccessfully for funding under the program. This may inevitably result in a level of positive bias, but this is considered of relatively low significance. Unsuccessful applicants would have offered little insight into the implementation of program, while interviews with successful applicants were carefully designed to minimise crude positive bias.
- Third, given time constraints, the ISR team only spoke with current members of the program's governance committees (both GOI and GOA). This inevitably limits respondents' recall and increases the risk of recency bias. However, the risk to overall conclusions is not considered great given the ISR's terms of reference and the emphasis on the forward-looking (formative) element of the study.
- Finally, the ISR's assessment of achievements under EOPO 2 (research results) is necessarily partial given that: the majority of research projects funded to date have not yet finished; the completed projects have finished relatively recently (given typical lags between research and use); and completed projects are concentrated on the ECC cohort, with a greater focus on public policy outcomes rather than technology / commercialisation outcomes.

1.4 Report Structure

Section 2 of the report outlines the program itself, while section 3 provides background on the operating context in which the program is working. Section 4 presents the ISR'S findings with respect to KONEKSI's progress towards its objectives: its 2 end-of-program outcomes and its intermediate outcomes (including GEDSI objectives). Section 4 also considers the sustainability of the progress to date and the question of added value to Australian universities (KRQ 5). Section 5 addresses program efficiency while section 6 considers the program's relevance given the changes in context discussed in section 3. Based on these findings, section 7 presents the ISR's recommendations for the strategic development of the program in the future.

2. The Program

2.1 Australian support

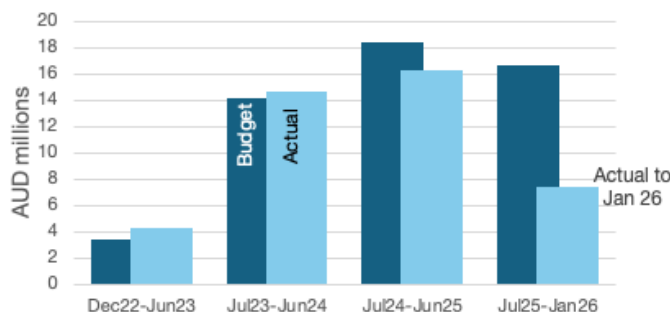
KONEKSI is Australia's flagship development program supporting research and innovation in Indonesia. KONEKSI began in late December 2022 but builds on a decade of collaboration in the sector between the two Governments. The program is funded until November 2027, by official development assistance (ODA) grant from DFAT, originally for AUD 50 million. However, the total grant was increased to AUD 65 million after the first year of operation to allow the program to respond to high demand among Australian and Indonesian researchers during the first call for research proposals.

The program uses a mixed modality of grant funding and technical assistance (TA) and is implemented by a managing contractor, Cowater International, through four main activities ('service lines'):

- Service Line 1: Awarding and overseeing grants for collaborative research projects between Australian and Indonesian organisations;
- Service Line 2: Providing TA for research partners and relevant GOI partners in the form of advice, training and technical support;
- Service Line 3: Providing TA to support knowledge dissemination, promotional activities and knowledge-sharing events to socialise the results generated from research projects; and
- Service Line 4: Providing TA to support the activities of networks influencing policy and innovation processes in line with the program's objectives.

To date, KONEKSI has funded or committed funding to 100 collaborative research projects involving over 380 organisations from Australia and Indonesia and more than 800 researchers². Total expenditure (to January 2026) is AUD 42.6 million (Figure 2.1) and appears largely on-track (63% of time vs. 66% of budget expended).

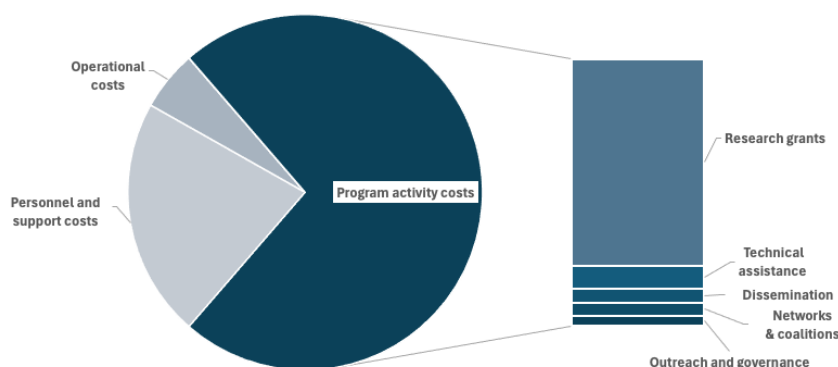
Figure 2.1: KONEKSI expenditure to date



² KONEKSI Annual Progress Report 2025, p.3

To date, program activity costs have accounted for the major share of program expenditure (69%), with the remainder covering delivery costs (predominantly personnel and operational costs). Expenditure on collaborative research grants to date account for just over three-quarters of all activity costs, with the various forms of TA accounting for the remainder (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2: KONEKSI distribution of expenditure to date (excluding management fees)



2.2 Objectives and approach

KONEKSI's purpose is to promote increased use of knowledge-based solutions for inclusive and sustainable policies and technologies. To contribute to this, the program aims to achieve two end-of-program outcomes (EOPOs):

- EOPO 1:** Australian and Indonesian organisations have increased collaboration and mutual understanding through knowledge partnerships
- EOPO 2:** Innovative solutions for inclusive and sustainable policies and technologies are generated by knowledge partnerships

To facilitate achievement of the EOPOs, the program has three intermediate outcomes it will pursue:

- IO1:** Participating Australian and Indonesian organisations have developed and strengthened knowledge partnerships around areas of mutual interests
- IO2:** Supported partnerships have increased capacities to generate and disseminate GEDSI-responsive knowledge for inclusive and sustainable policies and technologies
- IO3:** The Indonesian knowledge and innovation enabling environment is better able to promote and facilitate international knowledge partnerships

Geographically, KONEKSI currently supports research activities in nearly 30 provinces and regions in Indonesia and involves research organisations from all Australian States and Territories. The program has funded 7 rounds of research on different topics since starting, with the first of these – environment and climate change (ECC) – a pilot but the largest round so far (Figure 2.3). Two of the rounds have been jointly funded with BRIN (BIO-EC) and MOHEST (EJET) respectively, while the most recent, QUAL ED, was developed with significant involvement from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education but is wholly KONEKSI funded. All calls

were for 24 month projects, except the ECC pilot (12 months) and ECC extension (18 months). All projects under the initial ECC pilot are understood to be complete while projects under EJET and QUAL ED have yet to get underway. The remaining projects are on-going.

Figure 2.3: Number and average value of KONEKSI research projects ordered by research call

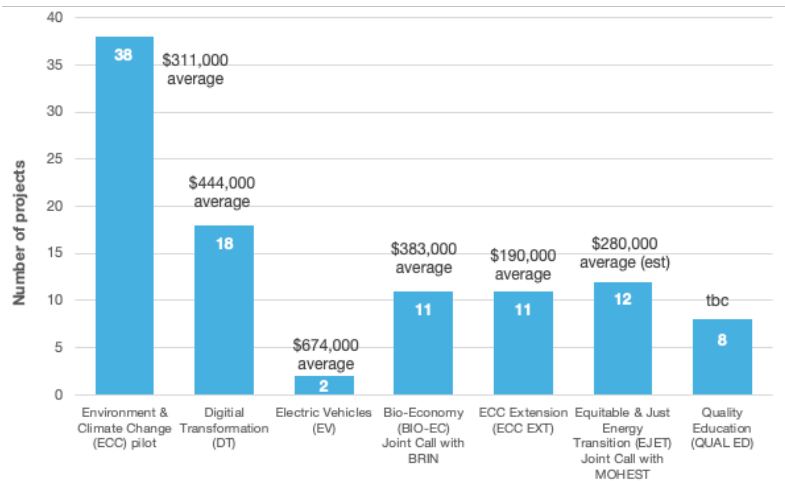
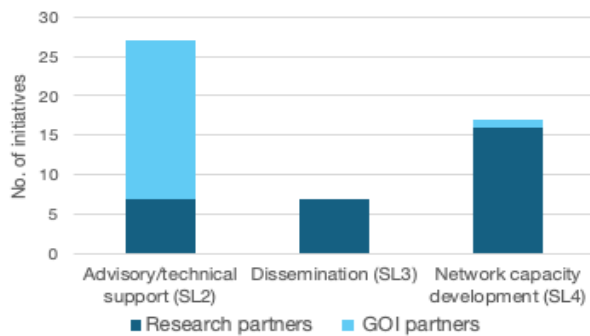


Figure 2.4 provides an indication of the allocation of TA resources to date. Note, however, that this is approximate, with potentially 1 initiative comprising a series of events. Nevertheless, it suggests that service line 4 (network capacity development) is the most significant area of support for research partners overall, while service line 2 (advisory/technical support) is the primary form of TA to GOI partners, with multiple initiatives.

Figure 2.4: Summary of TA activities (to date and planned) by Service Line



3. Program context

Indonesia is undertaking a comprehensive reform of its research and innovation system to ensure closer alignment with national economic and strategic priorities, particularly the 2025–2045 National Long-Term Development Plan (RPJPN – Golden Indonesia 2045³) and 2025-

³ <https://indonesia2045.go.id/>

2029 National Medium Term-Development Plan (RPJMN⁴). Innovation is increasingly framed not only as a knowledge-generation function but as a core driver of industrial upgrading, down-streaming and regional economic transformation.

Over recent years, the Indonesian government has accelerated reforms designed to consolidate research governance, strengthen links between universities and industry and improve the commercialisation of research outputs. Innovation policy is increasingly viewed as a strategic instrument supporting industrial policy, technological capability development and regional economic transformation. Indeed, this has been a consistent priority of the new President, with significant increases in budget funds allocated. The 2026 GOI budget ceiling for R&D funding was increased by 50% (to Rp 12 trillion) specifically to strengthen university research activities, including collaborative projects with BRIN, with priority given food self-sufficiency, energy self-sufficiency, industrialization, and downstreaming programs.

Alongside policy and budget commitments, the new administration has introduced machinery of government changes and supported greater inter-ministerial coordination to tackle problems of fragmentation in the research and innovation landscape. In late 2024, GOI established MOHEST as the policy lead on science, research and innovation, separating these functions from the broader education ministry, and strengthened BRIN's mandate as the primary coordinating body for publicly funded research and innovation activities. In January 2026, BRIN launched the Research and Innovation Communication Forum (FKRI) – a multi-ministerial mechanism to improve cross-sector collaboration, strengthen the innovation ecosystem and synchronize research agendas with development needs. Following that event, BRIN and MOHEST initiated the National Research and Innovation Roadmap⁵, identifying eight priority agendas for development. In February 2026, BRIN and MOHEST jointly announced the signing of a new MOU to strengthen coordination between the 2 organisations in the research and innovation sector. In discussions with the ISR team, the Coordinating Ministry, Kememko PMK, indicated plans to establish a Special Task Force on Research, Innovation, and Industrial Partnership, comprising members from related ministries and business associations.

Indonesia has also expanded its network of Science and Technology Parks, innovation hubs and university-based Centres of Excellence. These infrastructures are designed to strengthen collaboration between academia and industry, support start-ups and spin-off companies and provide incubation and commercialisation services. The expansion of these facilities reflects a broader effort to develop regional innovation ecosystems across the country.

The Indonesian government has placed increasing emphasis on down-streaming policies - the transformation of raw natural resources into higher-value industrial products through research, innovation and industrial processing. This strategy has become particularly important in sectors such as critical minerals, battery value chains, bio-based products, maritime technologies and energy technologies. To support this approach, the government launched the MOHEST Down-

⁴ https://perpustakaan.bappenas.go.id/e-library/file_upload/koleksi/dokumenbappenas/konten/Dokumen%2025/Konten/%7BDigital%7D%20Ringkasan%20RPJMN%20Tahun%202025-2029.pdf

⁵ <https://en.antaranews.com/news/401382/indonesia-launches-national-research-and-innovation-roadmap>

streaming Program in 2025⁶ signalling an operational shift toward integrated research-to-commercialisation pipelines. The program encourages research projects that bridge the gap between academic research and industrial application, including the development of prototypes, pilot technologies and demonstration projects that can support commercial deployment.

