

## Personal Statement

Dear Admissions Committee of The University of Western Australia.

Growing up in Indonesia as part of the lower economic class, I realised the crucial role of entrepreneurship to embracing change. Through collaboration with some college friends, I founded Metabharata Official, a startup that focuses on developing action games based on traditional arts. Unfortunately, this one-year-old startup had to compete with global gaming companies, such as Moonton with its Mobile Legends, which had far superior resources, perhaps related to the supportive ecosystem of its origin country. With limited capital and managerial skills, I found it difficult to elevate Metabharata Official to a higher level. Because the local entrepreneurial ecosystem was not favourable, our company experienced slow growth. I recognised that such cases are not uncommon in Indonesia. I was frustrated by how little I and many other local startups could do when trying to scale up amidst the challenges of a competitive market. What Indonesia's startup scene really needs is sustainable human capital development to create a supportive entrepreneurial ecosystem. That's where I want to dedicate my life to creating a paradigm shift in the ecosystem in Indonesia.

The population explosion, known as the demographic bonus, implies that Indonesia needs more entrepreneurs to potentially become a developed country. However, according to data from the Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises, the ratio of entrepreneurs in Indonesia is only 3.5% of the total population, and 50% of them fail in the first year. Early-stage startups struggle to find investors, exacerbated by the government's suboptimal funding programmes because the associated policies are made without proper analysis. Currently, policy makers in Indonesia's entrepreneurial sector are dominated by politicians without relevant backgrounds. In formulating a solution to the status quo, stakeholders must have an in-depth understanding of the needs. I want to be a practitioner who connects policymakers with the facts on the ground, so that they can make impactful decisions to promote human capital development and minimise new poverty.

The Master of Human Resources and Employment Relations (MHRER) degree from The University of Western Australia is strategic for me to realise the goal of sustainable human resource development, as it is determined to create a generation of global leaders, with the concept of acculturation between indigenous local wisdom and international development paradigms, where the idea of such an ecosystem is what I want to research in the tradition-rich country of Indonesia. I have also read an article by Dr Joseph Carpini on self-determination theory (SDT) on human resources in encouraging hard work and innovation. Given the unstable ecosystem in Indonesia, it was important for me

to understand how SDT ideas can accelerate the innovation ecosystem through strengthening autonomous motivation, personal growth, and more intensive contribution.

I would like to bring a new perspective to the research at The University of Western Australia, specifically on how underprivileged people in developing countries like Indonesia struggle when competing with global competitors. In order to better understand the target entrepreneurial ecosystem, during my time as an undergraduate student, I was active in the Entrepreneurial Student Development Programme of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology and the Hackathon programme of the Digital Forum of State-Owned Enterprises. In addition, as an effort to gain practical knowledge, I participated in an internship at a startup called Inclupedia as a Technology Product Manager who develops products from upstream to downstream, and was active in the Startup Capacity Building programme of the Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises in 2024, to establish relationships while increasing the fundraising potential of Metabharata Official.

Post-graduation, in the short term I plan to become an academic who bridges the interests of human resources in local startups with policy makers through research in the field of entrepreneurship, as well as developing Metabharata Official based on the managerial knowledge I have gained. In the long term, I aim to work at the Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises of the Republic of Indonesia to encourage strategic policies on financing and innovation assistance to local startups. In welcoming the demographic bonus, Indonesia needs an entrepreneurial ecosystem through better empowerment of human resources in the future, and I envision being part of the fighters who strive to make it happen.

Thank you for your consideration of my application. I am excited about the opportunity to study in an innovative, equitable and diverse academic environment at The University of Western Australia.

Sincerely,  
Cahyo Febri Wijaksono

