



INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IN BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION

INFORMATION

Nr. 1/02

CIB Student Chapters

University of Salford wins the Gyula Sebestyén Award 2002

The first new Gyula Sebestyén Award to a CIB Endorsed Student Chapter has been presented to The University of Salford, UK. This newly established award provides a maximum 7000 Euros per year to one or between more than one CIB Endorsed Student Chapters. Student Chapters proposals are reviewed by the CIB Programme Committee for both their link to the overall CIB Mission Statement as well as the thoroughness in the planning of the proposals. Winners will be expected to complete their proposal in a one-year timeframe and provide CIB with a final report that will be made available for all CIB Members.

General information on CIB Student Chapters is available on its Web Site at www.cibworld.nl/pages/begin/Student.html.

Below is a summary of the winning proposal submitted by The University of Salford.

Introduction

The University of Salford's CIB Student Chapter proposal for funding is to create a virtual conference chamber to allow a greater audience to participate in the forthcoming International Postgraduate Conference to be held on 11th and 12th April 2002.

This conference is a development over the past 5 years that started out as the opportunity for postgraduates from University of Salford to deliver papers on their research in a friendly environment and to receive positive criticism and academic debate from and with their peers. However since its inception the annual conference has developed rapidly providing opportunities even for postgraduates from other universities to be involved in it so that they were able to meet their peers and share their knowledge in

related fields of study. The last year saw this conference achieving another milestone in becoming a CIB co-sponsored international event, attracting papers from many postgraduates at a variety of institutions around the world. The papers received were reviewed by a committee of expert academics from various parts of the world. Awards have also been presented for the best paper and best presentation to motivate the postgraduate researchers to make outstanding contributions at the conference.

Whilst an important element of any conference is the physical attendance to deliver papers to a real audience, it must also be acknowledged that many postgraduates do not have the resources to attend, but would benefit from participation. Therefore the main purpose of creating a virtual conference chamber is to provide interactive support for this target audience who would otherwise be denied of an opportunity to participate at this annual event.

Representative from the other CIB Student Chapters will be invited to attend the conference and deliver a paper and a limited number of them will receive financial support for this. Whilst the conference is being held the Student Chapter representatives will meet to discuss ways in which the conference can be run simultaneously in the other Student Chapter Institutions and possibly in other countries in future years.

Aims and Objectives of the Proposal

This proposal aims at creating a virtual conference chamber that will allow those unable to physically attend the conference, to view the papers, videos of the presentations and copies of the PowerPoint slides. Also people will be encouraged to join in post paper



discussion areas to continue the debate out of the live session into the virtual conference chamber. Other CIB Student Chapter members will have opportunity to engage with each other and form closer links with the Salford University's Student Chapter Members. *To achieve these aims it is expected that:*

1. All presentations of the conference will be recorded and made available to other CIB Student Chapter members and the general public through the Internet.
2. A web site will be developed, which will serve as the permanent repository for the conference related video materials, papers and PowerPoint presentations. Asynchronous discussions will also be carried out on this website. The CIB Chapter at Salford University will be responsible for the development and maintenance of this web site, which will be hosted on the School of Construction and Property Management web server.
3. A discussion forum facility will be provided so that the users can engage in synchronous chats regarding presentations of the conference or other subject matters of common interests.

It is intended to make these facilities available to all the other CIB Student Chapters in the future so that discussion forums, virtual conference chambers and other similar events could be broad based for the benefit of a wider population. The virtual conference chamber created out of the website on the one hand will enable those who have resource constraints to attend the conference to benefit from its papers, slides and videos and on the other, it enables us to take forward the issues raised through post paper discussion forums. Issues raised out of the discussions could be addressed in the next annual conference in April 2003. It is also expected that the website that is developed will be made a shared repository for all Student Chapter activities of the CIB at a later stage. Therefore events of other Student Chapters will be recorded and linked in a meaningful way so that this information will benefit a wider population. The discussions taking place at the conference and the ones facilitated through the website will enrich the knowledge content of the website to become a permanent knowledge repository.

Details of Discussion Forums

Synchronous Chats

While the virtual conference session is going to be the main focus of this proposal, it is also expected to conduct quarterly discussion forums between the Student Chapters on agreed themes of the conference. As mentioned before some of the issues raised in the conference will be taken forward at these discussion forums and University of Salford will function as the hub, which connects the rest of the other Student Chapters in facilitating these discussions. Material discussed at these synchronous discussions will be

posted in the website, which may become subject for further debate in future discussion forums.

Asynchronous Discussions

The website will provide the space for threaded discussions, which are open not only to Student Chapter Members but to the wider public to participate. While attaching names and dates for these discussions, it is the policy of the Salford University's Student Chapter to moderate these discussions in a meaningful manner. Indeed it is the role of the moderator to generate discussions, but at the same time will take measures to prevent misuse of the discussion threads by incorporating various security mechanisms to identify the sources of misuse.

Technical Details of the Proposal

Salford University's Student Chapter will be purchasing the Real System Server plus version 8.0 software to facilitate the virtual conference chamber, and quarterly discussion forums between the Student Chapters during the period: March 2002 to March 2003. However the web authoring software currently owned by Salford University, the web server for the hosting of the website and the hardware elements needed for the synchronous discussions will be provided for the project by Salford university.

The 2nd International Postgraduate Research Conference in the Built and Human Environment will be held on 11 - 12 April 2002 at the University of Salford. Information is available on the Internet via <http://www.scpm.salford.ac.uk/bf2002/>.