



Chief Economist

May 2026

About Cowater International

Cowater International is a global company that partners with governments, markets and communities to deliver lasting impact through inclusive growth, stronger institutions and resilient societies. For more than 40 years, Cowater has combined the agility of a private firm with the purpose of a mission-driven organisation, delivering over 5,000 projects across more than 100 countries. Their work spans governance, economic development, climate resilience, institutional strengthening, and public sector transformation.

As Managing Contractor for Prospera Phase 2, Cowater International is responsible for delivering one of Australia's most significant bilateral economic development partnerships in Indonesia. Cowater brings together deep technical expertise, policy insight, and on-the-ground implementation capability to ensure sustainable and lasting impact across complex operating environments.

Program Overview – Prospera Phase 2

The Australia-Indonesia Partnership for Economic Development (Prospera) is Australia's flagship economic development partnership with Indonesia. The programme builds on more than three decades of cooperation between the Australian and Indonesian governments and supports Indonesia's efforts to promote sustainable, inclusive, and climate-resilient economic growth.

Prospera works with key Indonesian economic institutions to strengthen economic policy frameworks and institutional capability across areas including:

- Macroeconomic policy
- Financial sector development
- Public financial management
- Tax policy and administration
- Investment policy



- Labour markets
- Digital transformation
- Regional and international economic engagement

The programme combines high-level policy advisory services with government-to-government partnerships between Indonesian institutions and Australian Public Service agencies, creating a uniquely strategic and politically significant platform for change and collaboration.

The Role

Role:	Chief Economist
Location:	Jakarta, Indonesia (Full Time)
Salary:	On Application

Job Summary

The Chief Economist is one of the most senior and strategically important appointments within Prospera Phase 2.

Reporting to the Mobilisation Director and maintaining a direct advisory relationship with DFAT on substantive policy matters, the role provides intellectual leadership across the programme and serves as a trusted senior adviser on macroeconomic policy, change strategy, and economic diplomacy.

This position combines high-level technical expertise with exceptional stakeholder engagement capability. The successful candidate will shape and guide economic policy dialogue with senior Indonesian counterparts, support change sequencing and prioritisation, and ensure Prospera's economic analysis remains rigorous, relevant, and influential.

The Chief Economist will also play a critical leadership role internally—providing quality assurance across analytical outputs, mentoring teams and counterparts, and helping build a high-performing Office of the Chief Economist that supports Prospera's broader strategic objectives.

This is a rare opportunity for an exceptional economist to operate at the intersection of policy, diplomacy, and development impact.



Responsibilities

Strategic Economic Advice and Analysis Leadership

- Provide senior technical advice across:
 - Macroeconomic policy
 - Fiscal and monetary policy
 - Trade and investment policy
 - Structural change priorities
 - Public sector development and economic governance
- Lead the development of high-quality:
 - Policy briefs
 - Economic assessments
 - Strategic advisory papers
 - Forward-looking analysis of economic risks and opportunities
- Support change prioritisation and sequencing across Prospera's portfolio.

Policy Engagement and Dialogue

- Lead and support high-level policy engagement with:
 - Senior Government of Indonesia counterparts
 - DFAT and Australian Government stakeholders
 - Australian Treasury and relevant APS agencies
 - Multilateral institutions and international partners
- Represent Prospera in strategic policy forums and strengthen coherence across bilateral and multilateral engagement.

Knowledge Leadership and Quality Assurance

- Provide technical oversight and quality assurance of economic analysis across the programme.
- Ensure evidence, learning, and analysis are embedded into:
 - Programme strategy
 - Governance processes
 - Decision-making frameworks
 - Policy advisory mechanisms
- Mentor Indonesian counterparts and analysts while strengthening the institutional effectiveness of the Office of the Chief Economist.

Senior Leadership Collaboration

- Operate as a core member of Prospera's senior leadership cohort.



