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Partner Profile – Kate Long

1. What is the background/history of your organization?

I'm currently a partner in the Dr. Lucy Jones Center for Science and Society, along with Dr. Jones and two other close colleagues. Coming from separate agencies/areas - science, emergency management, business resilience, community engagement - the four of us had collaborated over the past decade on projects at the nexus of scientific advancement and use of that science by policy makers and practitioners to improve disaster resilience. We'd had both good success and a good time doing it. (As our friend Dr. Dennis Mileti puts it: "The most interesting work is always at the margins between the disciplines.") We formed The Center to continue the long handshake that transforms science-based information into programs and practices that serve societal needs and improve both disaster resilience as a foundational component of overall community resilience.

2. What do you see to be the future of earthquake science/engineering/research/outreach/response and recovery to increase resiliency?

For me, it's about facilitating that "long handshake" between the disciplines to ensure full implementation. Society benefits when scientists choose research topics that serve society needs, and when scientists understand their role in communicating the meaning of their work. Decision-makers at all levels -from government to business to individuals- need to improve their ability to understand and harness that information to make the policy that shapes our world for the better. One significant gap that I'm keen on addressing is "the last mile" of *application* research: We do our best to develop scientific evidence to support advancement of disaster resilience; to use social science methods to communicate the science and to create effective programs; but finding funding sources to quantify how well the programs succeed at the end-user level remains a challenge. I don't want to count how many people received a program, I want to know how it changed behavior/policy and made us more resilient.

3. Can you tell us about a specific project your organization is working on in earthquake safety/science/engineering/research/resilience/outreach field?

I'm excited about our Center's Resilient Government program. Based on the success of the City of Los Angeles' historic building code improvement program, our program begins by bringing together city leaders across a region, and then creating understanding and "political will" around the jurisdictions' earthquake hazard, specific impact risks, and regional interdependencies. From there, each participating city contributes representatives from three offices: elected officials, city management, and emergency management. The policy-level interest and the presence of implementers from these three key parts of government provides the platform for working all the way through the tough and sticky questions and implementation issues that can stall a problem between "we know we need to do something" and "here's a prioritized, practical solution with buy-in from internal and external stakeholders". Each city's work takes place as part of a larger cohort group of cities within the local area; this addresses the regional nature of resilience challenges and creates a force-multiplier of support and creative solutions in a cross-jurisdictional environment where interdependencies abound.

4. Do you have any other comments or words of wisdom for our readers?

Find what makes each audience into a stakeholder and a partner.