Managing knowledge in dispersed R&D settings
A qualitative study of management challenges and insights from practice

For globally dispersed R&D organizations, locally created knowledge offers unique and valuable insights that help create new technologies and potentially improve organizational learning throughout the organization. A challenge for such organizations lies in stimulating the creation of such locally embedded knowledge, while also managing to integrate that specific knowledge more universally into the larger organization.

How does management meet the challenge of creating embedded local knowledge while at the same time making such knowledge less local and more universal for the organization? How do engineers on the work floor cope with dispersed local knowledge? How do they work in geographically dispersed R&D projects? What formal and informal ways of collaborating do they engage in? These questions are addressed through four empirical studies on managing knowledge in dispersed R&D settings.

Taking into account a practical perspective on knowledge, and drawing on organization studies and interaction management theories, the study in this book identifies key challenges for effectively managing knowledge. It presents the results of four case studies and their findings on the relationship between local knowledge and its management in dispersed R&D environments, and provides several theoretical and practical insights into managing knowledge in management.

About the author
Roos Erkelens received her PhD from the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam in 2010. His research focuses on the development of management strategies for the management of dispersed R&D, with a specific focus on the transfer of knowledge across boundaries. He has published extensively in this field and his research has been recognized for its contribution to the understanding of the role of knowledge creation and management in R&D.