

## Media Release - 6 December 2019



### **New international research collaboration launches to help rural communities benefit from South Sulawesi's first ever train line.**

On 18 November 2019, South Sulawesi Governor Professor Dr Nurdin Abdullah [launched the Partnership for Australia-Indonesia Research \(PAIR\)](#) at his residence in Makassar.

PAIR is an initiative of the Australia-Indonesia Centre (AIC), supported by Australian and Indonesian governments, that brings together 51 researchers from 11 leading universities – seven Indonesian and four Australian – to collaborate on South Sulawesi's new train line.

Over the next four years, the researchers will explore the western coastal region of South Sulawesi, where a 145-kilometre train line will soon connect five cities and regencies: Makassar, Maros, Pangkajene and Kepulauan (aka Pangkep), Barru and Parepare.

"Experience shows that new transport projects do not benefit communities if they are not focused on people, and made easy to access and affordable to the public," said Dr Eugene Sebastian, AIC Executive Director.

"Communities," he explained, "are likely to remain disadvantaged if they lack the knowledge, resources and skills needed to find jobs or build a business", said Dr Sebastian.

The [11 Senior Fellows](#) that will lead the research team recently had their first week on the ground to meet with stakeholders from government, business, education and community groups to gain an understanding of the South Sulawesi context and the expected impacts of the train line.

"I believe that universities will be the lab for government, and also for business," said the South Sulawesi Governor, welcoming PAIR's mission to support evidence-based policy around the development of the train line.

"We can't live only relying on our own skills. We have to collaborate with other stakeholders, other regions, other provinces, even other countries."

Australian Consul General in Makassar Richard Mathews believes "PAIR could help stimulate the growth of good researchers and good analysts in places like Makassar, to contribute to the development of eastern Indonesia."

Research will begin in 2020.

**Contact details and more information on next page**

## Media enquiries

For more information contact:

**Leo Pegoraro**  
**PAIR Program Manager**  
03 9903 4677

**Marlene Millott**  
**PAIR Project Officer**  
0427 516 851

[pair@australiaindonesiacentre.org](mailto:pair@australiaindonesiacentre.org)

## About PAIR

PAIR is an AIC initiative supported by the Australian Government, the Indonesian Government and 11 leading universities to advance the research linkages between the two countries and improve the impact of that research.

PAIR focuses on the importance of knowledge production and research capability building to support development, planning and policy-making for both countries.

Visit the [PAIR website](#) for more information.

## About The Australia-Indonesia Centre



The Australia-Indonesia Centre is a consortium of 11 leading research universities in both countries. Its mission is to advance people-to-people links in science, technology, education and innovation.

Visit the [AIC website](#) for more information.