

NEWS

Protecting coastal communities from the impacts of climate change project wins Newton Prize 2019 for Indonesia

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The second [Newton Prize 2019](https://www.newtonfund.ac.uk/newtonprize/) (<https://www.newtonfund.ac.uk/newtonprize/>) winner has been announced at an event in Jakarta, Indonesia on Tuesday 14 January.

The winning UK-Indonesia partnership is helping to protect coastal communities from the devastation caused by coastal hazards such as flooding and tsunamis. The research has improved Indonesia's capacity to deal with these events through better communications and warning procedures.

Climate change is increasing the frequency and severity of extreme weather events and natural hazards. The research, which was led by Professor Richard Haigh, University of Huddersfield and Dr Harkunti Rahayu Institute of Technology Bandung, combined two distinct approaches – disaster risk reduction and climate change adaption – and developed a new integrated strategy to better protect homes, businesses and infrastructure in coastal urban areas. The team produced a policy statement to embed the research in Indonesia's development plan.

The project also addressed tsunami preparedness and informed the priorities and approach of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO and the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Indian Ocean to tsunami warning in Indonesia and other countries in the Indian Ocean.

Coastal communities are often vital hubs of economic and social development. The results of this work are important for other coastal countries, such as the UK, which are particularly vulnerable to rising sea levels.

Five projects were shortlisted for the Indonesia category of the Newton Prize. These included:

- improving the lives of women by ensuring their views and needs are accounted for by urban planners and decision makers
- improved diagnosis and treatment of Tuberculosis
- quick, inexpensive testing for insect spread infectious disease
- how a simple dietary change can reduce the risk of dementia by 20% and improve memory

Another UK-Indonesia project, on affordable bridge monitoring solutions that have reduced life-threatening accidents and improved economic development, has been shortlisted for the £500,000 Chair's Award. The winner of the Chair's Award will be announced at an event in London on Wednesday 12 February 2020.

Heather Wheeler, UK Minister for Asia and the Pacific:

"The success of the UK-Indonesia Science and Technology Partnership, which we support through the Newton Fund has led to a step change in our research and innovation relationship. We have more British and Indonesian researchers working together than ever before, with joint programmes in health, food, energy, biodiversity and sustainability driving positive change in the lives of many in Indonesia. The Newton Prize facilitates some of the strongest international research, and brings together the best minds from across a number of areas."

Professor Bambang Brodjonegoro, the Minister of Research and Technology / Head of National Research and Innovation Agency:

"From 2014 to 2019, the number of research and innovation collaborations between the UK and Indonesia has significantly increased. Thanks to the Newton Fund, we have jointly rolled out 22 calls for applications over 15 schemes that benefit more than 200 individuals from more than 100 organisations in the UK and Indonesia.

I hope the collaboration between the UK and Indonesia on science and innovation continues to flourish."

Newton Prize 2019

The Newton Prize is an annual £1 million fund developed to showcase how UK science and innovation partnerships are helping to solve global development challenges. The Newton Prize also incentivises researchers and innovators to participate in the Newton Fund as partners with the UK to work on the most important challenges facing developing countries such as poverty, gender equality and affordable and clean energy.

This year over 150 Newton funded projects, fellowships or other awards applied for the Newton Prize. Three prizes of up to £200,000 each will be awarded to winning projects with the eligible countries: China, Indonesia and the Philippines. An additional Chair's Award of up to £500,000 will be presented to one project from across the three countries that best demonstrates knowledge exchange and partnership working.

The funding allows researchers to take their Newton projects to the next level, for example by translating their project from the lab into the field, through expansion and/or improvements to their original project, by bringing in more capacity or gaining higher profile; all increasing the likelihood of success.

