

Kiso Motohiro Award Program

Ceremony

The ceremony is held once a year, mid-January (around January 17th).

Application Deadline

Up to September.

Eligibility Requirements

As a general rule, applicants should be researchers/engineers under the age of 40.

Award Description

Recipients of the "Kiso Academic Achievement Award" and the "Kiso Technical Achievement Award" will receive a certificate and cash prize.

*For further information on the Kiso Motohiro Award, please contact the administration office. Otherwise, please refer to the information updates on the website.

Fundraising Project

Donation Amount

Individuals minimum of ¥5,000
Corporations minimum of ¥10,000
*please donate in multiples of 1,000

Payment Method

Please transfer the payment to the post office using the enclosed transfer form.

Wire Transfer Information

We will start accepting payments starting April 15th, 2017.

Account Number: 00290-0-61912

Account Name:
NPO法人国際レスキューシステム研究機構

*Please note, the transfers made by gracious individuals and legal entities to NPOs are not eligible for tax advantages.

Contact Info

TEL: 078-641-2840
FAX: 078-641-2841
info@rescuesystem.org

International Rescue System (IRS) is a research and development NPO (Non-Profit Organization) founded mainly by researchers to sophisticate, advance, and disseminate disaster response using cutting-edge technology such as robotics and IT. Every year, the organization hosts robot system demonstrations and international symposiums, in addition to promoting and advertising conducted research outcomes. Furthermore, the organization takes part in projects led by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), and while on one hand conducting research and development to increase the practical use of robots, IRS (as a part of supporting research and development activities) has established the "Kiso Motohiro Award". Other than the activities mentioned above, we also work with local governments such as Kobe City and Kanagawa prefecture.



Illustration: Kyoto University Graduate School Bandō Mai

Non-profit organization International Rescue System

〒653-0042 7-1-18 Futaba-chō, Nagata-ku, Kobe-shi,
Hyōgo Prefecture, Japan.

TEL: 078-641-2840 FAX: 078-641-2841

URL: <http://www.rescuesystem.org>

E-mail: info@rescuesystem.org

the KISOI MOTOHIRO AWARD



This award is in honor of Motohiro Kiso, a student who passed away at the young age of 23 during the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake on January 17th, 1995. To continue his legacy, this award was established to recognize the achievements and outstanding contributions made by young scholars and engineers to the development of rescue systems and rescue robotics.



To recognize the outstanding accomplishments of young researchers who have contributed to the development of rescue systems:

An Introduction to the Kisoï Motohiro Award

This award is named after Motohiro Kisoï, then a young Kobe University 1st year graduate degree student who passed away under the rubble of an apartment building during the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake. The purpose of this award is to recognize researchers and engineers under the age of 40 who have significantly contributed to the field of disaster response and to support the research and development of rescue systems. During his first year as part of the Kobe University Master's Program, Kisoï was researching intelligent manipulation using robots that combine vision and mechanics, and dreamt of becoming a researcher or engineer who would develop robots that would save people in the future. To promote Kisoï's legacy, this award aims to recognize the eligible achievements in research development of systems that are designed to save people's lives.

As part of the activities of the Specified Non-profit Organization International Rescue System, this award project commenced on January 17th, 2005 – the 10th anniversary of the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake, when the first award winners were decided by the selection committee. The organization has hosted the award ceremony yearly ever since.

In 2014, we have also added the Medical Achievement and the Psychological Achievement Awards to the program, which are given out once in every 5 years. Furthermore, since 2009, we have been supporting several projects that are involved in developing disaster rescue response to help expand the network of researchers and technicians involved in rescue robotics and systems, including the RoboCup Jr. IRS Award (for elementary and middle school students), the Rescue Robot Contest (for high school and university students), and The Study of Rescue Robotics Award (for undergraduate and graduate school students). We also have a Special Award that is presented to an individual/organization in the field. The IEEE International Conference on Intelligent Robots and Systems (IROS) Best Paper Award on Safety, Security, and Rescue Robotics in memory of Motohiro Kisoï has demonstrated the globalization of our cause, which has been awarded every year since 2016.

The efforts to uphold this award project is supported by the contributions of donors from a variety of backgrounds. We would kindly like to ask for your endorsement. For more information on application guidelines, recommendation guidelines, donations, etc., please visit the International Rescue System official website.

