

# Executive Summary

## Crafting Futures Research

Mapping of New Materials and  
Repurposing Materials of Existing  
Materials in Indonesia's Craft Sector



---

# Introduction

## Mapping the Development of Materials in Craft

As part of the global British Council Crafting Futures Program, this research aims to support growth and innovation throughout the handicraft industry. In Indonesia, the program begins by mapping the development of new materials and repurposing existing materials of the local craft sector.

The research and development of new materials for crafts have been carried out by a number of Art and Design academics. Unfortunately their findings have not been applied outside of the academic sphere. The potential for its application in business practices takes an entrepreneurial spirit to transform an idea into a plan of action. The research and development that has successfully been explored as creative enterprises have resulted in the creation of new materials for crafting.

The innovations of materials and techniques in crafts depends on the awareness and understanding of the public for its progression. Through this knowledge and awareness, they are then able to better appreciate the level creativity/craftsmanship involved in producing crafts.



Woven banana leaf sheath  
© Budaya Kreatif Foundation

# Research Methodology

This research was conducted in 4 regions: DKI Jakarta, West Java, East Java and Bali. The mapping used a mixed methodology approach combining qualitative and quantitative approaches.

The qualitative data collection approach focused on in-depth interview and focus group discussions using the following aspect guidelines:

## **Business owners**

Business establishment and product conceptualisation  
Raw materials  
Production process and craftsmanship  
Business management and development  
Marketing strategies  
Quality control  
Perceptions, issues and sustainability

## **Institutions or communities**

Role of the institution or community  
Contribution to the development of the craft industry  
Stages and obstacles in programme and activity implementation  
Activities or programs related to sustainability

The quantitative data collection focused on an online questionnaire that aimed at the following stakeholders within the craft industry:

Business owners  
Government institutes  
Non-governmental organizations  
Academics  
Communities  
Marketing Companies

