Foreword

Successful entrepreneurial ethnic minorities are not of course a new phenomenon, and many interesting examples from the past spring to mind. There were the Jews who settled in Europe, the Chinese in Australia and Malaysia, and Indians in many places, including East Africa and Fiji. Many of those minorities had so strong a reputation for financial success that they were persecuted or, at the least, their political rights were (and in some cases still are) heavily circumscribed.

What has changed markedly since the middle of the twentieth century is the scale of exchanges of peoples between countries, as travel has become easier and more affordable, and national economies more open and integrated. Thus many different ethnic minorities now exist in many different countries and their entrepreneurship can therefore have a significant influence on national economies. So it is important that we can understand what factors make for success. It would also be important to try to understand what factors can minimize the negative political consequences that members of successfully entrepreneurial ethnic minorities might face.

This volume follows two earlier reference works in which the author, Léo-Paul Dana, from the University of Canterbury, in Christchurch New Zealand, has commissioned chapters from leading researchers in their field around the world. The first of the three volumes dealt with international entrepreneurship and the second the entrepreneurship exhibited by indigenous peoples.

This present volume, similarly, is a collection of chapters which, in this case, cover examples of the entrepreneurship of ethnic minorities from all parts of the world. Authors of the chapters in the introductory section have set the scene by discussing definitions and frameworks. Then, in the bulk of the work, there are many detailed analyses of the entrepreneurship displayed by ethnic minorities in North America, Europe, Asia and the southern hemisphere. The final chapter of the book endeavours to draw together some conclusions and principles which might have universal application.

Each of the previous two volumes on entrepreneurship has filled important gaps in our knowledge and will be important reference sources. I am confident that this present volume will do the same.

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