

April 25, 2011 Archi-Aid Supporters

An Appeal for Participation in Archi-Aid, an Architects' Network to Support Reconstruction Following the Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami

You are no doubt well aware of the devastating and extensive damage produced by the Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami to coastal areas of the Tohoku and Northern Kanto regions of Japan. In the realm of architecture, not only were numerous buildings destroyed, but the region's architectural culture, as well as the intangible assets of locally-based architectural education, also suffered heavy damage. Currently, many voices have arisen in support of emergency aid and rebuilding efforts.

As Japanese architects and those involved in architecture, we wish to actively support the affected areas and their reconstruction efforts, including the revival of the region and the rebirth of its architectural culture and education. To that end, we have created a reconstruction support network of architects, called Archi-Aid, and propose a joint, cooperative effort toward the revival of disaster-stricken areas.

For this type of aid to work effectively, there must be close collaboration with those in the local areas. We must quickly establish a platform capable of bringing together the numerous aid efforts into a network, while directing such activities appropriately to the stricken areas that need help.

We propose as the basis for such a platform the Sendai Design League, which has linked together the architectural departments of local universities while giving voice to the architectural culture of Sendai, located at the heart of the stricken area. We appeal to the world for donations and assistance toward creating the network and supporting the activities of this platform. The Sendai League will also be partnering with Architecture for Humanity, the world's largest nonprofit design and building services firm.

The Sendai Design League, which is centered on Tohoku University, will put collected funds to use toward building and putting into operation a foundation to support reconstruction efforts in the disaster zones; toward the revival of design education that was damaged by the earthquake; and toward the accumulation and illumination of knowledge pertaining to the disaster. We fervently hope that the recovery from this calamity will provide an opportunity for rebuilding the architectural culture and education in the stricken areas. We ask for your understanding and support.

Operational Goals of Archi-Aid

Archi-Aid will immediately begin work in the three following areas:

The Building of a Multi-Faceted Platform to Support Regional Reconstruction and Development Through an International Network

Making use of an international network of architects and universities, we will create a pool of creative talent that will supply interdisciplinary expertise, providing multifaceted support for such activities as urban planning, reconstruction design consultation, and cultural and educational community care.

Revival of Architectural Education/Development of a Practical Reconstruction Education Service

Positioning our long-term support for regional reconstruction as a process of cultural revival, we will match the expertise of architects and specialists with the needs of disaster-stricken areas, encouraging the involvement of residents and students in this process. This aims to develop a practical educational service in support of reconstruction, while also nurturing the young people who will sustain these regions in the future.

Accumulation and Illumination of Disaster Knowledge

Supporting interdisciplinary research and educational activities concerning the Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami, we will work toward the accumulation and illumination of knowledge about the disaster so that it can be handed down to subsequent generations.

Since the Sendai Design League is a private organization, a dedicated account to accept donations has been set up at Tohoku University, one of its core members. Donations made to support this effort will thus be managed under the strict accounting practices of the university. Through the partnership with Architecture for Humanity we will be able to collect and enable donations to be tax-deductible in the United States in support of this effort as well.

For further information, please consult the following website. Thank you for your support.

<http://www.archi.tohoku.ac.jp/html/archiaid.html>

(Special homepage within the website of the Department of Architecture and Building Science in the Graduate School of Engineering at Tohoku University)

Archi-Aid Official Site (In preparation)

<http://archiaid.org>

If you would like to make a donation in support of Archi-Aid and are in the United States, you can do so through Architecture for Humanity here:

<http://architectureforhumanity.org/donate/form?program=Archi-Aid>

To learn more about Architecture for Humanity please visit:

<http://architectureforhumanity.org/>

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(A total of 162 supporters, as of April. 26, 2011)