The government is also investing in strategic foresight exercises designed to identify emerging technological opportunities and ensure that research investments are aligned with future national priorities. Together, these initiatives represent a shift toward a more mission-oriented innovation system focused on generating tangible economic and societal impact.

These reforms are also reshaping the role of universities within Indonesia's innovation system. Higher education institutions are increasingly expected to function not only as teaching institutions but also as engines of innovation and economic development. Universities are therefore encouraged to align research agendas with national strategic priorities and expand collaboration with industry and government research agencies.

In Australia, the importance of research and innovation for the country's long-term prosperity has also received renewed attention in recent years. Under the *Future Made in Australia* policy initiative, the National Science Statement issued in August 2024 frames science as the "foundation of Australia's industrial transformation", while the recent Strategic Examination of Research and Development (SERD) has called for bold reforms to the way research and innovation is conducted and funded in Australia⁷.

At the same time, Australia has elevated the importance of higher education, research and innovation in its developing relationship with Indonesia, most notably through the May 2025 Plan of Action for the Indonesia–Australia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) and the Australia–Indonesia Development Partnership Plan (2024–2028). These frameworks place increased emphasis on cooperation in these sectors, recognising that innovation and knowledge exchange are central to both countries' economic development and regional engagement strategies. The plans highlight the importance of deepening institutional partnerships, promoting researcher mobility and strengthening collaborative research programs that address shared challenges. For Australia, collaboration in higher education, research and innovation is viewed as a key element in the maturing bilateral relationship with an increasingly wealthy Indonesia.

This has been accompanied by increased engagement from Australian science and innovation agencies in the last few years. DISR, CSIRO and DOE are engaged in Indonesia and looking to further develop their relationships with GOI counterparts. The CSP Plan of Action also commits to establish an Indonesia-Australia High-Level Policy Dialogue on Higher Education, Science and Research. Meanwhile, domestic programs in Australia like the Future Made in Australia program (and the related National Science Statement, 2024) and the on-going Strategic

⁶ <https://kemdiktisaintek.go.id/news/article/penandatanganan-kontrak-pendanaan-hilirisasi-riset-prioritas-2025>

⁷ Ambitious Australia (17 March 2026)

Examination of Research and Development are providing new opportunities to integrate the program within broader reforms to Australia's science ecosystem and innovation priorities.

This changing context has resulted in increased expectations and demands on the program from both sides - from Indonesia's emphasis on downstreaming and commercialisation and Australia's interest in building government-to-government relationships and collaboration on areas of mutual interest.

4. Progress towards program objectives

4.1 EOPO 1: Australian and Indonesian organisations have increased collaboration and mutual understanding through knowledge partnerships

(including IO1: Participating Australian and Indonesian organisations have developed and strengthened knowledge partnerships around areas of mutual interests)

EOPO1 targets collaboration and partnerships as ends in themselves. The concepts are somewhat nebulous in measurement terms, but at the heart of the program's design is the idea of increased collaboration between diverse Australian and Indonesia organisations, based on effective partnerships addressing issues of mutual interest. The evidence available suggests that overall KONEKSI is achieving EOPO 1⁸, though it is noted that the program has not defined specifically how it judges achievement. To date, the program has focused most attention on the quality of partnerships.

The program has implemented 7 collaborative research calls with 100 active, completed or committed research projects involving Indonesian and Australian researchers. This injection of activity has, according to BRIN, moved Australia from 6th to 1st in the rankings for countries with approved researchers working in Indonesia. To support these projects, the program has developed a strong concept of equitable partnership that is designed to foster collaboration and mutual understanding among partners (see box 4.1).

Box 4.1: KONEKSI's 5 pillars of a partnership

Pillar 1: Context – partners have a shared understanding of the organisational, sectoral and local contexts in which they operate.

Pillar 2: Goals and objectives – partners work toward the same clear goals and objectives

Pillar 3: Relationships – open communication, mutual respect and trust are cultivated and any inequities or unconscious biases are addressed.

Pillar 4: Resources – budgets, staff time and technical expertise are allocated fairly, effectively and transparently.

Pillar 5: Work processes – work plans, roles, communication and reporting lines are clear and efficient.

⁸ And the associated intermediate outcome, IO1. The substantive difference between IO1 and EOPO1 is not clear (and has not been specifically delineated by the program). As a result, the two are considered jointly.

During the inception phase for new research projects, KONEKSI conducts a series of on-boarding sessions that include guidance on developing and maintaining effective partnerships. These concepts are reinforced through quarterly progress reporting, which includes a question on how the partners are working together. The health of partnerships is monitored at the start, mid-point and end of projects through partner self-assessment surveys run by KONEKSI. The results, reported in the program's 6-monthly and annual progress reports overall point to relatively high levels of satisfaction among partners.

The ISR interviewed Australian and Indonesian research partners to hear their views about KONEKSI's partnership approach including the value of the tools used to promote partnership working. Overall, both Australian and Indonesian respondents were positive: for them, the program's emphasis on partnership is a notable strength and one of the key characteristics that distinguishes KONEKSI from other international research programs. Nevertheless, views on its practical application were nuanced (box 4.2).

The program has not defined how it measures 'increased collaboration' (referred to in the EOPO). In one sense, successfully running and funding research calls necessarily increases collaboration⁹, but this seems a low bar for the EOPO. To explore this question, the ISR examined: the diversity of organisations collaborating; the size of partnerships; whether partnerships created new collaborations; and the types of collaboration.

In line with design expectations, KONEKSI has also done a reasonably good job in ensuring involvement of **a diverse range of organisations**. Figure 4.1 summarises the results for 84 KONEKSI projects, for which data were available at the time of the ISR. As can be seen, most projects involve academic institutions from both Indonesia and Australia, with 53 and 24 different institutions participating respectively. Indeed, 30% of projects involved *only* formal research organisations¹⁰. Indonesian CSOs make up the largest number of organisations participating in KONEKSI and are involved almost 50% of the projects examined.

Box 4.2: Partners' views on KONEKSI's support for equitable partnership arrangements

Strengths

- Onboarding and alignment processes: The perceived practical value of these tended to vary inversely with the experience of the partner but both Indonesian and Australian partners acknowledged the value and uniqueness of KONEKSI's investment in the process.
- Budget transparency and equity emphasis: Both Australian and Indonesian partners recognised the centrality of KONEKSI's encouragement for fair financial arrangements for their sense of partnership. The caveat, however, is it is not evenly applied across all projects and therefore a contentious issue for some Indonesian partners.

⁹ KONEKSI projects are highly likely to be 'additional', in that they would not have occurred in the absence of the program, at least within the same timeframe.

¹⁰ However, the first ECC pilot call largely accounts for this (with nearly 50% of its projects); the share of projects involving only formal research agencies has dropped to 15% in subsequent calls.

- Partnership Health Check tool: The PHC is viewed positively. Again, like the onboarding process, its practical utility to partners appears to vary inversely with experience but all recognised its value as a framework to help structure and broach partnership issues, as a normative tool to signal expected behaviours.
- Non-hierarchical model of partnership: Multiple partners noted KONEKSI is genuinely unique in emphasising partnership as central to the program. Mandatory requirement for Indonesian partners and the use of Indonesian projects leads are particularly valued. These features, along with support from their Australian partners, are seen as enabling Indonesian researcher to achieve international recognition through their research publications.

Limitations

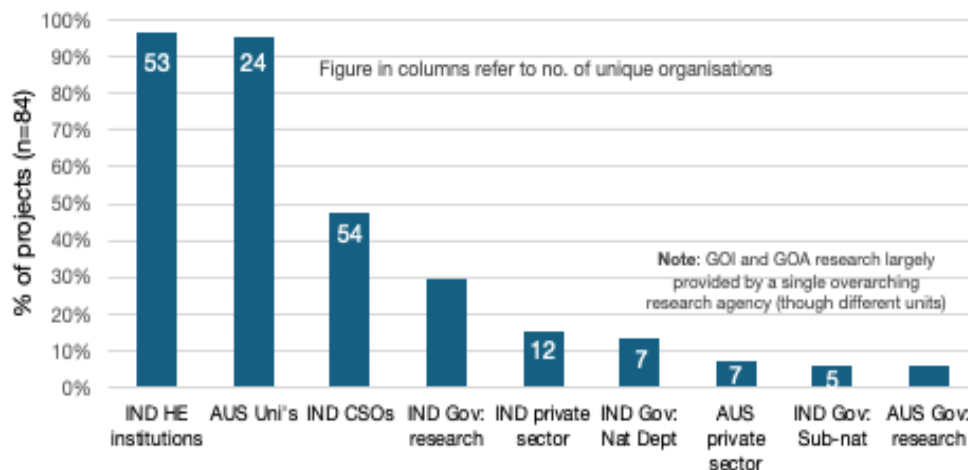
- Emphasis on administration over outcome: Both Australian and Indonesian partners acknowledged the importance of the intention, but raised concerns that PHC and Quarterly Progress Update tools risked becoming perfunctory and routine, rather than address and broker real partnership dynamics.
- Reliance on Principal Investigators (PIs): Good communication, budget transparency and budget 'fairness' are key factors affecting the quality of partnerships. KONEKSI relies on PIs to deliver these but interviews with Indonesian research partners suggest they are not universally well-managed, with some partners experiencing structural problems with information sharing and inequitable in spite of KONEKSI's intentions.
- Variable view of partnership among Indonesian partner types: While both Australian and Indonesia researchers generally recognized KONEKSI's strengths with respect to partnerships, Indonesian partners' views were typically more positive among university-based, PIs located on Java who had previous personal relations with their Australian partners. In contrast, the experience to date of regionally-based CSO partners, with no strong prior relationship with their project's PI has been more mixed.

After this, participation tails off: notably the private sector from either country is involved in less than one fifth of the projects examined. However, their involvement appears to have increased more recently in the joint calls¹¹ compared with the KONEKSI-only ECC and DT calls.

Within the Australian higher education sector, participation is quite broad but relatively skewed. The main 4 Australian universities for KONEKSI are involved in 45 of the projects examined (53%), while 20 other Australian universities are involved in 41 projects (nearly half of those universities in just one project). Within Indonesian higher education, the picture is somewhat different: the top 2 partners for KONEKSI are involved in 32 of the projects examined (38%), but the 51 other academic institutions involved participate in almost three-quarters of the projects examined.

¹¹ 45% of projects in the BRIN joint call, and 40% of the 5 projects examined in the MOHEST joint call.

Figure 4.1: Involvement of major partner types in KONEKSI projects (n=84)



The program has also been quite successful involving Indonesian higher education institutions (HEIs) based in Eastern Indonesia. With a total of 17 institutions involved, Eastern Indonesia accounts for 32% of the Indonesian HEIs participating in KONEKSI and they are involved in 27% of the projects. However, interviews conducted with Indonesian partners based in the region identified on-going structural barriers that affects their capacity in practice to participate, such as communication challenges; language barriers, preventing participation in training and international events; tight project budgets and higher archipelago transport costs; and limited organisational infrastructure.

More generally, it is noted, positively, that almost all of the 40 projects involving non-PTN BH¹² Indonesian universities involved collaboration with either Australian or top tier Indonesian universities (or both), which potentially provides useful learning opportunities.

Among the 54 Indonesian CSOs participating in the program, 10 are based in Eastern Indonesia and participate in 11% of the projects reviewed; 7 are focused on women's interests and participate in 5% of projects; and 6 are organisations for people with disabilities and participate in 7% of the projects examined. Larger, nationally recognised CSOs were PIs in 20% of ECC and DT projects (none in the other calls). However, for many smaller CSOs, KONEKSI often provided them with their first experience working within a large research consortium and, in many cases, was a bridge to their first formal collaboration with universities. Similarly, KONEKSI provided one large and established national disability organization with their first experience leading international collaborative research.

