

# Editorial: Local Open Innovation

Chris McPhee, Editor-in-Chief  
Christophe Deutsch, Guest Editor

## From the Editor-in-Chief

Welcome to the March 2013 issue of the *Technology Innovation Management Review*. This month's editorial theme is Local Open Innovation. It is my pleasure to welcome our guest editor, Christophe Deutsch, who is co-founder of En Mode Solutions ([enmodesolutions.com](http://enmodesolutions.com)) and R&D Manager at Telops ([telops.com](http://telops.com)), in Quebec City, Canada. The authors of the five articles in this issue provide diverse international perspectives on local open innovation; the issue also includes a report on a recent TIM Lecture on the same topic, given by Christophe and one of his co-founders at En Mode Solutions, Philippe Dancause.

In April, we remain on the topic of open innovation with the theme of Open Innovation and Entrepreneurship, and the guest editor is Jean-Pierre Segers, Dean of the Business School at PXL University College in Hasselt, Belgium ([pxl.be](http://pxl.be)).

Last month, I announced the publication of the TIM program's first ebook: *Best of TIM Review for Technology Entrepreneurs* ([amzn.to/XLs9JO](http://amzn.to/XLs9JO)), which features 16 of the most insightful, most relevant, and most popular articles on technology entrepreneurship published in the TIM Review. All net proceeds from the sales of this ebook will go to pay for the operating costs of the TIM Review, and I am pleased to report that initial sales placed the ebook in several bestseller categories in Amazon's Kindle Store: [tinyurl.com/co6nacw](http://tinyurl.com/co6nacw)

We hope you enjoy this issue of the TIM Review and will share your comments online. Also note that we still have a spot available in the unthemed issue we are planning for late spring. This is a good opportunity for authors to submit an article on any topic within our overall scope, so please contact us ([timreview.ca/contact](http://timreview.ca/contact)) with article topics and submissions. We also welcome suggestions for future themes and any other feedback.

**Chris McPhee**  
Editor-in-Chief

## From the Guest Editor

You might be surprised by the title of this issue – Local Open Innovation – because it mixes two concepts that seem to be in opposition. Why should you stay local when open-innovation techniques allow you to access the world? How can open innovation benefit from being local? These are some of the questions the authors explore through their articles in this special issue.

As stated by Frank Piller (2012; [tinyurl.com/d4w286m](http://tinyurl.com/d4w286m)), one of the biggest benefits for a company participating in open innovation is the chance to explore new domains of knowledge to help them solve problems or develop new opportunities. However, many open-innovation projects never concretize themselves because the solution provider is too far away, not only geographically, but also in culture, background, or capability to collaborate with the solution-seeking company. Here is the first reason why local open innovation enables new possibilities: the solution provider is next door, speaks the same language, and shares common values. It is much easier to concretize a project and benefit from the openness brought by this "neighbour", who may be from a different organization and disciplinary background.

The second reason why local open innovation will become more and more popular comes from the fact that this concept includes the concept of collaboration. In many industrialized countries, the rarefaction of highly educated people will require companies from the same region to share this resource. Local open innovation can help us overcome this new challenge, as you will see through the various examples shared in this issue of the TIM Review.

Finally, local open innovation brings, as a byproduct, a new light to different facets of the motivation behind open innovation: networking, curiosity, recruitment, and social exchange.

This issue of the TIM Review will present an overview of different initiatives from around the world that illustrate this new concept of local open innovation. The articles will provide readers with insights of different

## Editorial: Local Open Innovation

Chris McPhee and Christophe Deutsch

approaches, with examples of results that can be achieved, and with methods that readers can use to implement their own version of local open innovation.

In the first article, I present the Seeking Solutions approach to local open innovation, and I illustrate the concept with details and results from the first Quebec Seeks Solutions event. This new approach is at the origin of the term *local open innovation* and allowed the creation of a new company, En Mode Solutions, to promote the approach.

