



Uni now home to the Huddersfield Centre for Disaster Resilience



The Huddersfield Centre for Disaster Resilience, with Professor Dilanthi Amaratunga and Professor Richard Haigh, joins the University's School of Art, Design and Architecture.

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Professor Dilanthi Amaratunga and Professor Richard Haigh will join the University's School of Art, Design and Architecture

THE University of Huddersfield has become a key international centre for research which aims to ensure that communities, cities and countries around the world can resist and recover from natural and man-made disasters.

The University's School of Art, Design and Architecture (<http://www.hud.ac.uk/schools/artdesignandarchitecture/>) is now home to the Huddersfield Centre for Disaster Resilience, headed by two experts who have established a global network of important collaborations.

Professors Dilanthi Amaratunga (<http://www.dilanthiamaratunga.net/>) and Richard Haigh are both experts in the built environment and this has resulted in highly prestigious appointments such as leading roles in the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (<http://www.unisdr.org/>).

Pictured right: The 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami.

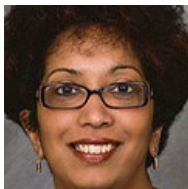
They are also founders and co-chairs of the International Conference on Building Resilience (<https://www.buildresilience.org/2014/>), a series of multi-disciplinary, international gatherings for academics, practitioners and policy makers.

The fourth of these events is taking place this month at Salford's Media City complex. It has discussed the global rise in risk and vulnerability to natural hazards and disasters, leading to massive loss of life, destruction of buildings and economic losses. However, research has shown how societies can develop greater resilience via improved building design and better social organisation.

Also during September, the two professors have been invited to make keynote addresses to a conference in Sri Lanka that marks the tenth anniversary of the Indian Ocean Tsunami. The event is organised by the Sri Lankan Government, in tandem with organisations such as the United Nations Development Programme.

Professor Dilanthi Amaratunga





(<http://www.dilanthiamaratunga.net/>)Professor Amaratunga is Sri Lanka-born, and lectured there after she obtained her first degree, in quantity surveying. She then relocated to the UK for doctoral study and a successful academic career, including projects such as the EC-funded Collaborative Action towards Societal Challenges through Awareness, Development, and Education (CASCADE) (<http://www.cascade-inconet.eu/?q=node/8>), with 17 international partners.

Her research has included post-disaster reconstruction, conflict mitigation, capability and capacity building in managing disasters, empowerment of women, and women in construction. In January 2014, she was invited by the European Commission to launch the new EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (<http://ec.europa.eu/research/iscp/index.cfm>) in South Asia.

She has presented widely at international conferences, has led international disaster management workshops and seminars, and is working actively with the United Nations.

Professor Richard Haigh

Professor Haigh's first degree was in construction management. After doctoral studies and research fellowships, he became a lecturer and has obtained thirteen research grants in the areas of disaster resilience, construction management and education, covering issues such climate change adaptation, social impact of post-conflict reconstruction, gender, curricular development, knowledge management, capacity building for resilience, and education in the built environment.



He is Principal Investigator of the €800,000, EU-funded ANDROID Network (Academic Network for Disaster Resilience to Optimise Educational Development) (<http://www.disaster-resilience.net/>) and also headed a 12-month programme to help prevent future conflict in the north and east of Sri Lanka.

Global Agenda



(<http://www.hud.ac.uk/ourstaff/profile/index.php?staffuid=sdesmk>)The University of Huddersfield's new Centre for Disaster Resilience will draw on the expertise of the two new professors in the built environment, and on the School of Art, Design and Architecture's established strengths in fields such as art, communication, architecture and 3D design.

The Dean of Art, Design and Architecture, Professor Mike Kagioglou (<http://www.hud.ac.uk/ourstaff/profile/index.php?staffuid=sdesmk>) (*pictured left*), is delighted by the arrival of the professors.

"I am confident that the establishment of the Huddersfield Centre for Disaster Resilience in our School will enable colleagues across all departments to engage with a significant global agenda and leadership," he said.

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