

---

## **Preface**

---

### **Athina Lazakidou**

Department of Nursing,  
Faculty of Human Movement and Quality of Life Sciences,  
University of Peloponnese,  
Sparti General Hospital Building Complex,  
GR-23100, Sparta, Greece  
Fax: +30-27310-89719  
E-mail: lazakid@uop.gr

---

Collaboration has become more important to global organisations as they handle the increasing dispersal of their activities across space, time, and organisational boundaries. How to get dispersed teams of knowledge workers and decision-makers to work together in more efficient and effective ways has driven organisational adoption and use of collaborative technologies.

Collaborative systems support networks of spatially dispersed actors (either humans or not) that play different roles and cooperate to achieve common goals, which are usually non-technological goals. On the other hand, collaboration is obviously enabled by the several technological building blocks that contribute to setup a collaborative system.

Traditionally, most of the efforts in the context of collaborative systems have mainly addressed technology issues, while collaboration issues have been dealt with at a very limited extent, more as a side effect of an innovative technology rather than as a driver that brings technology closer to people and organisational needs.

The special issue entitled 'Collaborative technologies and applications' fosters innovative research contributions addressing collaborative systems that help to create the right conditions for effective cooperation and coordination, thereby boosting factors like productivity, innovation and creativity.

This issue aims at presenting the state-of-the-art and future of collaborative technologies and systems. Another aim of the new special issue is also the discussion of the emergence of integrated collaborative environments, as well as other issues and trends that are influencing the collaboration marketplace.

This special issue include invited papers from experts from academia, and industry as well as contributed papers describing original work on the current state of research in collaborative technologies, collaborative systems and all related issues.

All of us who worked on this special issue hope that readers will find it useful.