

Establishment of IRDR-designated International Centre of Excellence – Taipei

An Integrated Research on Disaster Risk International Centre of Excellence will be created in Taipei jointly by Academia Sinica and the IRDR international programme.

The Centre will be overseen by an international advisory board (IAB) of 6-8 members appointed jointly by the SC-IRDR and Academia Sinica with the involvement of the Board of START International. The Director will be appointed by Academia Sinica from among its senior scientific staff in consultation with the IAB.

The Centre's research program will be an integrated multi-disciplinary approach to disaster risk reduction that is initiated from and centred on the perspective of the social sciences. Research foci, to be fully determined, would include risk analysis of disasters and informational sciences, including cloud computing, approaches towards creating a platform for managing broad disaster data bases, leading to integrated disaster risk programs.

The Centre will have both national and international components. The national component will consist of a strong cadre of disaster risk reduction research scientists from Academia Sinica institutes and centres, augmented nationally by professors and researchers from Taiwan universities and the National Science and Technology Center for Disaster Reduction. The international component will consist of short and longer-term (6-12 months) visiting scientists from developed and developing countries. The scientists from developing countries will be arranged through START.

The Centre will also support international workshops to bring together scientists in, for example, case studies or forensic investigations building upon the strong data base for disasters in Taiwan. These could then be extended to other countries in cooperative longer-term studies. It is proposed that a Cities at Risk workshop be held in Taipei in the first quarter of 2011.

Academia Sinica will contribute \$US 300K to the International Council of Science (ICSU) towards operating the international component of the Centre. Guest houses will be available for longer-term visitors.

The National Science Council of Taiwan will support an enhanced national program affiliated with the Center. New funding in the range \$US 1-2M is expected.

The proposed first step towards establishment of the Centre would be setting up the international advisory board. Also arrangement will be made for the financial transfer to ICSU.

The IRDR International Centre of Excellence – Taipei is seen as a model for future international centres of excellence in other regions of the globe.