**Sally Davenport, Stephen Cummings, Urs Daellenbach, and Charles Campbell** present the *problem-solving model*, which they illustrate through the analysis of the "What's Your Problem New Zealand?" competition that was launched in 2009. The approach brings very interesting strategic possibilities for R&D organizations to show their value to local companies and to help them innovate. It is a very nice manifestation of local open innovation because of the collaboration it introduces and by the adaptation of crowdsourcing approaches. I strongly believe that all managers from R&D organizations should read this article and see how this approach could be applied in their own organizations.

In describing the Quest for Solutions initiative, **Oscar Smulders** gives another example of local open innovation. This initiative enables an industrial cluster in the Netherlands to find solutions to common issues faced by companies in the process industry. The idea creation, the real implementation of some solutions, and the dynamic that was created locally thanks to this initiative, confirm the value of local open innovation but also show the challenges in achieving results and highlight the cultural change that is required.

**Alexandra Berger Masson** offers us the perspective of an economic development agency, Quebec International, on the value of supporting the implementation of local open innovation techniques within a region. She shows how her organization has been able to better achieve its mission of increasing the growth of local companies through the Quebec Seeks Solutions events. She shows also how the mobilization of all the innovation actors was crucial to the success of the events.

**Isabelle Deschamps, Maria Macedo, and Christian Eve-Levesque** give us a rigorous study about the readiness of small and medium-sized enterprises to increase collaboration with universities or R&D centres, and how open-innovation techniques are used in the Province of Quebec. Through several case studies, they present their key findings and identify what types of challenges await participants in local open innovation: constructing a systemic approach for collaboration and thoroughly understanding the role of intermediaries. From my perspective, their conclusions apply not only to the Province of Quebec, but could be generalized to all regions around the world.

**Chris McPhee** also provides a report of the February TIM Lecture, which I presented with my colleague, **Philippe Dancause**, on the topic of local open innovation. This lecture included a formal presentation along with a real-time, interactive experience of the Seeking Solutions approach. The audience proposed eight problems and then collaborated in groups to help find solutions to the problems. The session gave just a flavour of the benefits of local open innovation, but the feedback from the participants was nonetheless positive.

Finally, I would like to give some special thanks. Thanks to Frank Piller, who inspired the local open innovation movement; thanks to Nadia Noori, for putting me in contact with the TIM program; thanks to Tony Bailetti for the opportunity of contributing to this issue of the TIM Review; thanks to the authors, for their inspiring articles; and special thanks to Chris McPhee, this journal's Editor-in-Chief, who pushed us all to improve our articles and who contributed largely to the quality of this issue.

I hope that you, your colleagues, and your organizations will benefit from reading this issue and that you will integrate the local open innovation mindset to increase value creation in the future.

**Christophe Deutsch**  
Guest Editor

## Editorial: Local Open Innovation

Chris McPhee and Christophe Deutsch

### About the Editors

**Chris McPhee** is Editor-in-Chief of the *Technology Innovation Management Review*. Chris holds an MASc degree in Technology Innovation Management from Carleton University in Ottawa and BScH and MSc degrees in Biology from Queen's University in Kingston. He 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.

**Christophe Deutsch** is R&D Manager at Telops ([telops.com](http://telops.com)), an innovative company in the field of high-performance infrared sensors. He is responsible for the successful realization of product development and R&D projects. Previously, he was Vice President Operations at INO, an applied R&D centre in the field of optics, where he implemented project-management and technology-development processes and co-founded the RCR, a circle of R&D managers. Christophe has also worked for ABB Analytical Solutions, where he developed his competencies in system engineering and project management in several aerospace projects. As a member of IS-PIM's advisory board, he promotes innovation management to increase efficiency of R&D. In 2012, he co-founded En Mode Solutions ([enmodesolutions.com](http://enmodesolutions.com)).

**Citation:** McPhee, C. and C. Deutsch. 2013. Editorial: Local Open Innovation. *Technology Innovation Management Review*. March 2013: 3-5.



**Keywords:** local open innovation, open innovation, collaboration, problem solving, economic development