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## Editorial

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### Clive Davenport

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**Biographical notes:** Clive Davenport is the current President of MANCEF, the global Micro and Nanotechnology Commercialisation Education Foundation. He is also the CEO of the Small Technologies Cluster (STC) located at Caribbean Park, Melbourne, Australia. The STC is creating a world recognised centre of excellence in micro-nano-bio technology research, manufacturing and commercialisation. Prior to the STC, he was the CEO of the Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for microTechnology (2000–2006) a collaborative research initiative between industry, research and government. He has extensive experience in the scientific industry from managing research programs, developing commercial products, establishing international markets, to taking start-up businesses to global success.

David Tolfree is currently the European Vice-President and one of the founders of Micro and Nanotechnology Commercialization Educational Foundation (MANCEF). He is also the Co-Founder and Executive Director of Technopreneur Ltd., a consultancy company for the exploitation of micro-nanotechnology, established in Cheshire, England. He is a Chartered Physicist, and Fellow of the Institute of Physics and the UK Institute of Nanotechnology. He has published over 140 papers, including newspaper articles, chapters for books and conference papers, and has given interviews on television and radio. He is the guest editor and contributor to the *International Journal of Technology Transfer and Commercialisation*; and is also on the advisory boards of a number of international conferences. His latest book, *Commercialising Micro-Nanotechnology Products* was published in November 2007.

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COMS is the leading international conference on the commercialisation of micro and nano technologies. The name itself is an acronym for the Commercialisation of Micro and Nano Systems. The *12th International COMS Conference* (2–5 September, 2007) was concluded in Melbourne, Australia – the first time in the Asia Pacific Region. The goal of this Special edition of the *International Journal of Technology Transfer and Commercialisation* is to present a selection of papers based on oral presentations given at the conference. They cover micro-nano technologies, research and development

infrastructure, manufacturing, public and education issues and other topics. The first COMS that took place at BANFF in Canada in 1994 heralded the start of a series of unique conferences focused on commercialisation issues. Since then, 12 conferences have been concluded, each attracting a progressive interest as the technologies they represent matured and became adopted by industry for manufacturing components and new products. The emergence of nanotechnologies during the last ten years has added an extra dimension to these conferences.

COMS is the flagship conference of MANCEF, the global Micro And Nanotechnology Commercialization Education Foundation. MANCEF's mission is to connect the global communities engaged in commercialising emerging technologies with an emphasis on supporting the creation, exchange, and dissemination of knowledge vital to people, organisations, and governments interested in miniaturisation technologies. The conference promotes the exchange of knowledge and dissemination of information that can accelerate the emergence of an effective economic basis for the future development of micro and nano technology based industries, and assists decision makers and their staff to understand the technology, its markets, and potential for future growth.

Business is global. In the commercialisation of small technologies there is no 'one' model. Each country and region is different. Micro and nano are emerging technologies driven by 'technology push'. COMS draws on these differences and each other's experiences to assist in the conversion to 'demand pull' and industry's absorption capacity for these new technologies.

Traditionally the conference addresses the issues of opportunity realisation – encompassing research, applications and markets, business strategies, technology transfer and translation, manufacturing processes, facilities, infrastructure and investment, to issues such as regulatory, social implications, education and workforce development, the role of governments and development agencies and the building of successful MNT regional clusters. At COMS2007 we highlighted the application areas of Biotechnology and Healthcare, Energy, Water and Food and Agriculture.

COMS is the market place that brings together leaders from all over the world and every sector of the supply chain. By holding the conference in different cities around the world, the host nation adds their own particular flavour with an opportunity to showcase activity and successes pertaining to that specific region. Delegates and speakers are from a broad spectrum of high tech companies, national labs, universities and research institutes, regional development and government agencies, investment and consulting groups, market researchers, educationalists and students – all sharing, learning and creating partnerships in an open interactive environment.

In recent years the increasing interest in nanotechnology has given emphasis to education and work force development and to public and social awareness issues. This year's conference had a greater number of delegates from these areas so four papers on these topics have been included in this issue.

We thank Professors Mark Jackson and Mohammed Dorgham, the Chief Editors of the *International Journal of Technology Transfer and Commercialisation* for publishing this Special Issue.