

# SICSA Report: SICSA Robotics Lab Open Day 2019

## Context

The 1st *SICSA Robotics Lab Open Day* took place on June 21 2019 at Heriot-Watt University.

The event showcased 3 research projects and PhD level research (9 PhD talks) carried out at the Robotics Lab at Heriot-Watt University. The event also included three keynotes from international researchers in this field.

The open day was organised by Dr Robert Stewart, Dr Patricia Vargas, Dr Frank Broz, Martin Ross and Siobhan Duncan of Heriot-Watt University.

It attracted 99 attendees from many SICSA institutes, and from England and Wales.

## Keynotes

- **Dr Amanda Prorok, University of Cambridge, UK** *“When Robots Hit the Road: New Challenges in Multi-Vehicle Coordination”*.
- **Dr Mary Ellen Foster, University of Glasgow, UK** *“Face-to-face Conversation with Socially Intelligent Robots”*.
- **Dr Frauke Zeller, Ryerson University, Canada.**

In the evening, the speakers, researchers and PhD students interacted during a reception sponsored by the Edinburgh Centre for Robotics (ECR).

## Outcomes

### 1) PhD student training

- Opportunity for 9 PhD students to present to a large academic audience.
- Exposure to presentation techniques of 3 internationally acclaimed academics.
- Network with their peers and keynote speakers during refreshments and the evening reception.

### 2) Promoting Women in Robotics

The 3 keynote speakers were all female, raising the profile of women in robotics and STEM subjects. This event also raised the profile of SICSA and of the Robotarium with our Rest of UK attendees and with the keynote speakers.

### 3) Exposing relevant research projects

It raised awareness of two ongoing research projects in relevant areas, which may lead to future collaborations amongst the researchers that presented:

1. **Socoro project** socially competent robots to deliver behavioural skills training.
2. **Neurorobotics Model of Parkinson’s Disease** humanoid robots to gain insights into mechanisms of Parkinson’ disease (PD) based on first computational model of PD created from recent gathered data from marmoset monkeys.

<https://www.hw.ac.uk/news/articles/2019/robots-to-replace-animals-in-fight-against.htm>

The Robotics Lab Open Day website:

<https://www.macs.hw.ac.uk/RoboticsLab/index.php/open-day/>