# Findings

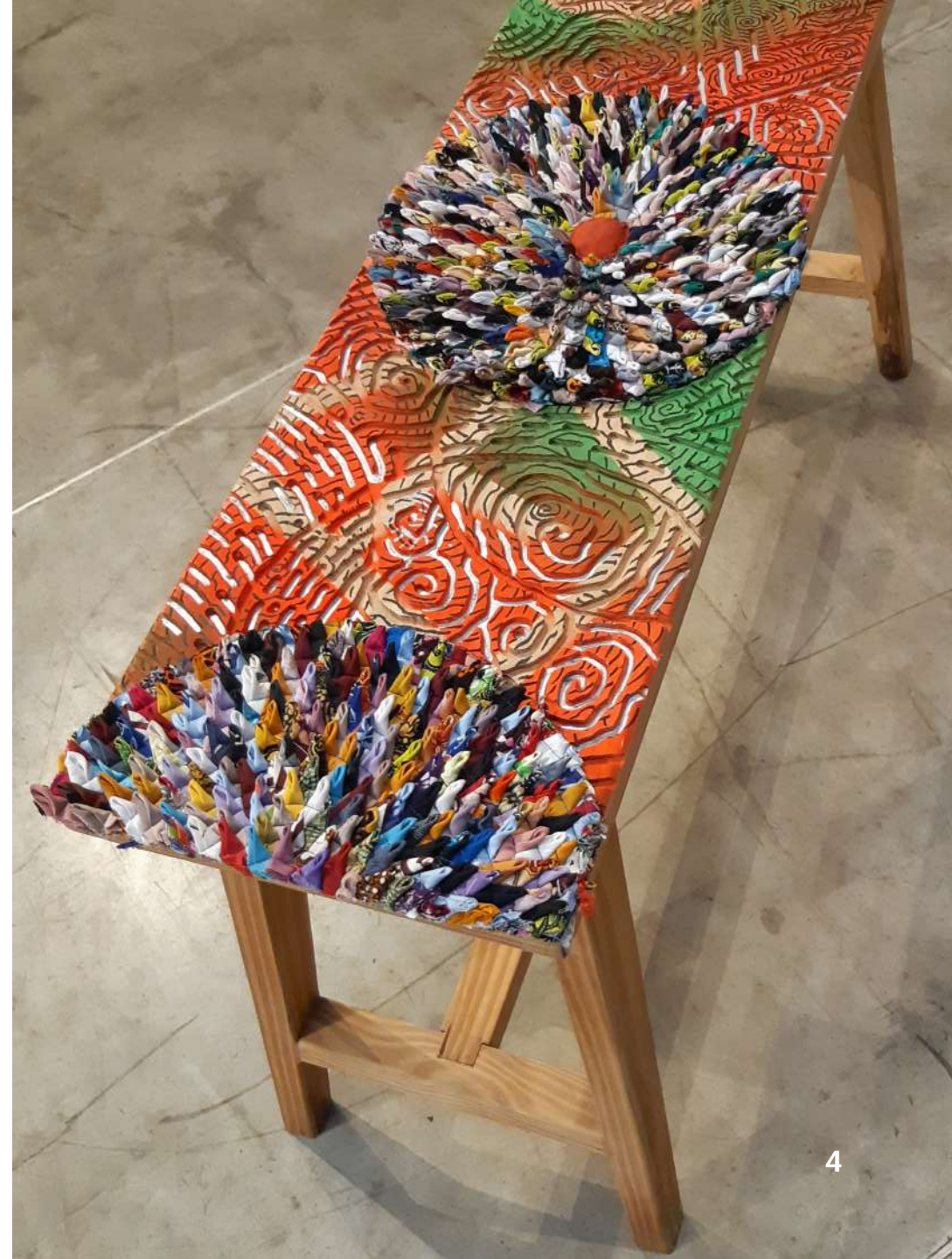
## New Materials

Our research discovered that existing experimentation on new materials are derived from organic resources. These materials include alternative leather made from chicken skin, leather sheets made from mushrooms and the use of banana and areca nut leaf sheaths. These innovations in raw materials have expanded the different derivations of product development in craft.

Not all of those who are developing new materials are crafters. For instance Mycotech, the enterprise experimenting with mushroom-based leather, only focuses on the development of raw materials. While the suppliers of areca nut leaf sheaths produce food containers manufactured by machines. However, creative enterprises such as Hirka (chicken feet leather) and Debog (banana leaf sheath) utilizes research and development to further innovate their products.

