

Abhaya Induruwa CEng FBCS CITP



'My expectation was always to reach the pinnacle of IT, which is BCS Fellowship'

Abhaya Induruwa

Only the IT industry's most senior leaders and respected professionals earn the honour of becoming a Fellow of BCS. As a leading light, not only in Sri Lanka but worldwide, Abhaya Induruwa gained Fellowship and took his rightful place alongside many other industry luminaries.

With a career spanning many decades at the highest level, Abhaya now holds preeminent positions at the University of Colombo School of Computing and Canterbury Christ Church University. He believes strongly that BCS Fellowship has not only given him invaluable access to a professional community, but resulted in him receiving unrivalled recognition throughout the industry.

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THE MOTIVATION

Abhaya was always destined for great things in computing. A pioneering First Class Honours graduate in electrical and electronic engineering, he went on to establish and head a computer science and engineering department at the University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka from 1985 to 1998. 'I suppose it represented a gradual shift from electrical engineering to computer science and engineering,' he says. 'I feel I didn't choose IT as a career, but IT chose me.'

In a career featuring many highlights, Abhaya went on to drive Sri Lanka's internet deployment. This led to his induction into the Internet Hall of Fame in 2014, placing him alongside an impressive list of honourees, including Tim Berners-Lee, the inventor of the World Wide Web. He also served as a Director of training for scientists from developing countries, organised by the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), Italy.

Today, Abhaya is Professor VK Samaranyake Endowed Professor of Computing at the University of Colombo School of Computing. He also served as Joint Acting Head in Computing at Canterbury Christ Church University, where he currently serves as the Programme Director for Research in the School of Law, Criminal Justice and Computing.

Abhaya's motivation for joining BCS in 1988 and becoming a Fellow in 1994 was clear: he believes in belonging to a thriving community of like-minded people. 'I understood the value of being a member of a professional society representing my area of specialism. My expectation was always to reach the pinnacle, which is Fellowship.'

THE JOURNEY

Abhaya's application for BCS Fellowship was straightforward: 'The assessment was very smooth and I didn't experience any issues or challenges.' Once accepted, Abhaya continued his Fellowship status. 'I saw I could help others gain Fellowship, including my colleagues and students, which is the premium recognition everyone should aim for,' he says. While working in Sri Lanka, Abhaya stayed up-to-date with rapidly evolving technology through BCS's publications. However, since coming to the UK, he has experienced the benefits of membership first-hand. 'In the last two decades, my proximity to the BCS office, as well as a local branch, has given me access to the events organised by BCS.'

In his role at Canterbury Christ Church University, Abhaya believes his FBSC status will reap many rewards. 'The Department of Computing is working towards obtaining BCS accreditation for its BSc computing degree programmes,' he says. 'Being a BCS Fellow provides positive recognition in the accreditation process.'

'Higher education is also a very competitive industry, and institutions are expected to adhere to strict benchmarks and industry standard best practices. My Fellowship enables me to contribute meaningfully to debates on these issues.' Abhaya is also the founding honorary treasurer of the BCS Cybercrime Forensics Specialist Group.

THE BENEFITS

For Abhaya, the advantages of BCS Fellowship transcend opportunities to network, and gain from the latest industry insights and knowledge. He believes one of the major benefits of being a BCS Fellow is the industry-wide recognition it attracts.

However, he's also keen for students to recognise the benefits of joining BCS: 'I feel that computing students from an early stage should belong to the professional body that represents them and looks after their interests.'

'They should feel comfortable about being part of a vibrant professional community, which allows them to voice their ideas and opinions.'

Abhaya also believes BCS membership will help students in the world of work. 'A BCS member is bound by the Code Of Conduct to uphold the society's values, particularly relating to ethical and social responsibility,' he says. 'Students who understand and implement that responsibility are more likely to progress quickly in their careers.'

For those thinking about applying for Fellowship with BCS, Abhaya has some simple advice. 'They should do it without delay and start contributing to the community. At the same time, they will benefit from the resources available to them at BCS.'