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# Chairs' welcome

Belpaeme, Tony

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ACM/IEEE International Conference on Human-Robot Interaction

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# HRI '20

Proceedings of the 2020 ACM/IEEE International Conference on  
**Human-Robot Interaction**

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# Chairs' Welcome

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the 15th Annual ACM/IEEE International Conference on Human Robot Interaction – HRI 2020. HRI is a premier, highly-selective meeting presenting the latest advances in the field, with broad participation from a range of scholars, including roboticists, social scientists, designers, engineers, and many others. HRI presents the latest advancements in technical, design, behavioural, theoretical, methodological, and metrological ideas in HRI.

The theme of this year's conference is "Real World Human-Robot Interaction," reflecting on recent trends in our community toward creating and deploying systems that can facilitate real-world, long-term interaction. This theme also reflects a new theme area we have introduced at HRI this year, "Reproducibility for Human Robot Interaction," which is key to realizing this vision and helping further our scientific endeavors. This trend was also reflected across our other four theme areas, including "Human-Robot Interaction User Studies," "Technical Advances in Human-Robot Interaction," "Human-Robot Interaction Design," and "Theory and Methods in Human-Robot Interaction."

The conference attracted 279 full paper submissions from around the world, including Asia, Australia, the Middle East, North America, South America, and Europe. Each submission was overseen by a dedicated theme chair and reviewed by an expert group of program committee members, who worked together with the program chairs to define and apply review criteria appropriate to each of the five contribution types. All papers were reviewed by a strict double-blind review process, followed by a rebuttal period, and shepherding if deemed appropriate by the program committee. Ultimately the committee selected 66 papers (23.6%) for presentation as full papers at the conference. As the conference is jointly sponsored by ACM and IEEE, papers are archived in the ACM Digital Library and the IEEE Xplore.

Along with the full papers, the conference program and proceedings include Late Breaking Reports, Videos, Demos, a Student Design Competition, and an alt.HRI section. Out of 183 total submissions, 161 (88%) Late Breaking Reports (LBRs) were accepted and will be presented as posters at the conference. A full peer-review and meta-review process ensured that authors of LBR submissions received detailed feedback on their work. Nine short videos were accepted for presentation during a dedicated video session. The program also includes 12 demos of robot systems that participants will have an opportunity to interact with during the conference. We continue to include an alt.HRI session in this year's program, consisting of 8 papers (selected out of 43 submissions, 19%) that push the boundaries of thought and practice in the field. We are also continuing the Student Design Competition with 11 contenders, to encourage student participation in the conference and enrich the program with design inspiration and insights developed by student teams. The conference will include 6 full-day and 6 half-day workshops on a wide array of topics, in addition to the selective Pioneers Workshop for burgeoning HRI students.

To accommodate the growth of our conference, this year HRI is organized as a single-track conference for 2.5 days, and dual track on the final day. Our goal is to provide sufficient time for presentations, discussions, and informal meeting and networking. It also allowed us to continue to support student design presentations, demonstrations, and sponsor talks. Over the course of four full days, we will have a rich offering of keynote sessions, oral presentations, posters, and demos. Keynote speakers will reflect the interdisciplinary nature and vigour of our community. Ayanna Howard, the Linda J. and Mark C. Smith Professor and Chair of the School of Interactive Computing at the Georgia Institute of Technology, will talk about 'Are We Trusting AI Too Much? Examining Human-Robot Interactions in the Real World', Stephanie Dinkins, a transmedia artist who creates platforms for dialog about artificial intelligence (AI) as it intersects race, gender, aging, and our future histories, and Dr Lola Cañamero, Reader in Adaptive Systems and Head of the Embodied Emotion, Cognition and (Inter-)Action Lab in the School of Computer Science at the University of Hertfordshire in the UK, will talk about 'Embodied Affect for Real-World HRI'.

HRI 2020 is held in the UK for the first time, in the historic university city of Cambridge. The University of Cambridge was founded in 1209 and it is the second-oldest university in the English-speaking world and the world's fourth-oldest surviving university. Cambridge will provide visitors with a unique experience of the 800-years of academic tradition as well as opportunities for exploring the beautiful Cam and connecting with the Silicon Fen which is home to a large cluster of high-tech businesses focusing on software, electronics and biotechnology. The conference program promises to be exciting, with coverage of the most important current research directions. We hope your experience at HRI 2020 is rewarding both professionally and personally.

We greatly appreciate the significant volunteer efforts of the program committee, organizing committee, reviewers, and steering committee in making this conference possible.

We are thankful as well for the generous support of our sponsors. The Technical Sponsor of HRI 2020 are the Association for Computing Machinery, in participation with the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. We gratefully acknowledge the support of our platinum sponsor FN Robotics, silver sponsors the ARM, Cambridge Consultants, Furhat Robotics, Halodi, and Toyota Research Institute, and bronze sponsors Cambridge University Press, EXG wear, Frontiers in Robotics and AI, the Honda Research Institute, IDLab, MDPI Robotics, MIT Press Europe, Promobot and Semio.

In closing, we are thankful to all of the people that have made this meeting possible, including the vital Human-Robot Interaction community. If this is your first HRI conference, welcome! If you are an HRI veteran, welcome back! We wish you a productive and enjoyable meeting.



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