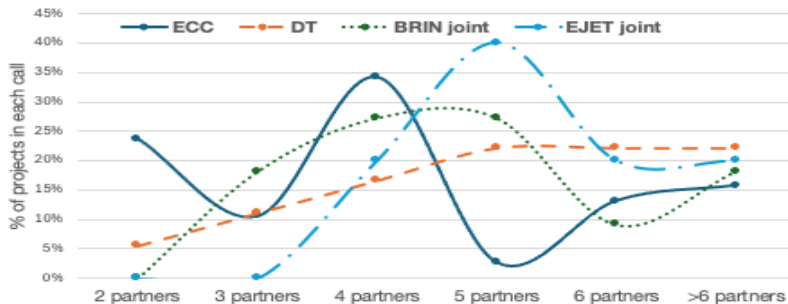
Another indication of the volume of collaboration is the **size of partnerships**. In principle, the number of connections within a partnership increase quadratically with each additional partner¹³. The evidence suggests that the typical size of partnerships has indeed grown gradually with successive research calls: the mean size of partnerships in the ECC pilot was 4.3

¹² This refers to the 24 top research universities in Indonesia – equivalent to the Group of 8 in Australia.

¹³ So, within partnerships of 2, 3, 4 and 5 members, there are 1, 3, 6 and 10 potential connections respectively, reflecting the standard "handshake problem" formula: $\frac{n(n-1)}{2}$

partners, increasing to over 5 for DT, EV and BRIN joint calls and over 6 partners in the MOHEST joint call¹⁴. Figure 4.2 highlights this trend, with the peak and area of the curves for each call shifting to the right compared with the ECC pilot round.

Figure 4.2: Share of KONEKSI projects by research calls and size of partnership



The extent/quality of collaboration within partnerships is not fully known, and larger partnerships will almost certainly entail ‘core’ and more ‘peripheral’ relationships. While the results of the program’s PHC provide some assurance on this point, the potential for (positive) bias in the self-assessments exists. The ISR encountered cases of dissatisfaction among some Indonesian CSOs with regards their substantive role in their projects. These mostly echoed well-known complaints of tokenism and extractive data-collection practices and although the number of CSOs was limited, the finding suggests that the frameworks that KONEKSI has put in place are no guarantee of appropriate collaborative arrangements. However, the ISR encountered a contrasting model, where experienced PIs could effectively bridge cultural differences between academic and civil society actors, and ensured that co-creation and co-design went beyond research ideas, methodology, and subject framing to include involvement in decision-making, transparent budgeting, and equitable resource distribution. The challenge, therefore, is not only equity in partnership design but also how capacity-building and inclusion are structured within expanded research collaborations.

There is also obviously a limit on the optimal size of each partnership, and certainly researchers leading larger partnerships pointed to the significant administrative demands in meeting all GOI and KONEKSI requirements across multiple partners. However, to date the program has not investigated this question formally.

Another measure of increased collaboration might be the establishment of entirely **new partnerships**. KONEKSI does not target this¹⁵ and does not provide any active ‘match-making’ service. In the absence of any facilitated approach, previous relationships play an important role. Some two-thirds of the Indonesian partners interviewed already had a relationship with their Australian partner before KONEKSI, in most cases based on earlier collaborative research. For around half of those with no prior relationship, the connection was established via an Indonesian research partner who was linked to both parties, acting as the bridge. In the case of

¹⁴ The caveat for the MOHEST figure is that details were only available for 5 out of the 12 projects at the time of the ISR.

¹⁵ Indeed, the program design document and first ECC pilot call included previous relationships as a selection criterion.

the Australian partners interviewed, almost all had prior connections with some of their partners though for nearly half, their KONEKSI project included new Indonesia contacts.

The ISR did identify cases where universities engaged smaller CSOs that have typically been excluded from large research grants. This suggests that KONEKSI has opened access to a degree at least for smaller CSOs to participate in large-scale research funding ecosystems for the first time. Nevertheless, the recurring message from interviews with partners – corroborating KONEKSI's own research – was previous relationships are important and to a fair extent the program's approach is based on this. This certainly suggests the program would need to modify its approach if the establishment of new relationships becomes more important.

Finally, the ISR has the following observations on the **types of collaboration** that have been supported under EOPO1:

- Relationships have been predominantly between individuals. These people-to-people links can be significant and enduring, but the EOPO refers to partnerships between organisations. The program treats the two as equivalent. The ISR did not identify any formal organisation-to-organisation linkages arising from KONEKSI to date, but more generally the program does not systematically assess this question. This is an area of potential interest.
- Similarly, the program has to date applied the concept of 'knowledge partnerships' only to the (academic-led) research-based projects, as distinct from other forms of knowledge generation/exchange. More recently, the program has begun to support partnerships on a government-to-government level but this has been under its engagement on the 'enabling environment' (see below) and is not incorporated into its approach to partnership development.

4.2 IO2 - Supported partnerships have increased capacities to generate and disseminate GEDSI-responsive knowledge

KONEKSI's **GEDSI strategy** (September 2023) sets out a comprehensive, twin-track approach which aims to mainstream inclusion across all research grants while delivering targeted initiatives for underrepresented groups. Overall, the strategy is conceptually strong and backed by **sufficient resources**: a dedicated GEDSI team (Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist and Disability Specialist with lived experience) provides capacity-building, technical assistance, and ongoing coaching to partners, supported by strategic partners. The decision in early 2025 to separate GEDSI and Partnership functions into distinct units within KONEKSI's program team has strengthened the program's strategic focus. The program has a GEDSI budget allocation

target of 7%¹⁶ (reaching 6% in the latest reporting period), operationalised with a financial tagging system, and proactively ring-fences budget for accessible and reasonable accommodation even when research partners do not request it.

In developing the GEDSI strategy, the program engaged a range of informed stakeholders and reviewed relevant literature to identify and key gender and disability barriers (e.g. the “leaky pipeline” of women in research and exclusion of disabled researchers). The evidence suggests KONEKSI’s **analysis of inclusion** applied a rigorous diagnostic approach and formally embedded **OPD consultation** through a research-focused advisory panel, and its support to the Disability Network and Disability Research School.

KONEKSI’s **MEL system** includes several mechanisms for tracking the program’s progress towards its inclusion objectives: GEDSI action plan (started during DT Calls), a mandatory GEDSI section in the quarterly progress updates (QPUs), inclusion-related questions in Partnership Health Checks (PHCs) applied at baseline, midline and endline, and, more recently, a GEDSI rubric that provides on-going assessment of the depth/significance of inclusion issues in the research partnerships. The rubric rating is a composite measure designed to capture whether the research reflects understanding of barriers, has consulted with disadvantaged groups and will benefit disadvantaged groups, and whether the project itself reflects principles of inclusion and generates relevant GEDSI-disaggregated data. It reflects the KONEKSI team’s own assessment of the projects, but the data has not yet been used to assess progress¹⁷. In principle, the PHC survey also provides insights regarding GEDSI progress (including attention to power imbalances within teams), but this is only conducted once during research implementation and, as a self-assessment survey, its utility depends heavily on whether it functions as a genuine reflective tool. In a few ISR interviews, research partners indicated that the PHC is more of a procedural, tick-box exercise, suggesting at least that care is needed in accounting for potential bias¹⁸.

KONEKSI’s mainstreaming approach for the research partnerships it funds is quite extensive (box 4.3). Overall, the approach is robust and multifaceted and appears to be having positive effects.

Box 4.3: KONEKSI GEDSI mainstreaming mechanisms

- Selection of projects: GEDSI responsiveness assigned equal weighting (25%) with other selection criteria
- The level of GEDSI responsiveness of research projects is assessed using GEDSI markers at the outset. These are re-assessed periodically by KONEKSI based on progress reports. These requirements were introduced after the first ECC pilot research call
- KONEKSI budget templates for projects include explicit lines for reasonable accommodation.

¹⁶ Exceeding DFAT recommendation of 3–5%,

¹⁷ Program progress reports have to date provided largely qualitative, narrative-based descriptions of progress, with examples; these are supplemented with PHC survey data when available.

¹⁸ Data limitations are not routinely discussed in program progress reports; however, the recent movement to partnership/project-based presentation of PHC results is considered a positive development.

- Partners are invited to attend inception and GEDSI workshops at the start of projects and KONEKSI has provided 'bootcamps' on GEDSI for on-going programs.
- Research projects are required to develop GEDSI Action Plans.
- Projects are required to provide Quarterly Progress Updates which include a mandatory section on actions taken to address GEDSI
- The KONEKSI GEDSI team provide support on request for on-going projects.
- The Partnership Health Check mechanism provides a baseline, midline and endline assessment of partners' views regarding the treatment of GEDSI-related commitments

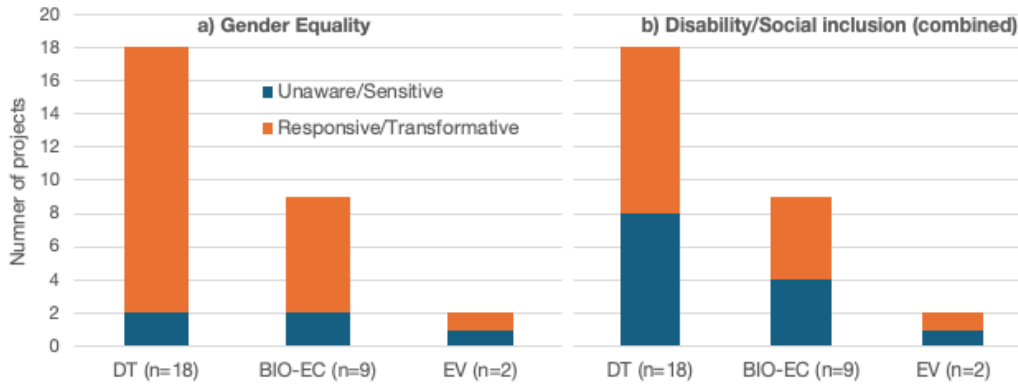
Indonesian and Australian research partners interviewed generally appreciated KONEKSI's approach to mainstreaming GEDSI as a meaningful and distinctive feature of the program. While some DT partners treated GEDSI as a separate compliance task, there are more interviewed partners that demonstrated clear efforts to implement the GEDSI Action Plan, including targeted activities for women, appointing GEDSI focal points and encouraging greater participation of female researchers at entry and mid-level positions. Interviewees from both groups attributed inclusive decisions on research team composition and data collection design directly to KONEKSI's emphasis on the topic. For Indonesian researchers in particular, budget flexibility to support reasonable accommodation was valued by several interviewees, by covering for example childcare costs, sign language interpreters, accessible transport, and accessibility costs for a person with sight loss. Interestingly interviewees from both groups highlighted the value of KONEKSI's focus in terms of opening up space for discussion of the issues and engagement with researchers less familiar with the concepts.

KONEKSI's GEDSI capacity building initiatives have been generally well received, particularly among researchers newer to the concepts. For more experienced researchers, the training is less novel but they acknowledged the value for junior team members and for those from technical backgrounds less familiar with GEDSI. Less experienced researchers interviewed referred to learning how practically to implement inclusive approaches, including for example using GEDSI assessment tools to capture intersectionality in their research design and inform the inclusion of GEDSI indicators in standards being developed by the project.

Nevertheless, the evidence collected during interviews suggests that mainstreaming's effectiveness is uneven in practice: formal GEDSI training has not consistently reached all project team members, disability inclusion is widely acknowledged as the weakest element of implementation, and the program's efforts to mainstream within the 'harder' STEM disciplines remains a work in progress. For one researcher, fully integrating disability inclusion would take a lot more resources, while the most recent PHC midline assessment of DT projects found more than half of the projects were less than fully confident they had sufficient resources for 'accessible and reasonable accommodation'. More generally, the quality of GEDSI within individual projects remains heavily dependent on the commitment of principal investigators, with limited accountability for their treatment of GEDSI issues.

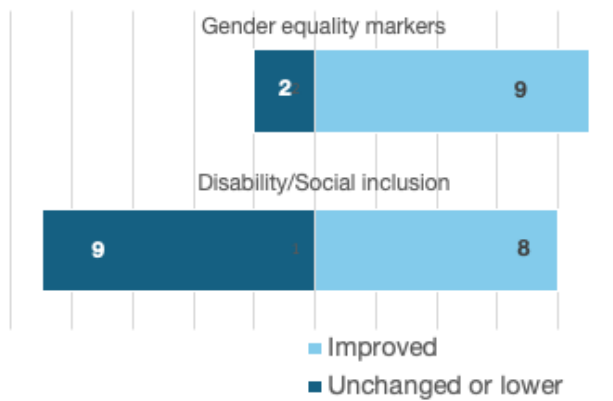
Data from the new GEDSI rubric are currently limited but they appear to reinforce these reflections. Figure 4.3 compares the latest GEDSI rubric ratings on gender equality and disability/social inclusion (combined¹⁹) for available research projects.

