

# THE IC<sup>2</sup> INSTITUTE: A THINK *and* DO TANK

by ELSIE L. ECHEVERRI

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**DR. GEORGE KOZMETSKY (1917-2003)** founded the IC<sup>2</sup> Institute at the University of Texas at Austin in 1977 when he was dean of the College of Business Administration and Graduate School of Business. A lifelong educator and businessman, he received the National Medal of Technology in 1993.

The IC<sup>2</sup> Institute is an international, multidisciplinary, “Think and Do” tank that advances the theory and practices of high-tech entrepreneurship through its world-recognized components, activities, and programs, including: Austin Technology Incubator, Global Commercialization Group, Master of Science Degree in Technology Commercialization, Bureau of Business Research, Center for Emerging Technology Commercialization, Center for Global Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Technology Business Accelerator (TECHBA), and the University Technology Enterprise Network (which facilitates globally competitive and sustainable S&T commercialization know-how in Portugal).

#### A Global Vision

Only twenty years ago, Austin was a traditional city of 345,000 that revolved around UT, state government, and an Air Force base. Austin has transformed itself into a leading center of high technology, and IC<sup>2</sup> programs have played a critical role in this transformation. More important, the institute offers customized and Austin-tested programs to other countries around the world, including India, Hungary, Egypt, Korea, Poland, and Portugal. This strategy is in line with Kozmetsky’s global vision:

“Technology continues to shrink the world. There is no choice other than to participate in the global community. Science and technology is too precious as a resource to be restricted from drawing the world together. That is what the twenty-first century is all about.”

Some of the IC<sup>2</sup> Institute’s programs have been carried out in Latin America.

#### The IC<sup>2</sup> Institute in Latin America

The institute has worked in Latin American countries like Belize in the past, but the focus in this article is on its currently active programs in other countries of the region.

The Chilean Technology Incubation and Venture Program is a partnership between the IC<sup>2</sup> Institute and the Chilean Economic Development Agency (CORFO), which assesses incubators in Santiago, Puerto Montt, Valdivia, Temuco, Concepción, Valparaíso, Antofagasta, and Talca. This program includes training for incubator managers, CORFO staff, and entrepreneurs, as well as selecting Chilean technologies for international business development.

As a member of the U.S.-Brazil Sustainability Consortium (USBSC) and the North American Sustainability, Housing, and Community Consortium (NASHCC), the institute helps facilitate international student exchanges among Canada, the United States, and Brazil.

Because of its geographical closeness, the IC<sup>2</sup> Institute has more programs in Mexico than in any other country in the region. The Program for the Development of the Northeastern Region and its links with Texas (INVITE) commercializes technologies from universities in four Mexican states: Nuevo León, Chihuahua, Coahuila, and Tamaulipas. Through TECHBA, the institute is helping Mexican technology businesses accelerate the commercialization of their products in the North American market.

Recognizing a void in understanding factors leading to the emergence of an important cluster of small high-tech firms in Monterrey, Mexico, the Bureau of Business Research interviewed these firms and policymakers and produced two publications.<sup>1</sup> The Bureau also has played an important role in developing terms of reference and

evaluating consultants for the Monterrey International City of Knowledge Program—Phase II in the Institute for Innovation and Technology Transfer (I<sup>2</sup>T<sup>2</sup>), a governmental entity in Nuevo León.

In a bid to strengthen ties with Latin America, the IC<sup>2</sup> Institute will locate its UT Center for Global Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CGIE) in a Monterrey, Mexico, science and technology park.

CGIE, in partnership with Mexico's CIMAV (Center of Investigation for Advanced Materials), offers a master's degree in science and technology commercialization (MSTC) in Monterrey.

The IC<sup>2</sup> Institute invites entrepreneurs and policymakers to stay at the institute as visiting scholars and maintains a network of more than 160 Global Fellows around the world—many of them from Latin America.

The institute's presence is expanding in Latin America, with a technology commercialization seminar being taught to a network of several universities in Colombia this summer.

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*Elsie L. Echeverri is Director of the Economic Development Program of the Bureau of Business Research at IC<sup>2</sup>.*

#### Note

1. Echeverri-Carroll, E. L. (2008), "The Growth of Knowledge-Based Small Firms in Monterrey, Mexico." *Texas Business Review*, Bureau of Business Research. Echeverri-Carroll E. L. (2009), "Las Pequeñas Empresas Basadas en el Conocimiento en Monterrey, México," *Comercio Exterior*, Vol. 52 (2): 111-115. ☀

"The IC<sup>2</sup> Institute created the technopolis model for technology transfer and entrepreneurship around the globe. The focus of the Institute is on using science and technology for wealth and job creation."

—John Butler, Director, IC<sup>2</sup> Institute

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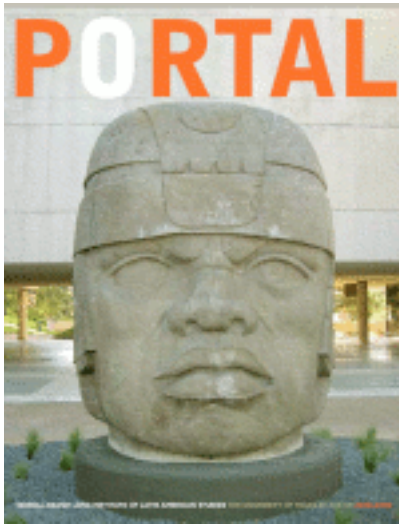
"The IC<sup>2</sup> Institute will manage UT's Center for Global Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the Innovation Technology Park in Monterrey, Mexico. The center will focus on programs such as the incubation of new companies and technologies, and educational initiatives for science and technology commercialization, all areas in which the IC<sup>2</sup> Institute has a long tradition of expertise."

—Juan Sanchez, Vice President for Research  
The University of Texas at Austin



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Elsie L. Echeverri



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