Welcome to this special issue on Rethinking Knowledge Management of the Journal of Information and Knowledge Management. The articles included are a selection of some of the best papers presented at the Eighth International Conference on Knowledge Management (ICKM), Johannesburg, 4–6 September 2012. The subject field of Knowledge Management is relatively diffused and scattered into diverging concepts, perspectives and disciplines. This conference explored trends about the future of Knowledge Management and provided an international platform for the presentation, discussion and debate of diverse and professional approaches and research on recent and future developments in Knowledge Management.

The paper by Jean-Pierre Booto Ekionea, Gérard Fillion and Vivi Koffi deals with Knowledge Management Capabilities (KMC) development at the municipal context to assess its impact on organisational performance. By using a KMC maturity model, which has five levels of maturity, the authors explain how to better understand the phenomenon of KMC in a municipal context.

Joyline Makani explores ways in which knowledge-intensive organisations can successfully develop and implement Knowledge Management systems in the second article. She suggests that both organisational knowledge-intensive attributes and knowledge-intense worker activities inform the choice and application of Knowledge Management systems in these organisations.

Franz Barachini and Chris Stary discuss how the incorporation of non-economic indicators in corporate management systems could help to bridge the gap between poor and rich economies. They propose the capitalisation of labour costs, the provision for costs caused in indirect value chains, environmental and social measures in scorecards, new remuneration schemas for managers, and a change in management attitudes towards Knowledge Management.

Knowledge Management has been proposed as one of the most effective ways to reduce medical errors and in the fourth article, Yong-Mi Kim and Donna Newby-Bennett holistically investigate knowledge sharing with regard to patient safety in the healthcare industry and propose that knowledge sharing can be nurtured or suppressed by organisational structures such as rules and policies.

Inter-organisational networks and Communities of Practice are two areas of inquiry of interest to Knowledge Management, especially when innovation is an important organisational goal. In the fifth article, Lourens Koen and Christiaan Maasdorp propose that innovation networks and Communities of Practice can respectively facilitate and support exploration and exploitation. Whilst networks and communities are different structures, they have complimentary effects and when combined could bring organisations closer to an optimal innovative structure.

The paper by Paul Laughton takes a qualitative approach to identifying practices and trends amongst four World Data Centres operating in the knowledge economy. Data is an abundant resource in the knowledge economy and the need for data centres and storage solutions to harness this data is evident. Recommendations are made to improve data practices amongst data centres in the knowledge economy.

Jaco Pienaar discusses the importance of intellectual capital measurement in the mass media. The framework proposed in this article gives a multi-disciplinary and holistic approach in understanding and contextualising a company’s presence in the public space. It takes into account and accepts the value of intellectual capital to an organisation and guides strategic flows and potential outcomes in this regard.

In the last article by Toyohide Watanabe and Masato Aoki on contents-analysis support for better reference to technical papers, the authors explain that it is not easy for researchers to find newly research subjects or grasp
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analytically research trends. They developed an experimental method to arrange already-read papers intelligently with a view to investigating current topics or subjects to be followed next.

My deepest gratitude to the authors and reviewers who have contributed their time, energy and expertise to make this special issue a success. Each author’s scholarly contribution is a valuable asset in helping to gain foresight on Knowledge Management in the 21st century.

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