Figure 4.3: GEDSI rubric ratings for Gender Equality and Disability/Social Inclusion (combined)



The figure indicates that fewer projects are rated ‘unaware’ or ‘sensitive’ (the lowest 2 ratings) for gender equality compared with disability/social inclusion. Figure 4.4 compares the extent to which projects initially rated ‘unaware’ or ‘sensitive’ have since improved their ratings, for gender equality and disability/social inclusion. While the results demonstrate some improvement over time, the challenges with disability/social inclusion are again evident.

Figure 4.4: Change in GEDSI ratings over time (for lowest rated projects only)



As part of its strategy, KONEKSI has also implemented a range of targeted, GEDSI-specific capacity-building initiatives that go beyond its mainstreaming approach and which are demonstrating promising interim results:

- On gender equality, the program established a Young Women’s Leadership Network. It has also run bootcamps – delivered with support from external facilitators including ANU’s Indonesia Project. The bootcamps are perceived as quite successful in equipping early and mid-career women, including young female researchers from Eastern Indonesia, with the skills and increased confidence to present their work on high-profile panels alongside senior academics and government officials.

¹⁹ Data normalised to aid comparison

- On disability inclusion, the most consequential initiative has been the Disability Research School, established in partnership with SAPDA and supported by CBM Australia, which is assessed as unique even by international standards; this is reinforced by a Disability Network that supports OPDs to apply for research incentives to mainstream disability-inclusive research methods across participants. The provision of small research incentives is seen as an innovative development, enabling persons with disabilities to engage as producers of knowledge rather than as research subjects.
- In the area of social inclusion, KONEKSI has, working through BaKTI, helped revitalise the Eastern Indonesia Research Hub, which has grown to encompass 9 regional hubs and diversified membership drawing in CSOs, NGOs, local government analysts, and young researchers from previously marginalised regional backgrounds. The program's "East-West Knowledge Corridor" has given Eastern Indonesian researchers national visibility and created informal environments for cross-regional partnership formation. On all of the possible pathways, BaKTI still needs to play the 'Intellectual Kitchen' role, ensuring that the Hub functions as a knowledge broker/intermediary between researchers, CSOs, and local governments.
- More broadly, KONEKSI has also sought to influence the enabling institutional environment, engaging with BRIN and MOHEST to incorporate inclusion principles into national grant guidelines.

KONEKSI's investment not only in research output but also in the capacity of researchers, particularly young and early career scholars, is recognised as different from conventional research programs. Through training, knowledge events, short-courses, young female researchers, disability researchers and researchers from Eastern Indonesia are gaining opportunities to deepen their research skills and connect with peers, facilitators and academics including those from Australia.

One general area identified for attention, however, is the limited integration of these initiatives with other parts of the program or the wider ecosystem. The bootcamps, for example, have occurred late in the research process, when their potential influence on research quality is inevitably limited. In the case of the Disability Research School, participating graduates and researchers, despite improved skills and confidence, remain on the margins of the broader mainstream research ecosystem, with no structured pathways to bridge this gap. The Eastern Indonesia Researcher Hub is currently not embedded in formal research governance structures such as Higher Education Services Institute (LLDIKTI), BRIN/BRIDA, or regional planning institutions, which in turn limits its ability to turn increased capacity into policy influence.

Overall, the frameworks and models implemented by KONEKSI align with Indonesia's evolving policy landscape, where the government has begun to strengthen gender and disability mainstreaming. with these developments and provide practical examples of how inclusive approaches can be operationalized within the research ecosystem. In doing so, KONEKSI also provides practical examples of how inclusive approaches can be operationalized within the

research ecosystem, and enhance the visibility and participation of young women, persons with disabilities, and researchers from Eastern Indonesia.

On a specific point: Safeguarding arrangements are underdeveloped, with a lack of clear protocols for managing safeguarding within the newly formed regional hubs. At present, these hubs largely operate as loosely-formed communities united by a shared research/capacity building/advocacy agenda. However, beneath this are diverse and sometimes competing interests. Members of the network have begun to develop an awareness of the importance of safe spaces, mutual responsiveness, and ethical collaboration. Yet, these values remain informal and have not been translated into a shared safeguarding framework. This gap highlights the importance of safeguarding not merely as a compliance mechanism, but as a necessary platform to manage power, interests, and relationships within the Hub ensuring that collaboration remains equitable, non-extractive, and grounded in mutual protection and respect.

4.3 EOPO 2: Innovative solutions for inclusive and sustainable policies and technologies are generated by knowledge partnerships

KONEKSI is also accountable for generating “*knowledge-based solutions for policies and technologies that contribute directly to more inclusive and sustainable development*”²⁰. To address this, the program requires applicants for research grants to identify in their proposals the expected impacts, provide a plan for how stakeholders/users will be engaged during the research and a strategy for disseminating results. These were only introduced after the first ECC pilot call, which is surprising, given that such expectations have been common in development-orientated research programs for decades.

It is still quite early to assess EOPO 2 achievement, given that funding has ended completely for less than 25% of KONEKSI's project portfolio (and has yet to start for around 20%). All ECC pilot (12 month) projects are understood to be complete, though 11 of these are receiving further funding for an extension phase. **Nevertheless, at this point, KONEKSI appears likely to be on-track to achieve the EOPO:**

- The 2025 Annual Report states that results from 3 ECC projects have been taken on and applied by sub-national governments in the fields of community water security, waste management and adaptation and resilience to climate change²¹. This finding is corroborated by case studies conducted for KONEKSI by the University of Melbourne's Nossal Institute.

²⁰ Program Design Document, p.13

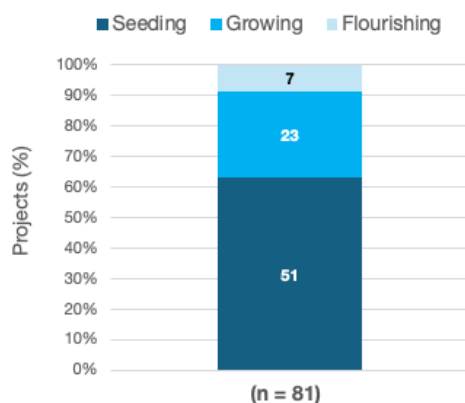
²¹ 1447/CRG/2023/29-ANU; 1447/CRG/2023/08-MOU; and 1447/CRG/2023/34-UNRAM

- In addition, KONEKSI estimates that results from at least another 4 ECC projects show good prospects for application in the short-term, given levels of interest demonstrated by policy makers²² during implementation.

While this is positive, especially given typical lags between research and use, assessing the extent of EOPO achievement is made difficult by the absence of clear performance expectations, as a basis for benchmarking progress²³. Notwithstanding the inherent uncertainty of research and the fact that research-to-use is rarely linear, one approach would be to model the portfolio of projects in terms of their anticipated ‘closeness’ to generating usable results. In principle, the program could do this using its three research streams: Seeding, Growing and Flourishing (figure 4.5).

The streams reflect differing levels of maturity/readiness for use and therefore different expected impacts. The available evidence suggest expectations for impact in the shorter term should be modest, given less than 10% of projects funded are categorised as ‘Flourishing’ (highest readiness). However, in practice the program has not used this framework systematically to characterise the portfolio and model the pipeline of expected impacts.

Figure 4.5: Readiness classification of research projects (%)



All the first ECC pilot call projects were classified as ‘Seeding’ but results to date suggest this categorisation was incorrect. Similarly, the ISR found evidence of DT projects classified as ‘Seeding’ whose research is significantly further advanced than “exploratory...early concept development...”, while the 11 EEC extension projects have not been classified at all. The value of the framework in its current use is, therefore, not clear and seems a missed opportunity.

²² Assessment based on KONEKSI’s analysis of data from quarterly project progress reports and, in some cases, program monitoring visits.

²³ Simple comparison with evaluation results from other international collaborative research programs are not considered a reliable basis.

The lack of a systematic approach to impact is hampering the program's ability to engage GOI stakeholders on this issue. The program has commissioned 3 case studies of research impact and while high quality pieces of work, they were designed largely for internal understanding, focused on partnership, with more limited focus on impact and utility for GOI partners²⁴.

In addition to 'front-end' results orientation of research, KONEKSI also provides 'back-end' support to partners in the dissemination and promotion of research results. Research partners interviewed identified strengths of the program in this regard:

- Knowledge Innovation Exchange (KIE) events and CONNECT! workshops (box 4.4) were acknowledged as useful dissemination platforms, with KIE events in particular using some effective communications/dissemination approaches. Interviewees also pointed to a marked improvement in embedding GEDSI as a guiding perspective at the KIE Yogyakarta event, compared with the Makassar event where some CSOs and OPDs felt sidelined on the second day.
- KONEKSI's grant management approach was also identified as supportive – in particular, budget flexibility allowing no-cost extensions for publication and dissemination; flexibility on the form of dissemination outputs permitted, to better reach target audiences; and the responsiveness of the partnership team in addressing questions about dissemination strategies.

Box 4.4: Summary of KIE and CONNECT! Initiatives

- A. KIE Roadshows**, intended to strengthen connections and promote exchange between researchers and potential knowledge users; encourage learning across KONEKSI partners; extend the reach of research findings; and demonstrate equal partnership models and GEDSI integration. **KIE in Makassar**, 19–20 August 2025 was attended by 466 participants (264 women, 202 men). **KIE Yogyakarta**, 19–20 November 2025 was attended by 191 participants (93 women, 98 men),
- B. CONNECT! series:** were a mixture of on-line and face-to-face/hybrid events with various topics:
- International Day of Care, March 2023. Engage target audiences in dialogue on issues of equity and inclusion in the knowledge sector
 - International Day of Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), February 2024. Increase awareness in academia, government, and civil society of women and girls in STEM
 - Disability and Urban Mobility, August 2024. Address challenges and opportunities in improving mobility for people with disability in urban areas
 - Women and Climate Change, November 2024. Address experiences of disadvantaged communities, particularly women, in addressing climate change impacts
 - Empowering Climate-Ready Generations, January 2025. Engage researchers and stakeholders on youth experiences and priorities; explore education-based solutions
 - Building Circular Economy, February 2025. Highlight research on circular economy transitions for climate and environmental resilience
 - Sustainable Health Systems, June 2025. Building a Climate Resilient Health System

²⁴ Strengthening the approach to profiling the research portfolio, ensuring case studies examine (potential) impact and the recommendation to map the readiness for use of all research projects (p.35) are offered as suggestions in response to the ISR KRQ 6 "How can KONEKSI better use its monitoring and evaluation tools to explain and promote its impact?"

- Media Communication on Climate Change Policies, June 2025. Focus on comparative research on climate change policy portrayal in Indonesia and Australia
- Electric Vehicles, 2025. Delivered in partnership with the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce.

However, researchers identified several limitations with the current approach:

- KIE events, while interesting, were criticised by many of the researchers as quite general and at times 'ceremonial' rather than substantive, with little follow up. CONNECT! workshops were more focused but perceived as relatively conventional presentations. As means to share knowledge between different projects and/or promote uptake among users, researchers felt they both were only partially effective.
- In practice, researchers indicated they had limited interaction with other projects working in closely related topics or areas, and opportunities for strategic clustering of projects and packaging of results were not being realised.
- In the main, researchers felt that the bridge to GOI partners was not well-established and policy engagement was left largely to partners' own pre-existing networks. Researchers noted that KONEKSI did not arrange any structured follow up activities after major dissemination events: one partner suggested that "link and match" meetings with government should be introduced as a standard post-event component, with agreed follow-up actions, rather than leaving contact to partners' own initiative.

