
Profile

CEO Haresh Haricharun

Haresh Haricharun, 41, joined The Innovation Hub Management Company (Pty) Ltd (TIH) as CEO on 12 October 2009. His appointment was warmly welcomed by the company's Board, employees and scientific community, as well as its shareholder, Blue IQ Investment Holdings (Pty) Ltd.

TIH Chairman, Prof Joe Tsotetsi, introduced Haresh as a "recognised leader with outstanding management and leadership qualities and the vision and drive to position The Innovation Hub – Africa's first internationally accredited Science Park – as an important contributor to the fast-changing, dynamic and challenging innovation landscape, locally and abroad."

During his 15-year career in nuclear physics, Haresh held a number of management and leadership positions locally at parastatal Eskom and the Department of Minerals and Energy (DME). Before joining The Innovation Hub, he was the Chief Physicist - Engineering in the Nuclear Programmes Division at Eskom Enterprises and a member of the assessment team handling international bids for the Nuclear-1 multi-billion dollar construction of nuclear energy capacity for South Africa.

Prior to that, from 2001 to 2007, he spent five-and-a-half years at the Department of Minerals and Energy, firstly as a non-Executive Director of the NECSA Board (Nuclear Energy Corporation of South Africa) and from May 2002 as Director of Nuclear Technology in charge of nuclear technology affairs for South Africa.

His DME directorship entailed coordinating the multi-billion dollar PBMR (Pebble Bed Modular Reactor) nuclear energy project, acting as project director for NECSA (oversight of 2 500 employees and contractors) and taking responsibility for IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency based in Wien, Austria) matters related to nuclear technology.

Haresh also has experience in nuclear safety and licensing obtained from the Council for Nuclear Safety (National Nuclear Regulator) where he served as Project Manager tasked with ensuring compliance with the Nuclear License issued to various mining houses in South Africa.

Haresh was educated in South Africa at the University of Durban-Westville in Natal in association with the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg

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and the Max Planck Institut für Metalforschung, Stuttgart, Germany, from where he graduated with a MSc in Nuclear Physics (Cum Laude) in 1993. His dissertation was entitled "Positron Annihilation Spectroscopy in Diamond." He commenced PhD studies in the same field (currently incomplete) at the Technische Universität Dresden in Germany. He holds an international certificate in project management from the KOICA Institute in South Korea.

His extensive management experience includes well-honed commercial, strategic and leadership skills in, among others, corporate governance, recapitalisation, business turnaround intervention, strategic policy formulation and systems development, investment promotion and enterprise financing, and financial analysis, business efficiency and performance management.

A number of significant achievements have included the coordination and facilitation of a recapitalisation programme and funding of a turnaround strategy at major South African corporations and their subsidiaries. He also hosted numerous international delegations, negotiated bilateral and multilateral international cooperation agreements and gained international recognition in the area of nuclear energy.

During this career in South Africa's state and parastatal environments, Haresh also served with local and international peers on a number of forums and steering committees. These included the Policy Group of the Generation IV International Forum (GIF), a cooperative international R&D endeavour to establish the feasibility of and capabilities for next generation nuclear energy systems; IAEA INPRO (International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles); PBMR IDCC (Inter-departmental Coordination Committee) and the NECSA Board REMCOM (remuneration committee). In addition to serving as a specialist consultant on the PBMR for nine months during 2001 and 2002, Haresh also coordinated the international PBMR review team.

While at the Universities of Durban-Westville and the Witwatersrand, Haresh held various senior research and lecturing positions and has retained a passionate interest in mentoring young entrepreneurs, a skill which he believes can constructively be brought to bear at The Innovation Hub in the pursuit of stimulating innovation in South Africa.

Haresh and his wife Uveka, a Project Manager at J P Morgan Chase, have a two year-old daughter, Shria and live in Illovo, Johannesburg. The family enjoy travelling and spending quality time together.

Haresh looks forward to making a meaningful contribution to the growth and expansion of The Innovation Hub and seeing it take its rightful place among the world's leading young Science Parks.

THE INNOVATION HUB™

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“I believe in the power of teams and in creating productive partnerships with bright companies and scientific and education institutions. One of my aspirations is to significantly improve and increase South Africa's innovative capacity in harnessing science and technology to stimulate innovation.”