



We mentioned the activities of TG19 in Issue 4/98 and noted its meeting in June 1998 at Long Island, New York.

International Workshop

Its Coordinator Satoshi Kose from the Building Research Institute, Tsukuba, Japan tells us that the International Workshop / Symposium on Universal Design was held from 30th November to 4th December 1998 as previously notified. This was in the nature of a sequel to the New York Conference and was attended by 50 researchers and practitioners.

It was jointly hosted by the Building Research Institute of the Japanese Ministry of Construction and the Science and Technology Agency.

Says Kose :

'Universal design is a more holistic approach than the traditional barrier-free design and it is also called 'design for all'.

The Workshop originally planned to have Mr. Ronald Mace, the Research Director of the Center for Universal Design as the keynote speaker, but he sadly passed away just a week after the New York Conference. However, we inherited his spirit, and were determined to press forward. We had participants from the States, the UK, Italy, Singapore, Canada, as well as from Japan.

The Workshop discussed such topics as housing/building design; products design; public environment design; and socio-political issues. A full-day site visit was included in the programme, which allowed participants, from overseas in particular, to grasp the state-of-the-art of accessible/universal design in a Japanese city more advanced than the others in their attitude.

Pre-conference proceedings assisted the participants to acquaint each other with the standpoints, experiences, etc. Various viewpoints were expressed, and arguments raised. The outcome is expected to be summarized, and included in the final Proceedings which it is planned to publish in the first half of 1999.'

Linked to International Symposium

A unique feature of the Workshop was that it was linked to an International Symposium open to the public. This took place in the afternoon of 3rd December 1998.

Hosted by the City of Yokohama, the Symposium on Universal Design attracted as many as 450 participants, and the lecture hall was full, despite inclement weather. Dr. Kose coordinated the Symposium, and six of the workshop participants (five among them were from overseas) presented their views and examples. Thus it provided an excellent opportunity for the Japanese to learn more about this new emerging idea of universal design. Fortunately, plenary lectures of the New York Conference were translated and published as a book, and it is Dr. Kose's hope that it will further boost the move toward universal design away from barrier-free design that is too restrictive (in the sense that they are linked to disability).

General information on TG19 can be found [here](#).