The futurologist Alvin Toffler said “Yesterday violence was power, today wealth is power and tomorrow knowledge will be power”. Dr. R. Chidambaram, the Chairman, Board of Governors of IIT Jodhpur frequently paraphrases Toffler’s words to say “Those who have the ability to transform knowledge into technology have power”. Today, as the world continues to battle an invisible enemy, it is scientific knowledge, translated into technology that has given us power over this virus. Right from identifying new diagnostic / treatment modalities, the development of vaccines, to the genome sequencing of new variants to mitigate their spread, science and technology have been central to our advance against COVID-19. Our advances against COVID-19 have not been without losses. The world has lost innumerable frontline warriors and medical professionals to this onslaught. Along with these immeasurable losses, we also remember Dr. Vandana Sharma, a young, dynamic faculty member from the IIT Jodhpur family, who championed IIT Jodhpur’s cause of effective online education and Mr. Pawan Meena, an Alumnus, from the Class of 2014 of B.Tech. (CSE). Their loss is irreplaceable to the Institute community. Despite the challenging times, IIT Jodhpur remains committed to grow in leaps and bounds to meet the technology needs of India.

As you will recall, the 6th Convocation of IIT Jodhpur was held on December 6, 2020 in an immersive 360-degree mixed-reality environment. Professor Geoffrey Hinton, Turing Award Winner and Emeritus Distinguished Professor at the Department of Computer Science, University of Toronto, Canada graced the occasion and delivered the Convocation address. The full transcript of his address is included in this issue. I am sure that you will find it illuminating. IIT Jodhpur remains committed to strengthening its relationship with industry stakeholders. To this effect, the annual Industry Day 2021 was organized virtually on March 12-13, 2021. The main themes of Industry Day 2021 were green technology, smart infrastructure, medical technology and drug discovery.

In the In Focus section of this issue, is an article by Dr. Heena Rathore, an Alumnus of IIT Jodhpur (Class of 2016 of Ph.D. in Information & Communication Technologies), currently serving as an Assistant Professor at the University of Texas, San Antonio, on neuroscience-inspired approaches for machine learning. Also in this section, Dr. Alok Ranjan shares his perspectives on how the current situation is a wakeup call for strengthening the health system in India. You will also find several other interesting snippets of ongoing research at IIT Jodhpur in this issue of TechScape. These interdisciplinary innovations can have several applications and create a profound social impact. Just to give a flavour for the diversity of research areas covered in this issue, Dr. Prasenjit Sarkar takes us through the process for development of human tissue in laboratory bioreactors, while Dr. Preeti Tiwari explores more fundamental questions on how social entrepreneurial intentions are formed. Dr. Rima Bhattacharya introduces us to Asian American literature and Dr. Jayant Kumar Mohanta discusses the design of spatial robots for lower-limb rehabilitation. Such diversity is and will always be our strength as TechScape strives to make knowledge available across disciplines. We are confident that you will enjoy reading this issue and we thank the contributing authors for making every issue of TechScape an experience in itself for you, the reader.