The need for the management of the ‘technology driven value chain’ in technology based enterprises became paramount in the current technology and knowledge society. The level and magnitude of technological innovation proved to be a strong predictor of economic success of companies worldwide.
Senior academic managers are the chair and co-chair of the South-African chapter of EMS for any number of years already. One of them was also elected to chair the Southern African section of IEEE for 2005 and 2006.

Another prominent global event is the Portland International Conference on the Management of Engineering and Technology (PICMET). PICMET is hosted by the Department of Engineering and Technology Management of the Portland State University, Oregon, USA. Typically 500 to 600 delegates from all over the globe participate in this conference. This is arguably the most notable event of its kind in the world today.

An important development is the founding of the Engineering and Technology Management Education and Research Council (ETMERC) in 2003. It is of significance to mention that senior academic managers of the University of Pretoria were elected as the first president and vice-president of this organisation.

The objectives of ETMERC are to formalise and promote the discipline of engineering and technology management. Specific focus will be to enhance education and research, resulting also in formal definition (description) of programmes allowing for later accreditation.

Such candidate programmes are a masters degree in engineering management (MEM) and a masters degree in project management (MPM) offered by UP.

The International Association for Management of Technology (IAMOT) is the prominent body in the world focusing on the management of technology. Important to note is that academic and industry role players from South Africa were co-founders of this prestige international organisation. IAMOT has an education council as well as a research council enhancing the discipline of the management of technology. UNIDO (the United Nations Industry Development Organisation) officially supports IAMOT.

True pioneering work was done in this field during the past 17 years. South African universities and industries have participated over the years and significant progress has been made towards formalisation and accreditation of educational programmes.

In the field of project management significant developments took place over the past few years. The Project Management Institute (PMI) in the USA is stretching its wings well beyond the borders of the USA. It already has more than 100 000 members worldwide.

The Department of Engineering and Technology Management at the University of Pretoria is a registered education provider (REP) of the PMI. The PMI has also started a process to accredit masters’ degree programmes in project management. The programmes of only three universities worldwide have so far been accredited and the University of Pretoria is in the process of applying for accreditation of its masters’ degree programme in project management (MPM).

The South African chapter of the International Council on Systems Engineering (INCOSE) was founded in 2003. Two successful international conferences were hosted already. Systems engineering plays a vital role in the engineering management world.

The Southern African Maintenance Association (SAMA) was formed in 1997 to promote the interests of maintenance professionals in southern Africa. This action followed the worldwide trend where maintenance engineering and maintenance management were becoming recognised as professions in their own right.

The chairman of SAMA is currently held by a professor from UP. SAMA has established international connections with professional societies in the maintenance field, for example the Society in Australia (MESA) and the Society for Maintenance and Reliability Professionals (SMRP) in the USA.

SAMA this month hosts the annual International Conference on Asset and Maintenance Management (ICAMM).

In the spirit of the University mission statement, we strive to keep our programmes internationally recognised, yet locally relevant.