January 17th, 2019

The non-profit organization, International Rescue System

A Call to Support the Kisoï Motohiro Award

We have now commemorated the 10-year anniversary of the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake. That horrible day, we have lost 41 young Kobe University students and friends who would have one day become reporters and architects, 6 students from the Kobe Merchant Marine University from the faculty of maritime Science of Kobe University, and the robotics research enthusiast Kisoï. There is no limitation to the grief that we feel for this loss.

We, Kobe University faculty, feel deep gratitude towards Professor Matsuno Fumitoshi, who served as Kisoï's master's thesis advisor, and International Rescue System, who have initiated and established the award project to pass on Kisoï's legacy. We have been inspired by your efforts and we believe that Kisoï's dream will be realized. We kindly ask for your support to keep this award project alive.

January 17th, 2005

Kobe University Vice President and Director, Kitamura Shinzō

At the time, Motohiro, my eldest son, was a graduate student at the Kobe University Master's Degree Program, and was living on the first floor of a two-story wooden building on Rokko Street, Nanku Ward, Kobe City. On January 17th, 1995, as the bottom floor of the building collapsed, ending my son's 23 years of life and starting his journey to the afterlife.

Motohiro specialized in robotics research in university. He grew up on the popular TV show "Doraemon", the character that made children's wishes come true. I believe the idea of a robot that can heal the hearts of humans had a strong impact on him. A Doraemon plushie was dug out from the same area where his body was found. He once told me of a dream he dreamt, of creating a robot that is helpful to humans. I can't help but think that he regrets leaving his dream halfway through.

I received word from the NPO International Rescue System, saying they hoped to establish an award in honor of Motohiro in 2005, on the 10-year anniversary of the disaster. At first, I thought the gesture was too excessive to recognize only a single individual that had failed in making a respectable achievement as a researcher, but then I was grateful to realize that this award would serve as another form of recognizing the 6,433 victims that passed away during that disaster. I am grateful to have Motohiro and his dream of "a world with robots that help humans" as an inseparable part of the field of disaster relief research, and I have no doubt that the intentions behind this award are to make sure that as many people as possible will be saved during future disasters. Recently, there has been an increase in natural disasters on a global scale, including the 2004 Chūetsu Earthquake and the 2004 Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami, making disaster preparation and response essential and International Rescue System's work relevant globally. However, I heard that research is lagging behind, and that there is a need for more exceptional young talent.

I wish from the bottom of my heart that more people will be saved with the help of rescue systems. I would be more than grateful for the support of this project to grow.

The late Motohiro Kisoï's family,
Kazumi Kisoï (father) and Emiko Kisoï (mother)

About Motohiro Kisoï

A total of 41 professors, staff, and students have fallen victim to the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake. Out of the 41 victims, 39 of them were students – including Kisoï. I was part of a different research seminar, but I have a strong impression of Kisoï from other courses and lectures which he took part in as a student. He was adored by exchange students, who wrote a eulogy for him. Even now, I remember his smiling face. I am grieved by the thought that the loss of this young talent has deprived the world a future with unlimited possibilities. I would like to take the opportunity to express my support, from the bottom of my heart, of this award and its purpose to recognize the exemplary achievements of young researchers, which serves as an acknowledgement of Kisoï's ambitions. I pray that this award will stand the strains of time, and ask for your support to keep the memory of his short life alive.

January 17th, 2005

Kobe University Emeritus Professor, Hirai Kazuma

"I hope, as miniscule as it might be, to pass on the memory of you - who dreamed of the future with sparkling eyes, and to continue the Japan Robotics Society (Nihon Robotto Gakkai) we established together some months before the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake in a small izakaya in Hirakata."

-Matsuno Fumitoshi
International Rescue System, Vice President
Kisoï's master's thesis advisor from Kobe University

"There were always many people gathered around Motohiro, who valued the bonds of friendship. I believe that through this award, many talented researchers from different fields can come together and strengthen these bonds of friendship."

-Koide Shinya
Friend from Kobe University

"If only rescue robotics was available during that time... We can pass on his will to never give up, and spread the love that he had towards others."

-Narasaki Takeshida
Friend from Kobe University

"He was deeply involved in outdoor activities for children. He deeply loved the children, and the children loved Kisoï just as much. He helped plant the seeds of kindness in each child's heart. Those seeds are already starting to bloom."

-Kosaki Yasuhiro
Fellow leader of the "Adventure Team", volunteer program of the Hyogo Prefecture Children's Association Federation