- Support coherent delivery across programme priorities through:
 - Strategic collaboration
 - Cross-team advisory leadership
 - Stakeholder alignment
 - Effective sequencing of policy advice and activities
- Build strong relationships across the broader policy ecosystem including research institutions, civil society organisations, bilateral partners, and multilateral agencies.

Candidate Profile

We are seeking an exceptional senior economist with deep technical credibility, strong policy judgement, and an established reputation within Indonesia's economic policy ecosystem.

Professional Experience

- Advanced degree in Economics (required)
- PhD strongly preferred
- 15+ years of senior experience in:
 - Economic policy
 - Macroeconomic analysis
 - Public sector development
 - Development economics
 - Economic governance
- Significant in-country experience in Indonesia (essential)
- Demonstrated experience producing high-quality policy advice for senior government audiences
- Strong professional networks across:
 - Government of Indonesia
 - Research institutions
 - International organisations
 - Multilateral institutions
- Experience working with or alongside Australian institutions highly advantageous

Skills and Competencies

The successful candidate will demonstrate:

- Outstanding analytical capability and intellectual rigour
- Strong judgement in politically complex policy environments
- The ability to translate technical economics into practical policy advice



- Exceptional relationship-building and stakeholder engagement skills
- Deep understanding of Indonesia’s political economy
- Strong knowledge of regional and global economic dynamics
- Collaborative leadership across cultures, institutions, and disciplines

Performance Measures

Success in the role will be assessed against:

- Quality, relevance, and timeliness of economic advice
- Effectiveness of senior policy engagement with Gol counterparts
- Strength of relationships that advance the bilateral economic partnership
- Responsiveness and strategic engagement with DFAT
- Contribution to Prospera’s broader programme objectives and Australia’s economic diplomacy priorities

Why This Role Matters

This is not a conventional Chief Economist role.

It is a strategic leadership appointment at the centre of one of Australia’s most significant international economic partnerships—requiring a rare combination of intellectual authority, policy influence, diplomatic credibility, and operational pragmatism.

For the right candidate, this role offers the opportunity to shape national development conversations, influence bilateral economic cooperation at the highest level, and deliver meaningful impact across Indonesia’s development trajectory.

How to Apply

All correspondence, at this stage, should be via Oxford HR. To apply for this post, click on the “Apply” button on the job advert page, complete the online application form, and submit your CV and cover letter as two different documents, which should be prepared before applying as they will be considered in the application process.

The cover letter should be no more than two pages long and explain why you are interested in this post and how your skills and experience make you a good fit.



The document should be saved in PDF in the following format: Your First Name-Your Last Name-Documents Name-Date (mmyy) e.g., Pat-Jones-CV-0526-CowaterInternational or Pat-Jones-CoverLetter-0526-CowaterInternational.

Timeline

Closing Date: 14th June 2026. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis and the position will close when filled. Early application advised.

First Stage Interviews: TBC

Final Interviews: TBC

Selection Process

All candidates will receive an update regarding their application after the closing date. We advise candidates to add the Oxford HR Consultant email address (see below) to their safe senders list and regularly check their spam folder.

Equality Statement

Equality and diversity are at the core of Cowater International's values. Staff are expected to work collectively and individually to promote a constructive and sensitive approach to others from a variety of backgrounds, where the work of others is valued and respected.

Queries

If you have any queries on any aspect of the appointment process, need additional information, or would like to have an informal discussion, please email at nsutcliffe@oxfordhr.com in the first instance.

About Oxford HR

Oxford HR is a B Corp certified leadership consultancy. Having worked within a diverse range of institutions, from not-for-profits and charities to governments and corporate environments, we've seen the powerful impact that the perfect team can have. Finding innovative leaders can be a challenge; and yet their transition into leadership is vital to an organisation's mission and success.

We work across the globe to search for and support remarkable leaders and teams, improve their board effectiveness and support on a range of leadership functions. Learn more at: oxfordhr.com