

AIS General Research Fund (GRF) and Early Career Scheme (ECS) Success Round 2020-21

Project Title:

The meaning of democracy and democratic consolidation in Indonesia

Brief Abstract:

Empirical research shows that multiple conceptions of democracy exist across the world, and the citizens of different countries often have widely differing views or expectations of democracy. However, as the existing scholarship focuses predominantly on conceptions of democracy as an outcome rather than as an explanatory factor, it has often overlooked the implications of conceptions of democracy. How do people's understandings of democracy shape the ways they evaluate its performance in their country? How do those conceptions affect public support for democracy as a system of government? How are those ideas associated with political behavior? This project addresses such questions through a study primarily focused on Indonesia, a rising economic and political power in the Asia-Pacific region, and as the third-largest democracy in the world. To investigate which ideas of democracy now prevail in the Indonesian political discourse and how those ideas have evolved over time, I will carry out a qualitative analysis of texts produced by prominent Indonesian political figures in various historical periods. To study the structure and the implications of conceptions of democracy in the mass public, and to compare Indonesia with other cases in the region, I will implement a series of public opinion surveys in selected East and Southeast Asian countries.

Investigator: Dr Diego FOSSATI

Biography:

Diego Fossati is Assistant Professor of Asian and International Studies at City University of Hong Kong. He studies political behaviour, accountability and representation, especially in the context of East and Southeast Asia. His work has been published in leading international peer-reviewed journals such as *World Development*, *European Journal of Political Research* and *Review of International Political Economy*. He holds a Ph.D. in Government from Cornell University.