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## Introduction

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**Biographical note:** Elena G. Popkova is a Doctor of Economic Sciences, Professor of the Chair “World Economics and Economic Theory” of Volgograd State Technical University (Volgograd, Russia), the founder of autonomous non-profit organization “Institute of Scientific Communications”. She actively participates in scientific conferences around the world and published materials of her research in international scientific journals, including Scopus indexed (38 publications) and WoS indexed, and is the author of more than 200 publications in Russian and English. Her scientific interests cover economic growth, clustering and foreign economic activities.

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Sustainability is the most important landmark of development of modern economic systems. Topicality and significance of this theme for science and practice are predetermined by the striving of economic subjects at all levels of an economic system to stabilise their well-being and to strengthen their positions in the market in the conditions of growing competitive struggle at the global scale.

However, despite the high interest from scholars and practitioners to the problem of provision of sustainability of socioeconomic development, their studies are brought down to the development of separate conceptual provisions of this scientific direction. At that, the applied issues of this topic are not sufficiently studied in the existing publications, and there are no specific recommendations for solving this problem.

This special issue is to fill in this gap. It contains the results of the latest applied research on the topic of sustainable development of economic systems, in which the perspective means of its achievement with the help of development of cluster processes and creation of innovational networks are offered.

The materials published in this special issue were presented at the international scientific and practical conference “Role of integration and clustering in provision of sustainability of economic growth” that took place on March 17–19, 2016 in Volgograd, Russia. All materials of the research published in this special issue undertook the double-blind peer-review process for correspondence to the subject, scientific novelty and theoretical and practical significance.

This special issue is to stimulate inter-disciplinary interest to issues of clustering, development of innovational networks and sustainable development in national and international scale. The conference featured research in these spheres by representatives of the scientific school of T.F. Romanova (Rostov State University of Economics), scientific school of L.S. Shakhovskaya (Volgograd, State Technical University), etc.

The most vivid works of this special issue include the ones devoted to study of the cluster processes in the modern economy: “Role of Clusters in Creation of Financial Innovations in the Sphere of Social Insurance”, “Influence of Clustering on Innovational

Development of Business Structures in Region's Economy", "Role of Clusters and Forms of Public-Private Partnership in Provision of Sustainable Growth on the Basis of Network Cooperation Within Regional Innovational System", "Ways of Corporate Tax Optimization for Cluster Entities", "Problems and Perspectives of Cluster Formation in View of Sustainability of Development of Regional Business Structures of the Russian Federation", "Perspectives of Use of Mediation in the Process of Cluster Development of Economy of Contemporary Russia".

The original scientific studies include "Corruption as Obstacle for Effective Logistics of Modern Clusters" and "Motivation of Company's Top Managers During Implementation of an Innovational Project: Financial and Non-Financial Constituents". The work in which the inconsistency of theory, policy and practice of clustering in modern Russia is studied is of high scientific significance.

Also, it is possible to distinguish such works as "Mergers and Acquisitions as a Form of Corporate Integration", "Financial Transparency in Budget Sector of Economy as a Necessary Condition of Clustering" and "Legal Provision of Clustering in Russia as Environment for Development of Innovations", as well as the work of E. Inshakova, O. Inshakov, and A. Orlova "Global and Russian Nanotechnology Products Market Development: Comparison of Trends and Impact of Sanctions", as the most prominent studies presented in this special issue.

These and other works, presented at the conference and published in this special issue, stimulate strengthening of theoretical and methodological basis and gathering of information for conduct of further fundamental and applied research in the sphere of stimulation of cluster and innovational processes in economy in the context of its sustainable development.