4.4 IO3 - The Indonesian knowledge and innovation enabling environment is better able to promote and facilitate international knowledge partnerships

The program design document identified a conducive enabling environment for collaborative research as foundational. KONEKSI was expected to focus on specific reforms of direct benefit for its activities, but the intention was that the reforms would also bring longer and wider impact on research collaboration beyond the program's activities.

In this area, the program has made several important gains:

- establishment of the Special Channel (Jalur Khusus) with BRIN to shorten the standard 3-month research permit approval process to just 2 weeks. All 38 ECC research projects received approval through this streamlined mechanism;
- KONEKSI also negotiated with BRIN important modifications to the definition of required outputs for research projects funded under the BIO-EC Joint Call with BRIN. BRIN further agreed to sign grant agreements without waiting for permits to be approved, to avoid typical delays exceeding two months.
- KONEKSI's approach to research call design – a two-step selection process, independent peer review, GEDSI markers, and a focus on impact – was adopted by both BRIN and MOHEST for their respective joint research calls with KONEKSI. KONEKSI's directly influenced the allocation of an estimated AUD 2.7 million in GOI research funding.

However, the gains have been ad hoc and are not yet institutionalised. Furthermore, their application has been patchy, reflecting different policies for research across GOI agencies: for example, MOHEST and LPDP to date have retained their challenging publication requirements that research projects have a paper under review in a Q1 Journal²⁵ in their first-year and accepted in the second, along with another paper under review..

KONEKSI has also attempted to address implementation constraints by providing early guidance and advice to successful applicants about the steps and requirements and working with university leadership to explore streamlined business processes. A few researchers interviewed indicated these efforts were helpful but the majority pointed to the severity of challenges within both GOI and university systems.

Australian researchers consistently identified visa and research permit challenges, while differing practices between Australian and Indonesian universities – especially ethics clearance requirements – added further complexity and delays. Both Australian and Indonesian researchers frequently cited the complexity and rigidity of Indonesian bureaucracy, with BRIN regulations described as "very, very strict." For a few researchers interviewed, intellectual property (IP) arrangements present a further obstacle: in one case, IP rights have remained unresolved for nearly two years, directly hindering the wider application of project outputs.

The joint announcement (February 2026) by BRIN and MOHEST of a new MOU to strengthen their coordination on research, innovation, science and technology, and higher education may offer some hope for greater regulatory consistency across GOI agencies in the future, but this is uncertain.

To date, the program has not developed a clear strategy for engaging on enabling environment issues, beyond the narrow focus on factors affecting research collaboration in line with design intentions. While it is true that momentum on research and innovation within GOI has grown significantly only in the last 18 months, in practice the program has been supporting GOI partners on issues associated with broader ecosystem development anyway through TA funds, but in a relatively ad hoc way. This is an area of significant demand among GOI entities, and one of great potential for broader knowledge partnerships between Australian and Indonesian peer organisations. However, a strategic approach – including linkages with other relevant GOA programs²⁶ – is essential given the level of demand and the variety of initiatives currently underway or mooted. The lack of a broader strategy in this area is, for the ISR, a limitation. KONEKSI recently commissioned an "*Enabling Environment Participatory Research Study*" to examine barriers and constraints from the perspectives of both policymakers and researchers. This may provide a starting point for the development of such a strategy.

²⁵ A Q1 journal is a publication that ranks in the top 25% of journals within its subject category based on citation metrics

²⁶ For example, on regulations affecting how research funds are used, PROSPERA, given its relationship with the Ministry of Finance.

4.5 Sustainability of outcomes

This section of the report reflects on the program's approach to ensuring the progress to date is sustainable. KONEKSI's strategy for sustainability seeks to integrate three layers:

- Enduring partnerships built on mutual commitment and institutional embedding.
- Ongoing influence of research through knowledge uptake into policy, technology, and practice.
- Transformative shifts in the ecosystem, including enabling policies and inclusive participation, underpinning the continuation of benefits

With respect to the first, interviews with research partners suggest that the program, building largely on existing relationships, is helping those relationships to endure and develop. For example, some Australian researchers referred to further research grant applications submitted with their Indonesian partners (for both KONEKSI and other programs), while others stated they now had new Indonesian PhD students either directly or indirectly because of their project. Against this, researchers also noted that the short timeframes for KONEKSI projects (12 – 24 months) limited the depth of institutional engagement possible.

Regarding the second and third layers, it is too early to determine the impact in sustainability terms of research results or KONEKSI's efforts to strengthen the enabling environment.

However, the ISR has the following observations:

- KONEKSI has supported the revitalisation of the Eastern Indonesia Researcher Network with better prospects for sustainability than previously, given the strategy now of recruiting younger researchers, CSOs, disability groups, and local government researchers (compared with reliance previously on senior and busy academics). However, key informants still pointed to risks: in particular the need for "institutionalising" the network - connecting organisations (universities/NGOs) rather than just people, and the importance of (funding for) intermediaries to continue to maintain and extend those relationships including developing linkages with a more established research architecture such as BRIDA, LLDIKTI, BRIN, Bappeda . They pointed to previous analogous initiatives - including one through DFAT's KSI program at Bappenas that collapsed once key individual champions were rotated out of position.
- Such institutionalisation would involve transitioning from a program-led model to a system-led approach anchored in formal Indonesian governance. Options worth exploring include:
 - Integration under BRIDA as the regional orchestrator
 - Collaboration with LLDikti as a pathway to strengthen academic linkages
 - Formalisation as a strategic partner in the development planning process (Musrenbang) under Bapperida/Bappeda to formulate Regional Government Work Plans and Strategic Plans.

- Operationalising the Network through place-based innovation ecosystems with linkages to Australian agencies (academic and government) with an interest in the region.
 - On all of the possible pathways, BaKTI still needs to play the 'Intellectual Kitchen' role, ensuring that the Hub functions as a knowledge broker/intermediary between researchers, CSOs, and local governments.
- Similarly, the establishment of the Disability Network and Disability Research School is viewed as an experimental and innovative initiative designed to support greater involvement and acceptance of researchers with disabilities. However, sustainability depends on translating the learning into action through advocacy and policy engagement. Options for KONEKSI to support this could include linking disability researchers to the research partnerships or piloting intern, mentoring or placement schemes for alumni of the Disability Research School. Such pilots could serve as models of inclusive research collaboration for the future. However, as yet, these strategies have not been developed.
- More generally, in response to concerns about limited grantee financial and organisational resilience, KONEKSI's sustainability strategy identifies several measures to mitigate the risk: supporting resource mobilisation training; exploring co-financing arrangements with other development partners or GOI ministries; facilitating access to regional and international funding; and establishing joint seed funding pools with government and philanthropic sources. However, the ISR did not identify any activities by the program to date to implement these measures.
- Finally, the program's sustainability strategy identifies 'Fragmented Research-to-Policy Ecosystem' and 'Misaligned Institutional Incentives' as key risks. However, as discussed above, the program has not yet developed its engagement strategy regarding key shifts in the enabling environment/ecosystem to put research and innovation on a more sustainable footing. The gains achieved to date in the enabling environment have not yet been institutionalised.

4.6 Added value to Australian university sector in Indonesia

The ISR was also asked to consider the program's value beyond the EOPOs for Australia's university sector. In the time available for the review, in-depth assessment of the program's contribution in this area was not possible and the ISR did not speak with senior managers in participating Australian universities. Nevertheless, the Australian research partners interviewed pointed to a mix of 'additional' benefits, above and beyond the value of their research projects funded by KONEKSI. The most common identified were:

- Enhanced institutional visibility in the region: raising the university's profile and research reputation in Indonesia among potential students.

- Relatedly, the research projects are believed to help create pathways for Indonesian student recruitment: both directly with Indonesian project team members applying for PhD study in the partner Australian university; and indirectly, with Indonesian researchers applying for Masters and PhD study under the supervision of the Australian principal investigator on the KONEKSI project.
- Enriching teaching and learning experiences in Australian universities: several academics emphasised how international collaborative research feeds directly into their teaching, providing 'real world' examples to strengthen teaching resources.
- Strengthening bilateral relations: Australian academics consider the university sector as an important element in the bilateral relationship and collaborative research opportunities as an important means to strengthen mutual understanding between two close neighbours. Interest within the university sector in Indonesia can be variable (with senior managers often looking to the US and Europe as 'natural' partners), but a program like KONEKSI helps demonstrate the value of partnerships with Indonesia and build/maintain positive perceptions about Australia among Indonesian academics.

That said, the relationships between Australian and Indonesian universities supported by KONEKSI are primarily person-to-person rather than organisation-to-organisation at this stage. In one university, KONEKSI was considered to have been part of the overall strategic decision to develop more formal relations with Indonesian universities. However, the strength of existing links with Indonesian universities is variable among Australian institutions, beyond those with a track record of engagement and relatively large numbers of Indonesian students such as ANU, Monash, UQ and UTS.

5. Program efficiency

In general, the program appears to be making appropriate use of time and resources to achieve its end of program outcomes. To date, almost 70% of spend has been directed to program activity costs²⁷. Of this, just over three-quarters has been for collaborative research grants, under 'service line' (SL) 1, with the remainder comprising TA covering: training and advice to research partners and relevant GOI policy makers (SL2); dissemination, promotional and knowledge-sharing events (SL3); and supporting networks and coalitions (SL4), in line with the program's objectives for equitable, inclusive research. In terms of budget management, overall expenditure for the first three full years of operation (2022-2025) amounted to 98% of budget (though budget variation for individual years has been greater).

As the largest single item of program expenditure, research grant proposals are subject to detailed examination and budget review to ensure proposed activities are eligible and relevant, and budgets are appropriate and sufficient. There is some reliance on sole source

²⁷ The remaining 31% is made up predominantly of program delivery costs (staff and operations) and also management fee.

procurements (given the specialist nature of some contracts) but all major procurements must be approved by DFAT. Once approved, research grants represent relatively low risk to program VFM, given that they are fixed price and paid on a milestone basis. Project progress against agreed milestones is monitored on a quarterly basis and all projects are subject to audit on completion.

A significant question mark over the use of resources, however, relates to the decision to expand the initial pilot ECC call. This was done in response to high demand among researchers, but that should not have been a surprise. Indeed, even more expressions of interest (EOIs) were submitted for the next DT call. The very purpose of a pilot is to test, and changes were indeed subsequently introduced based on the experience of the pilot: to the results-orientation of research design, duration of research projects, inclusion requirements for research projects and refinement of the partnership management model. The rationale for making the pilot exercise the largest single call to date is not clear; currently the ECC pilot accounts for nearly 40% of all research grant commitments to date.

KONEKSI has a dual modality: research grants and TA. The inclusion of a TA element makes the program somewhat different from most international research programs but enables KONEKSI to support practical implementation of key design intentions. The program uses its TA service lines to provide training and support to research partners including from Eastern Indonesia in effective partnership management and inclusive research methods, and build capacity among research networks to advance broader inclusion objectives as well as respond flexibly to GOI requests and opportunities to support development of the broader ecosystem. Both GOI partners and research partners interviewed considered this combination an important element in the program's value, with GOI stakeholders describing KONEKSI as the 'benchmark' model given its comprehensive approach.

Key stakeholders in MOHEST and BRIN report that KONEKSI is well-managed, both in terms of the research calls/grants and broader engagement with GOI stakeholders. Indonesian and Australian research partners were also broadly positive, citing the program's responsiveness and flexibility (particularly financial flexibility) and the availability of on-boarding support as strengths in comparison with other programs. However, Australian partners pointed to the relatively high burden of quarterly reporting, and to evidence suggesting program requirements could be better adjusted to the reality of initiating and managing multi-partner, collaborative research in Indonesia²⁸. Indonesian and Australian research partners also pointed to on-going challenges and delays in spite of KONEKSI's efforts to facilitate and streamline grant establishment processes. In some cases, these were attributed to GOI requirements, in others to differences in partner institutions' policies, and in others to project management challenges for lead researchers dealing with complicated financial administration.

²⁸ For example, the requirement to agree milestones before contract signature, which itself can take months given multiple partners, means projects often started already behind schedule. Similarly, conducting the first partnership health check right at the outset means answers are provided before any partner has experience in how things are working.

