

Honda Conducts European Public Research to Perfect Human-Robot

Linz, Austria, September 1, 2010 - A research project will be conducted this week in Linz, Austria, to discover what the ideal interaction between people and humanoid robots ought to be in the future, Honda R&D and Ars Electronica Futurelab announced today. The research, the first of its kind in Europe, will involve members of the public directly interacting with ASIMO, Honda's humanoid robot.

The findings from this and similar research around the world will be integrated into the functionality of future versions ASIMO. It will also help realize a humanoid robot that can interact effortlessly with people in a living environment and take on some the tasks that would help make people's lives easier.

For nearly a quarter of a century Honda has made significant progress towards this goal. The latest generation of this research is Honda's ASIMO, widely regarded as the most advanced humanoid robot. ASIMO, which stands for Advanced Step in Innovative MObility, features functionality including high-level mobility and an ability to give and receive objects.

Satoshi Shigemi, Large Project Leader of ASIMO development, Honda R&D Co., Ltd., said: "This is an exciting collaboration for us with Ars Electronica Futurelab, which has a long history of investigating human-machine interaction and design. It is a significant milestone in our development of ASIMO and an important piece of human-robot interaction research to examine the diverse levels of robot acceptance and interaction around the world. We've already held research in Japan and in time we will conduct similar research in different cultures and different parts of the world."

He added: "The aim of this research is to better understand what the ideal interaction and communication between people and humanoid robots ought to be in the future. People need to be able to comfortably communicate with the robot so that it can react properly to their commands and carry out their wishes when assistance is needed."

The collaborative research with members of the public visiting the Ars Electronica Center will take place from the 2nd to 8th September 2010 during the Ars Electronica Festival in Linz, Austria. Leading experts from around the globe in the fields of robotics, futurology and design will gather at the Festival.