Bench made of wood chunks by  
Wooden Crop circle

© Budaya Kreatif Foundation





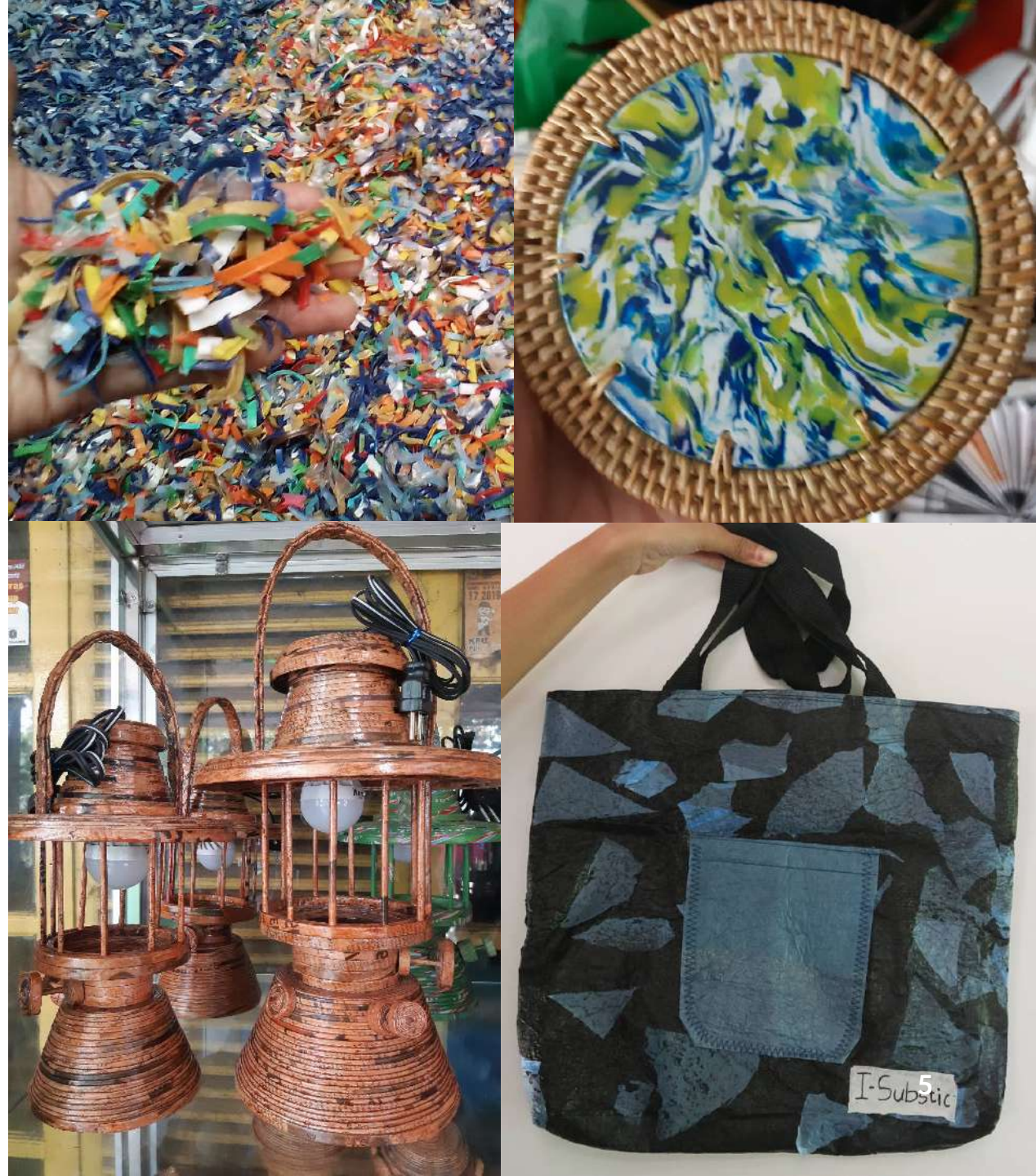
# Recycled / Upcycled Materials

Rising concerns for the environment have inspired artisans to reuse materials either through recyclability or upcycling. Many crafters and business owners have created awareness building community networks that share knowledge on environmental issues, and the ways of incorporating recycling / upcycling into craft production.

According to the research findings, the materials used in crafts are predominantly plastic (bottles, bottle caps, plastic bags), old newspapers, patchwork, scrap metal (keys, padlocks, small metal plates), used glass bottles, sludge waste, eggshell waste, and leftover wood from furniture production. All of these materials are processed in different ways, most of which are done through the unique expertise of each crafter during the production process.

Clockwise: 1. Chopped plastic bottle caps, 2. Coaster from plastic waste, 3. I-Substic bag from used plastic, 4. Lanterns by Kreasi Menik, made fro used newspapers

© Budaya Kreatif Foundation





# Sustainable Materials

From our in-depth interviews with craftsmen and academics, there are two key factors in determining sustainability in craft products; sustainability with respect to the sourcing of raw materials and sustainability in the production process. Crafters need to be aware of whether their raw materials are easily replenished. A lack of regard for this concept can result in over exploitation of the environment. In relation to the production process, a sustainable system must include ethical principles and practices.

Those with experience in manufacturing bamboo based crafts highlight the sustainable advantages it provides. For instance, conserving bamboo is easier in comparison to other raw materials because of its natural abundance. Crafts made from bamboo are also durable and long lasting. Moreover, bamboo products are known to be eco-friendly and biodegradable, so long as they are not chemically processed or contain any synthetic finishing.