Researchers perceive KONEKSI's grant management processes as quite intensive and well-resourced, in comparison with other programs they have worked on. This suggests there may be scope for efficiency gains - for example, shifting from quarterly reporting to at least reporting every 4 months (if not 6 months); conducting the baseline PHC later, when partners have a more realistic perspective on the partnership's strengths; potentially more targeting and tailoring of TA support to researchers, though whether the efficiency gains would exceed the costs of targeting is an open question.

However, there are 2 particular elements that on paper appear to increase costs, but for the ISR represent value for money: reasonable accommodation; and joint research calls.

KONEKSI's flexible provision of accessible and reasonable accommodations undoubtedly increases operating costs, but provides capacity to respond to Indonesia's geographic challenges, particularly in supporting engagement in Eastern Indonesia. Given the mobility constraints across and within the region, this budgetary flexibility enables KONEKSI to deliver genuinely inclusive events and represents a key strength in translating inclusion commitments into practice.

In the case of the joint calls, researcher interviews consistently point to *significantly* greater implementation challenges associated with the BIO-EC joint call with BRIN, compared to KONEKSI-only funded calls. Whether this experience will inform and improve practices for the soon-to-start EJET call with MOHEST remains to be seen. On this question, however, the ISR has 2 observations:

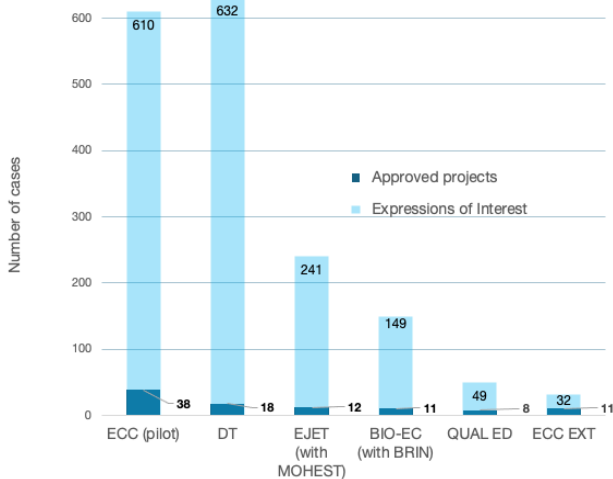
- In spite of the difficulties and additional costs, the advantages of joint calls outweigh the disadvantages, given the additional resources they leverage and the opportunity they provide to work within and improve GOI systems.
- These advantages however depend on the program rigorously capturing the experience gained and using the evidence generated to advocate systematically for improvements going forward.

Finally on program management, the ISR notes that the 7 research calls managed to date show significant variation. The first 2 KONEKSI-only funded calls (ECC pilot and DT) were open calls, attracting over 600 EOIs each. The 2 joint calls (BIO-EC and EJET) were open but attracted a narrower range of interest. The 2 KONEKSI-funded projects under the EV call were targeted rather than open competition, while the most recent KONEKSI-only funded call (Quality Education) was a restricted competition. Finally, the ECC EXT call was open but restricted to the 38 projects included in the ECC pilot call.

This variation is evident in figure 5.1 which shows for each call²⁹ the number of EOIs relative to projects finally approved, while figure 5.2 shows the ratio of full proposals received to the number of projects finally approved. A few observations can be made.

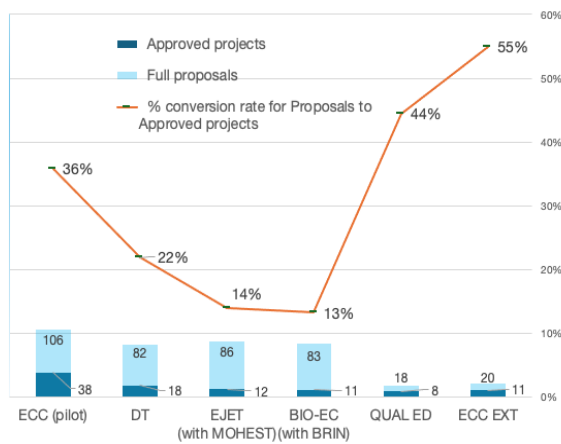
²⁹ Figures 5.1 and 5.2 exclude the 2 EV projects as these were selected directly.

Figure 5.1: Number of EOIs and approved projects, by call



First, the restricted calls (QUAL ED and ECC EXT) generated the smallest numbers of EOIs and full proposals, but the highest conversion rates into approved projects. In contrast, the KONEKSI-only open calls (ECC pilot and DT) generated over 600 EOIs each, significantly more than the joint calls, though the latter still received over 200 and over 100 EOIs. The ISR is not aware of the reason for this difference. For DT and the 2 joint calls, over 80 full proposals were invited from bidders, but less than an average of 1 in 6 were successful.

Figure 5.2: Ratio of full proposals received to the number of projects approved



Considering the effort required to develop a full proposal, this appears a low conversion rate and contrasts with the restricted calls, where around 1 in 2 full proposals were successful. Overall, the picture provided by the data suggests 2 things:

- The calls for EOIs could benefit from greater specificity and focus.
- Use of compliance only tests to shortlist eligible EOIs for full proposal development seems inefficient for both the program, given the number of proposals to be reviewed, and for bidders, who bear the time and cost of proposal development. There may therefore be a case to introduce a technical element to the EOI review to generate a shortlist for full proposals more in line with the expected number of approved projects.

Governance arrangements for the program comprise a Program Steering Committee (PSC) with very senior (echelon 1) representation from BAPPENAS, MOHEST, BRIN and DFAT; and a Program Technical Committee (PTC) made up of less senior (echelon 2), relevant staff from the same partners. Review of the minutes of PSC and PTC meetings indicate attendance and engagement by partners is high and indicative of their interest in KONEKSI. However, the minutes also suggest that the PTC does not act a forum for debate, deliberation and coordination among the partners, but rather it mirrors the PSC, as a forum to convey each partners' views and priorities. While this is not unusual, for the ISR it is somewhat of a missed opportunity for the program to facilitate more collective engagement of partners to consider and agree ways forward on, for example, key enabling environment constraints, on the priorities for program TA support and so on. One possible way of testing the feasibility of this concept would be to propose the use of working groups, attached to the PTC and dedicated to specific challenges.

Finally, the program to date has made some progress on ensuring greater harmonisation. Harmonisation with other DFAT programs has been limited to date, though it appears to be increasing³⁰. KONEKSI has also collaborated with DISR and CSIRO – the former largely in relation to the 3 projects under the EV call; the latter as a provider of TA (existing and planned) to BRIN and MOHEST. However, the engagements are projectised rather than structural to the program. With GOI, progress has been made: 2 of the 7 research calls run to date have been jointly funded with BRIN and MOHEST respectively, amounting to an estimated AUD 2.7 million in GOI funds. Although relatively small in financial terms, they are notable because they are potentially part of a larger unlocking of Indonesia's Education Endowment Fund (LPDP) for research activities rather than simply scholarships. And although not without their challenges³¹, the joint calls are also notable for the program, as a positive development that was not envisaged at the design and as a vehicle for the program to model more efficient and effective processes within Indonesian Government systems. As yet, however, joint calls have not become standard operating practice for the program's research funding.

6. Program relevance

The concept of conducting research that is of 'mutual interest' to Indonesia and Australia is central to KONEKSI's design and strategic importance. It is a key defining characteristic of the intended partnerships and in many ways distinguishes the program from more 'traditional' development initiatives.

Interviews with GOI partners, and their demonstrable engagement in the program to date confirm the concept remains highly relevant. However, as noted in section 3, there have been

³⁰ In particular, consultations with KINETIC (on climate change/ECC research) and INOVASI (QUAL ED research call)

³¹ Including a significant reduction in BRIN's planned contribution following budget cuts and lengthy delays in getting research underway.

significant developments in the program's context which have affected expectations for the program. All GOI stakeholders interviewed confirmed that the broad topics of the research calls were aligned with GOI priorities. However, they consistently pointed to 2 limitations that ultimately limit the relevance of the projects from their perspective:

- The process of issuing a relatively broad, open call to researchers and selecting projects on their individual merits resulted in 'researcher-driven' activities, which while technically sound, did not necessarily generate projects focused squarely on GOI's top priorities;
- GOI stakeholders also indicated that the process was not closely connected to end users resulting in challenges in bridging between dissemination of results and application. This concern reflects the significantly higher emphasis now being placed on downstreaming of research and commercialisation within Indonesia.

For GOA, questions of program relevance have also increased since design, for 2 main reasons:

- In spite of the program's emphasis on mutuality, Australian government entities with key responsibilities for research have not been closely involved in the design or implementation of the program to date. As a consequence, the relevance of the selected research topics has been variable for Australia³², while opportunities to integrate KONEKSI within broader reforms to Australia's science ecosystem and innovation priorities have been limited³³.
- As Australia's largest international collaborative research program³⁴, expectations about the program's value to government-to-government (G2G) relations have also increased. Mutual partnerships in higher education, research and innovation are seen as key components of the maturing bilateral relationship with an increasingly wealthy Indonesia³⁵. The program document anticipated that KONEKSI would "provide an opportunity for meaningful dialogue on complex problems of mutual interest" (p.9) as Indonesia seeks to transition from a resource-based to a knowledge-based economy. However, in practice, the development of G2G relationships has been limited to date, even though more formal peer-to-peer linkages and learning exchanges are of great interest to GOI stakeholders.

Fortunately, the program has a strong base from which it can evolve to align better with changing expectations on both sides. There is also evidence that this is on the program's agenda.³⁶

³² For example, the majority of Australian researchers interviewed indicated their research had limited direct application in Australia.

³³ For example, syncing the program with outcomes of the imminent Strategic Examination of Research and Development.

³⁴ ISR team's understanding based on discussions with DISR and ISR corroborating research.

³⁵ Action Plan for the Australia-Indonesia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (2025).

³⁶ "[T]here are emerging opportunities for longer term, government to government collaboration on innovation [and] the potential in 2026 to establish a more enduring bilateral platform for joint experimentation, knowledge exchange, and innovation system strengthening" (Annual Report, 2025, p.5)

7. Recommendations for the strategic development of the program

This section of the ISR provides the formative element of the review and identifies strategic opportunities for the program, based on developments in the sector, priorities and interests expressed by key stakeholders during the ISR, and the ISR team's own expertise. As the ISR is not a design mission, the proposed actions are intended to help set the program's direction going forward but require further discussion and refinement with stakeholders.

Based on the findings detailed above, the ISR identifies great potential for the program and strongly endorses a continuation, building on the progress achieved to date and KONEKSI's core concepts of equitable partnership and inclusion in STI research. However, to maintain its currency and influence, the program needs to evolve in two respects: to respond to GOI's agenda and enhance G2G engagement.

Many of the necessary steps can be undertaken within the scope and time remaining for the current phase and extension option (of a recommended 12 months). KONEKSI phase 2 will require some redesign to operationalise G2G ambitions and acknowledge the broadening of the program's mandate (through new/modified EOPOs³⁷). Specific steps recommended are as follows:

7.1 Responding to GOI's agenda

As noted in section 3, strengthening the higher education, research and innovation ecosystem has been accorded increased priority in Indonesia since the design of KONEKSI. This creates both opportunities and risks for the program. Rapid development in response to Presidential priorities has given rise to coordination challenges and siloed initiatives, though steps are being taken to address this – most notably through the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between MOHEST and BRIN and the development of a joint road map. Notwithstanding these positive movements, a comprehensive overarching strategy remains some way off. Box 7.1 indicates the range of established and emerging initiatives that were raised during discussions with GOI stakeholders.

Box 7.1: On-going initiatives in the research and innovation ecosystem

Discussions with key stakeholders during the ISR confirmed that a range of established and new initiatives are underway to strengthen the ecosystem for research, innovation and down-streaming:

- MOHEST has facilitated the establishment of 84 Centres of Excellence in Indonesian universities and 5 Science and Technology Parks, supports research co-funded with industry, and has expressed interest in the "2+2" collaboration model established by CSIRO with Singapore. With the Indonesia

³⁷ For example, to elevate the program's engagement with ecosystem development and a greater focus on results; and probably shift partnership quality from an end in itself to a critical success factor in the ways of working, alongside a broader definition of knowledge partnership; and possibly add an relevant objective if opportunities to engage in HEI reform are identified.

