The 2014 Presidential election revealed a new and interesting phenomenon: the emergence of a movement by volunteers. These volunteers worked both individually and in groups, across all classes in society. They included people from the lower classes – housewives, traders at traditional markets, musicians and the youth, and also businessmen and political figures. Their movement was not directly connected with the party supporting Jokowi-JK, although over the course of the election they did cooperate. The support of these relawan began when Jokowi and Basuki Tjahaya Purnama alias Ahok, ran in the 2012 regional election for Jakarta. This volunteer movement seems to resemble what Mashal Ganz described as ‘organizing without an organization’ after the election 7 of Barack Obama in the 2008 US Presidential election.

This presentation will present findings from research undertaken during the 2014 election. The volunteers movement constituted a breakthrough for change, not only political change and transfer of power, but also radical change to the tradition of Presidential elections and the process of democracy in Indonesia itself.

First, there were no transactions or money politics to secure nomination of the candidates on behalf of Jokowi-JK, neither of whom were the leader of a party. Secondly, the wide spread support from society was mobilised by volunteers. Volunteers also persuaded those who did not usually vote (golput) to attend a polling booth, without paying them to do so. The decrease in percentage of ‘no votes’ made a significant contribution to the votes won by Jokowi-JK. Thirdly, the volunteers were motivated by ‘trust’ in Jolowi to spread a message of radical change due to his track record of initiating radical change as Mayor of Solo in Central Java, and Governor of Jakarta. These changes include anti-corruption initiatives, transparency, order and cleanliness and enforcement of a system of fairness in governance.