Foreword

It is indeed a pleasure to write a foreword for Global Perspectives on Technology Transfer and Commercialization: Building Innovative Ecosystems. Anyone who has traveled the world with their eyes and ears open and tuned to their surroundings experiences those moments of realization that someone else does something better than any other country or locale or culture or institution in the world. Wise travelers bring those observations home and try to influence positive change in the direction of the best practices they have observed. Relatively recently, societies and their private sector and government institutions have tried to organize systems and methods (even ecosystems) to successfully and consistently stimulate and nurture technology transfer and commercialization as components of economic development strategies. Their efforts are not only relatively new, but they are highly varied as well. Thus, it is way too soon to make the call as to who does this best. That is not the intent of this volume. Rather, my distinguished colleagues, John Sibley Butler and David Gibson and IC3 Institute’s formidable worldwide faculty affiliates, have brought to the rest of us a most insightful (armchair) tour of the great variety of efforts and methods that have been developed or are being explored worldwide. I can think of no better manifestation of the IC3 mission at this moment in time when population size and depletion of natural resources central to global economic activity are colliding and challenges are exploding from the collision. The rest of the twenty-first century will bring a huge succession of sometimes brutal and urgent tests of mankind’s ingenuity. The world must pick up the pace of discovery and invention and their application and commercialization if mankind is to thrive within the bounds of our finite natural resources.

The IC3 Institute is a research unit at The University of Texas at Austin with a transdisciplinary focus. Since its inception, it has brought together scholars from many disciplines to solve unstructured problems in economic development within market economies. One of its great strengths is its Global Fellows Network, composed of scholars worldwide who share the research vision of the Institute in many areas. The Global Fellows, in turn, interact with many additional scholars and leaders bringing them into contact and collaboration with the Institute and greatly expanding
the total network of affiliated faculty dedicated to the same or related objectives.

This volume has been produced by that network, drawing on the expertise and experiences of scholars from thirteen countries who examine the infrastructures for technology transfer and commercialization in their countries. Significantly, it allows scholars, business leaders and government leaders to compare countries on an important dimension of technology transfer and commercialization, the business ecosystem. As George Kozmetsky, the founder of the Institute, admonished, 'Technology continues to shrink the world. There is no choice other than to participate in the global community. Science and technology is too precious a resource to be restricted from drawing the world together. That is what the twenty-first century is all about.'

Robert G. May, PhD
Former Dean, McCombs School of Business
Faculty Coordinator, Master of Science in Technology Commercialization
The University of Texas at Austin