

## **CFP - Bridging the Robotics Gap: Bringing Together Ethicists and Engineers**

University of Twente, The Netherlands; July 11-12, 2011

[http://www.ethicsandtechnology.eu/subsite/bridging\\_the\\_robotics\\_gap\\_bringing\\_together\\_ethicists\\_and\\_engineers/](http://www.ethicsandtechnology.eu/subsite/bridging_the_robotics_gap_bringing_together_ethicists_and_engineers/)

### **Conference Topic**

“Our processes determine the quality of our products”. This quote, taken from the work of Hugh Dubberly studying the multiple design processes of technologies, sums up the main aim of high quality engineering robot design: to create high quality robots by ensuring high quality design processes. But even high quality design processes may raise ethical issues. This conference brings together roboticists and ethicists working in the field to discuss the ethics of robot design. The conference targets both philosophers and engineers that want to take-up the challenge of interdisciplinary research – both theoretically, methodologically and pragmatically. As roboticist Illach Nourbakhsh claims, some of the personal obligations of the roboticist include being aware of the ethical issues and deliberating these issues. Thus, we will discuss the more abstract philosophical issues as well as applied ethics case-study based research, in conjunction with the obstacles facing engineers and designers. In short, the conference intends to bridge the robotics gap by facilitating the dialogue between ethicists, philosophers, anthropologists and social scientists, and, computer scientists, engineers and designers, all working in the field of robotics.

### **Keynote Speakers**

Noel Sharkey (University of Sheffield)

Amanda Sharkey (University of Sheffield)

Peter Asaro (The New School, New York)

John Sullins (Sonoma State University)

### **Outcome of the Conference**

The goal is to compile a grouping of the most successful papers presented in the form of a special edition. Potential journals include, but are not limited to; International Journal of Social Robotics, International Journal of Robotics and Automation, Journal of Robotic Systems, International Journal of Robotics research, IEEE Expert or Journal of Philosophy and Technology. Ideally the journal selected would appeal to the engineers in order to “bring ethics to the engineers”.

### **Content of the Conference**

The conference will attempt to address the ethical aspects surrounding the design and implementation of robots. Questions of considerable interest are: understanding the complexity of the task for which the robot will be used; understanding the complexity involved with programming; understanding the real world state of the art in robotics and the challenges it faces; and, understanding where ethics comes into play and why it ought to be incorporated further upstream in the design process.

### **Potential topics include, but are not limited to:**

1. The main ethical and technical obstacles facing roboticists today (from the perspective of ethicists and engineers respectively)
  2. Values and robot design (how are values implicated in design and how might values be embedded in design)
  3. Short term impacts of robots on users (from both an engineers perspective and an ethicists/philosopher’s perspective)
  4. Long term (soft) impacts of robots on society (from both an engineers perspective and an ethicists/philosopher’s perspective)
  5. How to include ethics in the design (process) of robots?
  6. Ethics of robots in particular fields: health care and elderly care, military robotics, social robotics
- Broader philosophical topics include:
7. Moral status of robots
  8. Robots and philosophical anthropology
  9. Ethics of robotics from an intercultural perspective

### **Call for papers**

The conference invites papers from the many fields involved in robotics research: computer scientists, engineers and designers as well as ethicists, philosophers, anthropologists and social scientists. Each paper/presentation must clearly indicate the relevance of the topic in both the field of research of the author as well as its relevance on a broader scale (ie. for another robotic’s discipline). Abstracts of 500 words can be submitted by May 15th via email to [bridgingrobotics@utwente.nl](mailto:bridgingrobotics@utwente.nl) and notification will be sent out by June 1.

**Location/Participation**

The conference will be held at the Drienerburgh hotel on the University of Twente campus in Enschede, the Netherlands; <http://www.drienerburgh.nl/> . July 11 and 12th, 2011.

Conference fees: 100 Euro regular, 65 Euro students.

**Registration**

For overview of the conference, please click [here](#).

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For queries please send an email to [bridgingrobotics@utwente.nl](mailto:bridgingrobotics@utwente.nl)

**Organization**

This conference is co-organized by Aimee van

Wynsberghe, <http://www.utwente.nl/gw/wijsb/organization/wynsberghe/> and Dr. Mark

Coeckelbergh <http://www.utwente.nl/gw/wijsb/organization/coeckelbergh/> of the University of Twente.

For any questions about the conference please email Aimee van Wynsberghe

at: [bridgingrobotics@utwente.nl](mailto:bridgingrobotics@utwente.nl)