[www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org)



L to R: 1. Peeled skin of chicken feet, 2. Sewing process, 3. Final product

© Budaya Kreatif Foundation

# Development of Crafts in the Four Provinces

The substantial growth of Indonesia's craft sector can be traced back to the last 4 decades. Within this duration, activities to improve the engineering and design aspects were carried out by the central government and its regional governing bodies. For the past three decades, academic research, private sector participation as well as increased aid from non-profit institutions have contributed to the advancement of Indonesia's crafters. Additionally, the government have implemented programs to help small businesses grow and thrive. This includes training courses in entrepreneurship, and capacity building. Indonesia's Government support is increasingly visible after the existence of law No. 24 2019 pertaining to the Creative Economy, in which craft is one of the 16 creative industry sub-sectors.

## WEST JAVA

**Craft background and expertise: 1) Art and Design Education Crafters, 2) Inherited craftsmanship, 3) Self-taught crafters**

**Active involvement of local governments, academics and communities in craft development activities**

**Activation in the form of festival activities, workshops from the Creative Economy sector**

**Local government support through regulations of the Creative Economy since 2017**

## JAKARTA

**Craft expertise and background: 1). Art and Design Education crafters, and 2). Self-taught crafters**

**Activation in the form of festival activities, workshops from the Creative Economy sector**

**Active involvement of local governments, academics and communities in craft development activities**

# Development of Crafts in the Four Provinces

## EAST JAVA

**Craft expertise and background: 1). Art and Design Education Crafters, 2). Inherited craftsmanship 3). Self-taught crafters.**

**Activation in the form of festival activities, workshops from the Creative Economy sector**

**Active involvement of local governments, academics and communities in craft development activities.**

## BALI

**Craft expertise and background: 1). Art and Design Education Crafters, 2). Inherited craftsmanship, 3). Self-taught crafters.**

**Active involvement of academics and communities in craft development activities.**

**Festival activities, and workshops in the Creative Economy sector.**



# Programme Recommendation

The materials used in crafts are not limited to traditional method and natural material only. With the rising concern of environmental issues, crafters are pursuing alternative solutions through the consideration of sustainability. However, traditional handicrafts in Indonesia have close ties to local culture and everyday customs. Traditional crafting skills and production processes have been passed on from generation to the next. Therefore, whilst it is important to further develop and research more innovative or sustainable methods of crafting in Indonesia, it is also equally important to still maintain the cultural aspects as well. Finding a balance between the two elements has to be at the core of the strategy to further develop Indonesia's craft sector. For this reason, we recommend the following :

## Capacity Building

Capacity building in production, design, sustainable materials and production, and entrepreneurship for Indonesian crafters. This can be done through mentorship with industry experts and initiating collaborations with craft enterprises within Indonesia and the United Kingdom. The preservation of traditional and cultural knowledge around Indonesian crafts also needs to be shared among younger generations through working with existing expert crafters across the Archipelago who understand traditional techniques, designs and production processes.

# Programme Recommendation

## Research and Development

Initiation of cross-sector research in developing materials in the craft sector, research to traditional and cultural values in craft products and craftsmanship to support continuation programs for younger generations. Research and experimentation that focuses on developing eco-friendly materials and their application in craft products.

Advocacy through initiating a series of discussion panels and working groups to develop and design government policies on the potential use of materials and standardization of the use of environmentally friendly and sustainable materials in the craft sector. Facilitating development through implementing programmes for capacity building in the production and commercialization of craft products derived from recycled, upcycled, and eco-friendly materials and processes.

## Advocacy



# Programme Recommendation

## Public Awareness Campaign

Ecosystem collaboration in the organisation and campaigning of initiatives that educate the public about the close relationship between crafts, cultural identity and everyday customs. This aspect can also support a marketing approach for crafts businesses to promote products using crafter stories and production journeys.

Supportive initiatives that provide space and opportunities for crafters to test and market their products on a national or international scale. Develop a platform/programme that provides the space, opportunities and resources for crafters to gain knowledge about product quality and design from others within the network both locally and internationally.

## International Market Access