

IDEERS Newsletter

An *EPSRC funded project by the University of Bristol's Earthquake Engineering Research Centre for
Introducing and Demonstrating Earthquake Engineering Research in Schools

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EPSRC Award for Partnership in Public Understanding



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Prof. Rosamund Sutherland

Dr Adam Crewe and Dr Wendy Daniell, from the University of Bristol's Earthquake Engineering Research Centre (EERC), have been awarded an EPSRC grant of £29,000 for their **IDEERS** project to promote understanding of their research in earthquake engineering amongst secondary school students. To ensure effective communication, they will be working with Professor

Rosamund Sutherland, an educationalist at the University, currently researching how young people interact with screen technology.

The IDEERS Project

The **IDEERS** web-site will be developed as a learning resource on the effects of earthquakes on communities, the need for research to improve the earthquake resistance of structures, and some fundamentals of the seismic behaviour of buildings and their earthquake resistant design. In addition, the web-site will provide details of the annual **IDEERS** schools' competition for designing and constructing a model of an earthquake resistant building. By developing and testing ideas for their models, students will simulate and learn about the process of earthquake engineering research.

Models will be brought by secondary school students to the EERC to be tested on the EPSRC earthquake simulator. Prizes will be awarded for the best designed models and for presentations demonstrating most clearly that the value and process of earthquake engineering research has been understood.

Sponsorship of IDEERS Competition Prizes

EQE International, Ove Arup and WS Atkins, all international consultants prominent in the field of earthquake engineering, have agreed to judge the competitions and to sponsor personal cash prizes for the winning students. Prizes for the schools of the winning teams will be sponsored by Texas Instruments who are donating calculator based schools laboratory equipment.

The IDEERS Project Programme

The completed **IDEERS** web-site will be launched during summer 2001, and the first of three successive annual competitions will be judged in the schools' summer term of 2002. In the meantime, the web-site and competition specification will be developed and tested in a few local schools. Publicity for the project has started and will be ongoing, so that teachers can plan their timetable, in advance, to help students entering the competition.

IDEERS Web-Site On-Line Now

The IDEERS web-site has been set up and can be accessed at www.ideers.bris.ac.uk

Currently, it is a small site publicising the project and inviting school students and teachers to register their interest in the forthcoming project, so that information at key stages of the project can be E-mailed to them.

Trial of Model Specification Underway

A preliminary specification for the model building has been developed. To test its robustness, teachers at Rednock School in Gloucestershire are running a pilot competition in their Technology Club. In April 2000, their students will bring completed models to the EERC to be tested on the earthquake simulator.

For further details on the **IDEERS** project visit the web-site at www.ideers.bris.ac.uk or contact:

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