

Editorial: Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Australia

Chris McPhee, Editor-in-Chief

Welcome to the June 2016 issue of the *Technology Innovation Management Review*. This month's editorial theme is **Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Australia**, and it is my pleasure to introduce our guest editor, **Rowena Barrett**, Head of the School of Management at Queensland University of Technology (QUT; qut.edu.au) in Brisbane, Australia.

The inspiration for this special issue arose during the ISPIM Innovation Summit (summit.ispim.org/brisbane2015/), which was hosted by QUT in Brisbane from December 6–9, 2015 under the overarching theme of "Changing the Innovation Landscape". Fittingly, this international conference of researchers, industrialists, consultants, and public bodies who share an interest in innovation management coincided with the launch of the Australian Government's (2015) National Innovation and Science Agenda on December 7th. The Agenda provides a framework for Australia's new innovation policy, which is accompanied by \$1.1 billion AUD investment over four years. In the wake of the collapse of the "mining boom", the National Innovation and Science Agenda is designed to stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship, leading to an "ideas boom" that will (hopefully) lead to new jobs and growth.

The launch of the National Innovation and Science Agenda and strong, interesting presentations showcasing Australia's approach to innovation prompted rich discussions among the conference participants. For this special issue, we invited researchers and practitioners from the ISPIM Innovation Summit in Brisbane who had particular insights about innovation and entrepreneurship in Australia to submit articles based on their presentations and papers and inspired by the feedback and discussions generated during and after the event.

In the first article, Guest Editor **Rowena Barrett**, who also chaired the ISPIM Innovation Summit, introduces the special issue and sets the scene for the contributions from the other authors by reflecting on the concept of innovation in concept and practice, and in light of Australia's new National Innovation and Science Agenda. She explains the rationale for the Agenda and highlights the challenges facing the country as it seeks to re-invent itself through innovation and entrepreneurship.

Next, **Anton Kriz**, **Courtney Molloy**, **Alexandra Kriz**, and **Sabrina Sonntag** from the University of Newcastle and the University of Sydney argue against blanket policies that assume equivalency across Australian regions. Based on fieldwork and ongoing action research from the Australian regions of Hunter and Central Coast (New South Wales) and Northern Tasmania, they identify 11 structural attributes of a regional innovation management (RIM) sandpit framework. The attributes and processes of the RIM Sandpit offer important insights into how policymakers and regional stakeholders, both within and beyond Australia, can enhance innovation in place-based regions and ultimately improve outcomes.

Then, **Troy Haines**, Co-Founder and CEO of theSPACE in Cairns, Australia, shares his experiences developing a startup and innovation ecosystem in a regional setting and extending the model to other regions of Australia. Haines argues that regions face quite different challenges from metropolitan areas and identifies the key ingredients of the champion-based regional model developed at theSPACE, including their physical space, programs, and events. He shares the early results of their efforts, along with lessons learned, before concluding that Australia regions are beginning to understand that building an ecosystem for economic growth is far more than a short-term goal of establishing an incubator or accelerator, but is actually about creating a cultural shift that will offer longer-term benefits.

Luke Hendrickson, **Stan Bucifal**, **Antonio Balaguer**, and **David Hansell** from the Australian Government's Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, and the Australian Bureau of Statistics, draw on five years of data tracking high-growth micro-startups through the Government's Expanded Analytical Business Longitudinal Database. The conclusions fit with international patterns, but they do not fit with innovation stereotypes. Notably, the results show that a very small fraction (about 3%) of micro-startups account for more than three-quarters of job creation by all micro-startups over a five-year period. They discuss the implications of their findings not only for firms but also government policy, emphasizing that high-growth startup activity requires strong strategic management capability.

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Kieran O'Brien from the Australian Innovation Research Centre at the University of Tasmania shifts the perspective to the national level, where he examines "hidden innovation": the value and impact of expenditure on outsourced innovation and activities. O'Brien estimates that hidden innovation in Australia amounted to \$3.4–4.0 billion AUD in 2014. He concludes that new, more reliable data sources are necessary for measuring hidden innovation and highlights the need for businesses to monitor the right supplier networks and nurture the capabilities required to source and integrate external expertise, knowledge, technology, and equipment for innovation.

Finally, **Peter Townson, Judy Matthews, and Cara Wrigley** from the Queensland University of Technology and the University of Technology Sydney demonstrate the potential of design-led innovation in the form of an experienced designer acting as an innovation catalyst to help firms develop customer-inspired innovation. They present findings of an 11-month study in which the researcher/designer was embedded in an Australian manufacturing firm to help it overcome barriers and recognize opportunities within a changing market context.

It was a pleasure to have the opportunity to participate in the ISPIM Innovation Summit in Brisbane, and I hope you will enjoy the timely insights our authors share about innovation and entrepreneurship in Australia in this special issue.

For our future issues, we are accepting general submissions of articles on technology entrepreneurship, innovation management, and other topics relevant to launching and growing technology companies and solving practical problems in emerging domains. Please contact us (timreview.ca/contact) with potential article topics and submissions.

Chris McPhee
Editor-in-Chief

References

Australian Government. 2015. *National Innovation and Science Agenda*. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. <http://www.innovation.gov.au/page/agenda>

About the Editor

Chris McPhee is Editor-in-Chief of the *Technology Innovation Management Review*. He holds an MASc degree in Technology Innovation Management from Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada, and BScH and MSc degrees in Biology from Queen's University in Kingston, Canada. Chris has over 15 years of management, design, and content-development experience in Canada and Scotland, primarily in the science, health, and education sectors. As an advisor and editor, he helps entrepreneurs, executives, and researchers develop and express their ideas.

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