



Press Release

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The 2009 EUROP/EURON Robotics Technology Transfer Award continues to boost European robotics

Leuven, 07 April 2009 –The European Robotics Technology Platform (EUROP) and the European Robotics Research Network (EURON) have presented their joint "Technology Transfer Award" in recognition of outstanding achievements in European robot technology. At the EURON Annual Meeting in Leuven on 7 April, the first prize was awarded to a team consisting of members of the company TETRA GmbH, and the universities of Darmstadt and Saarbrücken for their joint development of a compliant robot, BioRob, whose design was inspired by the antagonistic muscle-tendon apparatus in humans and animals. The application was presented by Andreas Karguth, Managing Director of TETRA and Prof. Oskar von Stryk of Technische Universität Darmstadt. The second prize was awarded to a team from University of Udine for their work to automate and control a tunnel digging robotic machine. The third prize honoured a joint development of a prototypical unmanned surface vehicle by EADS 3 Sigma S.A. and the Technical University of Crete.

The BioRob is a small robot arm of a low mass-to-payload ratio, which makes it intrinsically safe in case of collision. Therefore, no additional protection devices are needed in case of human-robot-cooperation. Application areas of the BioRob-arm include: assistance robots for handling or inspection tasks, automated planting of small cuttings in horticulture industry or automated handling of very lightweight cell probes in cryogenic environments.

Heavy duty tunnel digging machines, as produced by Casagrande s.p.a. (Italy), consist of a crawler with two hydraulically powered robotic arms to support the large rail which guides the drilling mechanism. The control of this closed spatial kinematic chain contributes significantly to improving the precision and the cost-effectiveness of tunnel forepoling.



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KRISSALOS is an autonomous sea going vehicle which assists coastal guards, naval forces, research institutes, as well as environmental organizations in monitoring coastal or off shore areas, and in search and rescue tasks. The boat's autonomous navigation capabilities include obstacle detection and automated path planning and control.

"The Technology Transfer Award has firmly established itself as a permanent part of European robotics research," says Martin Haegele, organizer of the annual award and Head of Robot Systems at the Fraunhofer Institute for Manufacturing Engineering and Automation (IPA) in Stuttgart. According to Haegele, the award is intended not only to reward the exchange of knowledge between research and industry, but also to motivate the entire robotics community to put research and development results successfully into practice. The networking activities have given a tremendous boost to European robotics research, confirms EURON coordinator Herman Bruyninckx, Professor at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium. Bruyninckx was encouraged by the fact that the "Technology Transfer Award" has evolved into a visible expression of a continuous growing-together of the European robotics community. "This year's finalists clearly show Europe is leading the world in many advanced robotics domains," Says Rainer Bischoff, Chairman of the EUROP Executive Board. "European companies have learned to effectively transfer high-tech results from research centers into commercial products". Both EURON and EUROP representatives state that a continued support of the coordination of research and training, and the promotion of technology transfer is necessary to maintain and expand European robotics world leadership.

The EUROP/EURON Technology Transfer Award is jointly presented each year in recognition of outstanding innovations in the field of robotics and automation, in order to promote excellence in applied research, and technology transfer between research and industry.

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| | <p>EUROP – European Robotics Technology Platform</p> <p>EUROP is an industry-driven framework for the main stakeholders in robotics to strengthen Europe’s competitiveness in robotics R&D and global markets, and improve quality of life.</p> <p>EUROP is one of several European Technology Platforms (ETPs) supported by the European Commission.</p> <p>http://www.robotics-platform.eu</p> |
| | <p>EURON – European Robotics Research Network</p> <p>EURON is a community of more than 220 academic and industrial groups in Europe, with a common interest in advanced research in the field of robotics.</p> <p>http://www.euron.org</p> |
| | <p>EUnited Robotics – European Robotics Association</p> <p>EUnited Robotics was founded in 2004 by leading industrial robot manufacturers to establish an independent voice of the European robotics industries.</p> <p>http://www.eu-nited.net/robotics</p> |

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