Endowment Fund for Education Agency, MOHEST has also launched *Bestari Saintek*, a platform for local government, industry and academics.

- BRIN is developing its Indonesia Innovation House (*Rumah Inovasi Indonesia*) to improve access to research results for potential users, with the intention of linking regional innovation houses (*Rumah Inovasi Daerah*) with around 50 regional research and innovation agencies (BRIDa) operating under local government.
- Bappenas is piloting Innovation Hubs in Jakarta, Depok and Eastern Indonesia, and has an SDG Entrepreneurial Centre to support knowledge exchange, start-ups and public-private partnerships.
- Kemenko PMK, the coordination ministry responsible for research, is developing an Advanced Lab concept aimed at supporting regional research needs.

Steps to promote alignment and coordination among some of these initiatives are underway, though a unifying strategy has yet to emerge.

MOHEST has also expressed interest in exploring ways in which KONEKSI might support GOI's related ambitions to improve the quality and economic contribution of Indonesia's higher education institutions. With over 4,500 higher education institutions in Indonesia, this is a significant and long-term endeavour, well outside KONEKSI's current scope except insofar as it connects with the program's research and innovation activities. Box 7.2 sets out the priorities identified by the Directorate-General of Higher Education within MOHEST during the ISR.

Box 7.2: Relevant initiatives in the D-G for Higher Education, MOHEST

In discussions with the ISR team, the Directorate-General of Higher Education within MOHEST identified the following priorities in shaping the future of higher education in Indonesia, which may be of potential relevance for KONEKSI-streaming.

- Development of a new Impact Roadmap (2026–2030) to guide higher education policy over the next 5–10 years;
- Strengthening vocational education by a program of transitioning polytechnics to universities and a series of initiatives including "Link and Match" with Australia;
- Talent management and leadership development to strengthen management skills of higher education leaders; and
- Expanding the internationalisation of Indonesian universities, designed to improve their global visibility and rankings, encourage more inbound and outbound student and staff exchanges, joint and double degrees, visiting scholars, and international research collaboration including high-impact publications with foreign partners.

In this context, KONEKSI faces important opportunities and challenges. In responding, the program's will almost certainly develop its remit: with greater focus on research impact, more active support for the evolving research and innovation ecosystem, strengthening G2G and peer-to-peer institutional relations. The ISR team acknowledges the risks associated with this but assesses that the greater risk lies in the missed opportunity that would follow from a failure to evolve in line with the developing.

Two considerations are particularly important in framing a response. First, this is a dynamic context that will develop over the longer term: there is no justification for the program to adopt a 'wait and see' posture, but equally it should develop in step with progress in the research and

innovation ecosystem and in GOI policy on innovation. Second, any broadening of program ambitions should build on the established successes and strengths of the program – namely, collaborative knowledge partnerships grounded in mutual interests and the principles of equitable and inclusive research. These features have its performance to date.

With that in mind, the ISR identifies a number of opportunities for KONEKSI in the sections that follow. As a guide, proposed actions are assigned an approximate timeframe for implementation, bearing in mind that the current phase has 20 months remaining, with the (recommended) option of an additional 12 months provided for in KONEKSI's design. On that basis, a successor phase might be expected to begin by the end of 2028 or early 2029 at the latest.

Strengthened connections between researchers and users

In the short term (within the current phase):

- The ISR recommends that the program **develop and pilot a challenge-based funding model** to drive the selection of new research activities. The model should be integrated with one or more of the GOI place-based initiatives designed to build the innovation ecosystem. This will require an additional round of research funding, potentially for fewer but larger projects, utilising the budget earmarked for the current phase.
- In principle, the program should **adopt joint-funded research calls as standard** operating procedure for research grants. There are clear risks associated with this approach, as highlighted elsewhere in this report. However, the ISR team considers that the benefits outweigh these risks on two grounds: working within the system affords the program greater opportunity to influence GOI's approach based on first-hand knowledge and shared interest; and it should free up more of the program's limited budget for technical assistance, while potentially increasing the overall quantum of research grants supported by the program.
- The program should also **update and map the readiness for use of all research supported to date**, (completed and on-going). This will require a revision of KONEKSI's current uptake framework and should include, among other things, an assessment of the adaptation and adoption steps necessary for application, and of potential application domains.
- The ISR further recommends that the program run **Knowledge and Information Exchange (KIE) panels focused on specific challenges in relevant locations** – for example, the seaweed industry in Eastern Indonesia. These would bring KONEKSI knowledge partners and related potential users and beneficiaries together in challenge-focused clusters to discuss and learn from the research. They should connect as closely as possible with relevant GOI initiatives to develop innovation ecosystems sub-nationally. In the view of the ISR team, this approach, which aims to work through local

systems and is coupled with the adoption of challenge-based funding, is the preferred means of fostering down-streaming of KONEKSI research³⁸.

Engagement with Indonesia's developing research and innovation ecosystem

In the short term (within the current phase):

- The program should **codify the lessons and solutions identified to date in the enabling environment**. The program's own learning – in particular regarding constraints to collaborative research – together with commissioned studies, for example those examining aspects of Australia's research and innovation ecosystem, should be used to generate specific knowledge products tailored to target audiences. Opportunities for this learning to influence developments in the ecosystem are opening up, notably with the recent MOU between MOHEST and BRIN which is, among other things, seeking to establish a single set of rules for international collaboration across agencies.
- The program should **develop an ecosystem engagement strategy encompassing both technical assistance and grants**. This should address regulatory and institutional aspects and draw on learning about approaches to ecosystem development from within and outside Indonesia and Australia. The program's engagement in broader ecosystem development to date has been effective but somewhat responsive and ad hoc. While flexibility remains important given the dynamic environment, the growing demands on the program make a more explicit articulation of purpose and objectives necessary to guide and prioritise its contribution. The strategy might usefully incorporate participatory workshops or forums with key stakeholders to examine developments in the round and discuss and prioritise the program's contribution – with a view to avoiding support being directed along siloed organisational lines.
- The program should **develop a framework to alleviate intellectual property (IP) constraints**. To date, lack of clarity around IP has had a limited but non-negligible impact on the program. With growing interest in down-streaming, IP issues will only become more pressing. A single approach will not serve all circumstances, and the differing interests of stakeholders makes this task complicated. However, with targeted short-term expertise, the program is well placed to establish a working framework capable of addressing the most common issues.

³⁸ An alternative approach suggested during the ISR was for the program, with GOI partners, to identify a small number of 'winners' and support their commercialisation or adoption. However, this is considered a considerably riskier strategy and a significant departure from the established strengths of the program.

Mobilising philanthropic and private sector funding

Diversifying funding sources and engaging non-governmental and non-ODA actors represents a further area of opportunity, though one with important constraints. Indonesia's innovation landscape is becoming increasingly pluralistic. Corporate research and development activity, state-owned enterprises with innovation mandates, venture capital ecosystems and philanthropic foundations supporting education and research are all expanding. Beyond direct funding, the private sector can also contribute in-kind, through staff time, facilities and infrastructure and through intangible resources such as access to proprietary data, intellectual property and networks. These actors are increasingly relevant to innovation diffusion and scaling.

KONEKSI's established credibility means it is well-placed to act as a broker for structured co-investment. Matched-funding models, industry sponsorship, philanthropic support for social innovation streams and blended finance mechanisms for innovation pilots are all conceptually feasible. However, the current program architecture is not designed as a blended finance or co-investment platform. Private sector engagement requires clear value propositions, including IP clarity, market access incentives and risk-sharing mechanisms. Philanthropic actors typically require mission-oriented causes and often operate outside formal government-aligned research structures, necessitating different engagement strategies. Enhanced due diligence and oversight would also be necessary. Diversification can enhance sustainability and leverage additional resources, but will not substitute for core bilateral commitments; rather, it can complement a more innovation-oriented program model.

In the short term (within the current phase):

- The program should **identify lessons and opportunities from existing GOI research initiatives co-funded with industry** – for example, MOHEST's Matching Fund. It should also explore co-investment opportunities and requirements through the proposed challenge-based research pilot, with private sector or philanthropic actors serving as the challenge holder, as part of the program's engagement with relevant innovation ecosystem actors during the development of the pilot.

Contribution to GOI's reforms in the Higher Education Sector

There are potential opportunities for KONEKSI to contribute to GOI's higher education reform agenda through its research and innovation activities and strategic engagement with ecosystem development. However, the higher education sector is vast, and the risks associated with strategic drift must be managed carefully. The program's role should very much be limited to what it can contribute through its adjusted research and technical assistance activities. Even the limited options outlined here may have budget and scope implications for program implementation; for this reason, they are considered exploratory at this stage.

In the medium term (within the extension period of the current phase):

- As a foundational exercise, the program should **conduct a rapid assessment/mapping of the existing and potential strengths of Indonesian and Australian research institutions in relevant fields**. This would inform not only the facilitation of new research partnerships through challenge-based funding, but also the targeting of potential contributions to higher education reform. The purpose would be to identify complementary strengths – not to make comparative assessments. This exercise might usefully be facilitated jointly by the Directorate-General of Higher Education within MOHESST and the Australian Department of Education (DOE).
- The program should **explore the scope to integrate KONEKSI-supported research grants with GOI scholarship funding**. GOI has expressed an interest in deriving greater economic value from its educational scholarships. Linking scholarships for junior academics with KONEKSI's challenge-based research grants would provide a clear channel through which scholarships could be focused on priority research topics.
- The program should **explore whether KONEKSI-supported research can provide PhD opportunities** for junior Indonesian academics. Increasing the number of PhDs and raising the global rankings of Indonesian universities are stated priorities for Indonesia. Options might include an accelerated PhD program linked to specific research projects, or in some instances projects that extend beyond the current 24-month timeframe.
- The program should also **explore the scope to support MOHESST's leadership development among senior staff in higher education institutions**. Such institutional mentoring arrangements could potentially be integrated with existing research partnerships, thereby widening the relationships they sustain beyond the researcher level.

7.2 Enhancing government-to-government (G2G) engagement³⁹

The managing contractor model has been largely effective in progressing the current phase's objectives while providing efficient administrative coordination, risk management and technical support. Research partners reported that grant management, compliance processes and advisory services are professionally delivered and generally responsive. However, the model also mediates most operational interaction between GOA and GOI institutions. While strategic oversight structures exist, day-to-day programmatic engagement is largely channelled through the contractor. As a result, the program operates more as a collaboration mechanism for universities and research institutes than as a structured G2G platform embedded in formal bilateral policy coordination. The G2G links established to date – such as the CSIRO-BRIN Science Management Symposium and associated internship – are projectised and somewhat ad hoc in character.

³⁹ KRQ 9: What opportunities and challenges exist to further enhance GOI-GOA collaboration in these sectors

Indonesian and Australian stakeholders alike acknowledged the value of strengthening connections between peer institutions. GOA has a strong interest in deepening bilateral relations and advancing the ambitions set out in the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (2018) and associated Action Plan (2025). KONEKSI is by far Australia's largest bilateral collaborative research initiative and can be leveraged more effectively to build institutional relationships in areas of shared interest. For GOI, more embedded G2G linkages in research and innovation could facilitate and streamline joint priority-setting, policy experimentation and structured knowledge exchange between ministries and agencies.

The contractor-managed model, while operationally efficient, can dilute opportunities for sustained G2G engagement in the processes of thematic prioritisation, activity selection and implementation oversight. Strategic dialogue tends to be constrained when the mobilisation of strong research and innovation expertise on the GOA side is episodic and activity-focused. At the same time, expanding whole-of-government participation introduces coordination and capacity risks and can reduce implementation efficiency where policy interests are substituted for programming experience. Enhancing G2G engagement through the program represents a high-value opportunity and is eminently feasible. A range of models for bilateral G2G collaborative research programs can be drawn upon for reference (see Box 7.3).

