Kerry SIEH

Director, Earth Observatory of Singapore (EOS)
AXA-Nanyang Chair in Natural Hazards

Kerry Sieh is the Director of the Earth Observatory of Singapore. He initiated the field of paleoseismology four decades ago, with the discovery of how fast California's infamous San Andreas fault slips and how often it generates great earthquakes. Over the past two decades he and his colleagues have used coral reefs and GPS measurements to understand the patterns of great earthquakes on the Sunda megathrust, offshore Sumatra. These discoveries have led to useful forecasts of recent and impending large Sumatran earthquakes and tsunamis.

Prof. Sieh's specialties, paleoseismology and neotectonics, employ geological data and methods to understand the geometries of active faults, the earthquakes they generate, and the crustal deformation their movements produce. He first developed these techniques in southern California and subsequently applied them to faults in other parts of the world, including southern China, Taiwan, Myanmar, Bangladesh and Indonesia. Prof. Sieh has a strong interest in using science to help communities live more safely and sustainably.

Before becoming Director of the Earth Observatory of Singapore, Professor Sieh was the Robert P. Sharp professor of geology at the California Institute of Technology. There in 2002, he co-founded Caltech's Tectonics Observatory, a US$30-million privately funded scientific effort. He conceived of the Earth Observatory in 2007 and left Caltech for NTU in 2008 to build it. He became the first holder of the AXA-Nanyang Chair in Natural Hazards at NTU in 2012.