

Obtaining International Excellence through Cross-Border Research Initiatives: A Consortium-Sponsored Journal

It is with great pleasure I provide an introduction to this innovative academic journal on higher education. *Excellence in Higher Education* was conceived within the Consortium of Indonesian Universities–Pittsburgh (KPTIP: Konsorsium Perguruan Tinggi Indonesia–Pittsburgh) in 2009 and this inaugural issue is the culminating work of an international editorial team led by professors from Indonesia, the United States, and other countries from every major geographic region.

KPTIP was organized to build partnerships between member universities. The mission of KPTIP is to advance excellence in Indonesian higher education, establish sustainable academic and research partnerships, and provide technical support to KPTIP member universities. We accomplish our mission by improving the quality of higher education among KPTIP member universities, strengthening the system of decentralized education in Indonesia, and providing an avenue for member universities to better network and collaborate together. Several Consortium-sponsored projects include regional and international seminars on higher education management, leadership, and strategy as well as a focus on long-term sustainability of best practices in higher education leadership and quality assurance.

KPTIP was organized on 24 September 2007 in Pittsburgh, USA. The setting that led to its formation was a higher education management training conference of seven Indonesian rectors who visited the University of Pittsburgh as part of USAID's Decentralized Basic Education 2 Project. When the KPTIP was first established it consisted of seven Indonesian universities and one US university: Syiah Kuala University, Banda Aceh; State University of Semarang; Walisongo State Institute of Islamic Studies, Semarang; Sebelas Maret University, Surakarta; State University of Malang; State University of Surabaya; University of Muhammadiyah Makassar; and the University of Pittsburgh. Since its initial meeting in Pittsburgh, the Consortium has grown to number 19 universities from Indonesia and the United States.

KPTIP is making a difference in providing excellence in higher education. The Consortium sponsors a number of publications, projects, an Academy for Higher Education Management, and training meetings on a variety of topics. Multiple KPTIP-member universities also have university based lab schools.

Excellence in Higher Education has the full support of KPTIP as exemplified by the Consortium's logo on the front cover of each issue as well as the cover page of each article. We are grateful for the initial support and generous funding of USAID, which made this publication initiative possible. On behalf of KPTIP, I am pleased to provide my personal endorsement for this journal and to ensure that *Excellence in Higher Education* has the full and sustained institutional support it needs to live up to its name.

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