Box 7.3: Examples of bilateral G2G-led international research collaborations

The **UK-India Science and Innovation Council** is a bilateral ministerial forum established in 2012 to steer high-level strategic cooperation on science, technology, research and innovation between the two countries. Cochaired by the UK's Minister for Science, Research and Innovation (DSIT) and India's Secretary, Department of Science and Technology (DST), it meets every 1–2 years, with policy dialogues and technical working groups in between. It is supported by a steering committee of senior officials from DSIT, UKRI, FCDO, DST and India's DBT/Principal Scientific Adviser. On the UK side, DSIT leads policy, with UKRI, British Council, Royal Society and FCDO (Science and Innovation Network) delivering programmes in collaboration with Indian partners. Funding is pooled from UK ISPF/Newton corridors and Indian DST/DBT grants, often with 50:50 costsharing on joint projects.

Australia's Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR) currently runs bilateral collaborative arrangements with India and China, under its **Global Science and Technology Diplomacy Fund (GSTDF)**. DISR acts a policy lead and has responsibility for oversight. The administration is run by an Australian Learned Academy, which informs priority setting through its membership and networks and administers grant agreements for discrete projects/activities. Program priorities/projects are decided jointly by DISR and the relevant government counterpart, and informed by mandatory consultation with DFAT, Prime Minister and Cabinet (PMC), and other relevant GOA bodies. Decision-making is operationalised through joint selection committees with counterparts in partner countries.

The **Commonwealth Scientific & Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)** is the Australian Government's national science agency with 45 facilities around the country and just under 5000 staff. It runs a range of SE Asian partnership programs, including the Aus4Innovation partnership with Vietnam and the Innovations in Food for Sustainability (IF4S) grants program with Singapore. It has operated a number of niche programs with Indonesia such as the Applied Research & Innovation System in

Agriculture (ARISA) program, which focused on brokering and building capacity in partnerships between research institutes and the private sector, and the Indo-Pacific Plastics Innovation Network (IPPIN), which supports the development and scale-up of ideas through entrepreneurial capacity-building and funding for applied research and commercial trials. It also separately partners with BRIN on the Research & Innovation for an Advanced Indonesia (RIIM) grants program.

The precise arrangements will vary according to context and objectives, but regardless of the final form, advancing this aim will require certain elements to be in place:

- The approach should be grounded in the framework provided by the Action Plan for the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (2025) and informed by any relevant outcomes of the Strategic Examination of Research and Development (SERD) in Australia, which is due to report shortly.
- It should enable more systematic involvement of DISR, CSIRO, relevant Australian Learned Academies, ACIAR and DOE in establishing mutual research priorities with Indonesian counterparts, sharing knowledge about innovation ecosystems and contributing to the managed transition to an appropriate GOA institution for longer-term implementation of the program.
- It should be based on a more thorough appraisal of the areas of greatest mutual interest within the research priorities of both Indonesia and Australia.
- It should offer clearer integration with bilateral policy processes beyond project-level engagement, and provide more formalised policy dialogue platforms linked to research themes.
- It should enable greater whole-of-government participation in strategic oversight structures.

Beyond these parameters, DFAT and GOA will need to determine the optimal design for structuring G2G engagement through detailed consultations with key stakeholders. In developing the design, DFAT will need to identify governance arrangements that strike the right balance between interest, expertise and capacity in designing, delivering and overseeing a broad program of collaborative research with a significant component of strategic technical assistance. Maintaining the program's commitment to equitable and inclusive partnerships will continue to be a central element in advancing Australia's International Development Policy and preserving ODA eligibility. With that in mind, the ISR recommends the following steps:

In the short term (within the current phase):

- DFAT should **mobilise a series of consultations with GOA stakeholders** regarding the implementation model for phase 2. One option is for DFAT to establish an advisory panel among relevant GOA stakeholders as a forum to explore the available options and guide developments in an informed and coordinated manner.

In the medium term (within the extension period of the current phase):

- The program should **undertake a strategic foresight exercise for science, technology and innovation (STI)** to systematically identify potential areas of collaboration between Australia and Indonesia, drawing on the respective strengths of each country and engaging the relevant actors from both sides. On the Australian side, the exercise should involve DISR, CSIRO, relevant Australian Learned Academies and ACIAR. In Indonesia, consultees should include BAPPENAS, MOHEST, BRIN, the national science academies (API and ALMI), and relevant actors from the private sector.
- When stakeholder consultations are sufficiently advanced, **DFAT should launch a design mission for phase 2 of the program**. The mission should ideally involve DISR as a co-design lead and consult closely with CSIRO, the Australian Learned Academies, ACIAR and DOE, among others. The exercise can benefit from the findings of the foresighting exercise.

In the longer term, the expectation is that phase 2 will entail significantly greater G2G involvement. Whether there is a continued role for a managing contractor in the management and administration of the program, or whether it can be run from DISR through CSIRO and the Learned Academies - as is the case with other bilateral programs - remains to be determined through the design process, as does the pace of any transition.

Annex 1: Data sources and collection methods

Data sources

The ISR team drew on both primary and secondary sources of data. **Primary data** was obtained from semi-structured interviews conducted remotely and face-to-face with stakeholders, individually or in groups, at both the national and subnational levels, as set out below:

Primary data sources

Key informant group	Male	Female	Total
Indonesian national government	20	12	32
Indonesian subnational government	1	0	1
Australian Government	8	22	30
Indonesian academic	16	10	26
Australian academic	9	7	16
Indonesian CSO	7	13	20
Australian NGO	2	1	3
Indonesian private sector	4	0	4
KONEKSI program leadership team	3	4	7
TOTAL	70	69	139

Secondary data sources:

- DFAT policies and strategies
- Program strategies, design, planning, monitoring and performance reports
- DFAT's own corporate performance reports (IMRs)
- Relevant management information data (financial, operational and administrative) held by both DFAT and the program
- Relevant reviews and evaluation reports of the programs

Annex 2: Alternative Text for Diagrams and Figures

Figure 1.1.: ISR Implementation Timelines

Figure 1.1. shows the implementation timeline of ISR in picture format. It shows that the ISR planning began in late November to December 2025. It is continued with document review in January 2026 and fieldwork from mid-January to mid-February and follow up interview from mid to the end of February. The analysis and drafting process of the ISR was then concluded in the end of March 2026.

Figure 2.1: KONEKSI Expenditure to Date

Figure 2.1. is a bar chart which shows KONEKSI expenditure per fiscal year to date. Based on these chart, KONEKSI total expenditure is AUD 42 million to January 2026, and it appears to be largely on track in spending its budget, where KONEKSI have spent 66% its budget within 63% of its budget time. The first bar shows that from Dec 2022-June 2023, KONEKSI spent more than 4 million AUD. The second bar shows that from July 2023 to June 2024, KONEKSI spent around 14 million AUD. The third bar shows that from July 2024 to June 2025, KONEKSI spent around 16 million. The last bar shows that from July 2025 to January 2026, KONEKSI spent around 8 million.

Figure 2.2.: KONEKSI Distribution of Expenditure to Date (Excluding Management Fees)

Figure 2.2. is a pie chart showing the distribution of KONEKSI's expenditures broken down from the highest to least proportion of expenditures such as program activity costs, personnel and support costs, and operational costs. It shows that to date, program activity costs have accounted for the major share of program expenditure (69%), with the remainder covering delivery costs (predominantly personnel and operational costs). Expenditure on collaborative research grants to date account for just over three-quarters of all activity costs, with the various forms of TA accounting for the remainder

Figure 2.3: Number and average value of KONEKSI research projects ordered by research call

Figure 2.3 shows a bar graph identifying an average grant value provided by KONEKSI across 7 (seven) research call proposals on the topics: Environment and Climate Change, Digital Transformation, Electric Vehicle, Bioeconomy, ECC extension, Equitable and Just Energy Transition (EJET) and Quality Education. . The first bar shows that for ECC grants, the average value of research project is AUD 311,000 for 38 research projects. The second bar shows that for the DT grants; the average value of the research project is AUD 444,000 for 18 research projects. The third bar shows that for 2 EV grants; the average value is AUD 674,000. The fourth bar shows that for the joint call with BRIN on bioeconomy, the average grant value is AUD 383,000 for 11 research grants. The fifth bar shows that for the ECC extension grants, the average value for 11 research projects is AUD 190,000. The sixth bar shows for the joint call with MOHEST on EJET, the average value is AUD 280,000 for 12 projects. The seventh bar shows that for the Quality Education grants; the average value of 8 grants is still to be confirmed as the contract negotiation was still in process while this report is written.

Figure 2.4 on summary of TA activities (to date and planned) by service lines

Figure 2.4 shows a bar chart comprise of three bars which represents three types of KONEKSI Technical Assistance (Tas) that have been delivered during the time ISR was conducted, namely advisory/technical support, dissemination, and network capacity development. The first bar shows that KONEKSI has provided around 7 advisory/technical support for research partners and around 20 for GOI partners. The second bar shows that KONEKSI has conducted 6 knowledge dissemination activities, of which were targeting KONEKSI research partners. The third bar shows that KONEKSI has provided around 15 capacity building for research partners and 1 for GOI partners.

Figure 4.3 GEDSI rubric ratings for Gender Equality and Disability/Social Inclusion (combined)

Figure 4.3 shows a bar graph identifying the degree of understanding of gender equality and disability inclusion across three KONEKSI research projects (ECC, DT and Electric Vehicle), assessed against KONEKSI GEDSI Rubrics. In DT research, of 18 research, 16 are categorised as gender equality responsive/transformational, 2 are categorised gender equality unaware/sensitive. On Disability/Social Inclusion, 10 DT research are categorised as disability/social inclusion responsive/transformational and 8 are categorised as disability/social inclusion unaware/sensitive. In Bioeconomy research, of 9 research, 7 are categorised as gender equality responsive/transformational, 2 are categorised gender equality unaware/sensitive. On Disability/Social Inclusion, 5 Bioeconomy research are categorised as disability/social inclusion responsive/transformational and 4 are categorised as disability/social inclusion unaware/sensitive. In EV research, of 2 research, half of them is GEDSI responsive/transformational and other is GEDSI unaware/sensitive.

Figure 4.4: Change in GEDSI ratings over time (for lowest rated projects only)

Figure 4.4 shows that two bars which shows the change in GEDSI ratings of KONEKSI projects which received the lowest score in GEDSI. The first bar shows that of 11 projects rated as low in Gender Equality, 9 projects have demonstrated some improvements. The second bar shows that of 17 projects rated as low in disability/social inclusion, 8 projects have demonstrated some improvements.

Figure 4.5 on Readiness Classification of Research

Figure 4.5 shows the maturity of the research project based on KONEKSI Readiness Scale or Classification. It shows distribution of the total of 81 ongoing KONEKSI research projects based on the following categories: Seeding, Growing and Flourishing. The bar shows that there are 51 research are on 'seeding' category, 23 research are on 'growing' category, and 7 research are on 'flourishing' category.

Figure 5.1 on Numbers of EOI and Approved Projects by Call

Figure 5.1 a bar chart shows the comparison of number of EOIs received with the actual number of approved projects for each research topic. The first bar shows that for ECC research, KONEKSI received 610 EOIs and approved 38 projects. For Digital Transformation research, KONEKSI received 632 EOIs and selected 18 projects. For Equitable and Just Energy Transition research, KONEKSI received 241 EOIs and selected 12 projects. For Quality education,

KONEKSI received 49 EOIs and selected 8 research. For ECC extension, KONEKSI received 32 proposal and selected 11 projects.

Figure 5.2 on the Ratio of Full Proposal Received to the Number of Project Approved

Figure 5.2 shows the ratio of number of projects approved in six KONEKSI grants cohorts, against the proposal received during the selection process. The first bar shows that in ECC cohort, 38 of 106 research proposals submitted are selected (36% conversion rate). The second bar shows that in DT cohort, 18 of 82 research proposals submitted are selected (22 % conversion rate).. The third bar shows that for EJET cohort, 12 of 86 research proposals submitted are selected (14% conversion rate) proposal is selected. The fourth bar shows that for Bioeconomy cohort, 11 of 83 research proposals submitted are selected (13% conversion rate).. The fifth bar shows that for Quality Education cohort, 8 of 18 research proposals submitted are selected (44% conversion rate), and the sixth bar shows that for ECC Extension cohort, 11 of 20 research proposals submitted are selected (55% conversion rate).