

Why does that Entrepreneur need yet another Entrée?

Prof. Ian Ferguson

*School of Electrical and Computer Engineering
School of Materials Science and Engineering
Georgia Institute of Technology
Atlanta, Georgia 30332-0250 USA*

Thursday 03/19/09

3:00pm - 4:00 pm

Room: Classroom South 500

Abstract:

The question of ‘How do I become an entrepreneur?’ is answered in a similar way to ‘How do I be writer?’; as writers’ write, entrepreneurs’ entrée. The successful entrepreneur is typically not in status but is working on many different projects at once due to the need to manage risk. This presentation will consider cases of both successful and unsuccessful inventors and entrepreneurs and the speaker will share of his experiences in entrepreneurship. The presentation will look at the importance of relationships in entrepreneurship and the mismatch that often occurs between the inventor and the business community. The mechanics of entrepreneurship such as developing a business plan can be taught however it is typically found that most successful entrepreneurs have been through a number of troubled ventures before seeing success.

Biography: Dr. Ian Ferguson has worked extensively in both industry and academia during his career. He is currently a Professor in the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering and the School of Materials Science and Engineering at the Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) and Director for the Focused Research Program on Next Generation Lighting at Georgia Tech. His undergraduate and graduates degrees were in Physics from Heriot Watt and St Andrews University in Scotland. Dr. Ferguson research focuses on the area of wide band-gap materials and devices (emitters, detectors and electronics) using GaN and ZnO and developing these materials for illumination, spintronic and nuclear detection applications. He has authored over 260 refereed publications, six book chapters, and has edited ten conference proceedings, one book and multiple patents. Prior to Georgia Tech, he was most recently based at EMCORE Corporation as the Director, Research Development providing strategic and tactical focus for EMCORE’s longer range research and development. He received a National Small Business Association Award at the White House in Washington DC for contributions to the SBIR program. Dr. Ferguson also operated as the General Manager, In-situ Products a business unit operated as a separate profit and loss center within EMCORE defining the technical roadmaps for future product development. As the Director, Intellectual Property Dr. Ferguson defined EMCORE’s strategic approach and budget for intellectual property issues, coordinating this activity. Dr. Ferguson has been actively involved in the entrepreneurial process of both establishing new companies for the last ten years in different areas of technology. He currently in senior management positions in the three start-up companies that are in different stages of development; the founder/CTO of Bellwether Technology, acting CTO CERMET Inc. and founder/CSO NXLighting. He was awarded a Technology Utilization Foundation Technology Transfer Award for contributions to the development of light emitting diodes.