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EURON/EUnited Robotics Tech-Transfer Award

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"EURON/EUnited Robotics Technology Transfer Award" gives boost to European robotics

Award for successful exchange of knowledge
between research and industry in robot
technology

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The European Robotics Research Network (EURON) and the European Robotics Association EUnited Robotics have now for the third time presented their joint "Technology Transfer Award" in recognition of outstanding achievements in European robot technology. At its annual meeting in Palermo in March, the first prize was shared equally between Germany's Michael Gauss and Prof. Heinz Woern from the University of Karlsruhe for a new standardized robot-sensor interface and France's Bruno Jouvencel from the LIRMM Institute and Pierre Emmanuel Gaillard from Hytec (both based in Montpellier) for the Taipan underwater robot. The third prize went to the team of Daniel Lecking, Oliver Wulf and Prof. Bernardo Wagner from the University of Hanover and Volker Viereck and Dr. Joachim Tödter from Still GmbH, who jointly developed an automated forklift truck for transport tasks inside large-area buildings. The award, which was advertised last December, attracted a total of

twelve applications, from which four finalists were selected.

The open interface developed by the ARIKT project (Adaptive Robot Inspection of Complex Parts) allows the fast and simple linking of robots, image-recognition and -processing systems or other sensors to form intelligent system solutions which have now been standardized. "Taipan" was realized in close cooperation between industry and research in order to include a multiplicity of instruments for underwater measurements, maintenance and mapping. The mobile, compact underwater robot, which measures 1.7 metres in length and 0.2 metres in diameter, can operate autonomously over four hours and is also suitable for versatile use in shallow coastal waters thanks to its sophisticated 3D navigation and great manoeuvrability. A new-type navigation process, which uses the ceiling to detect the vehicle's position, allows the forklift truck, likewise developed in cooperation between research and industry, to safely identify pallets and pick them up.

"The EURON/EUnited Robotics Technology Transfer Award has firmly established itself as a permanent part of European robotics research," says Martin Haegele, organizer of the award ceremony and head of robot systems at the Fraunhofer Institute of Production 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 Henrik Christensen, Director of the Centre for Autonomous Systems at Kungliga Tekniska Hogskolan in Stockholm. Christensen was encouraged by the fact that the "Technology Transfer Award" has evolved into a visible expression of the functioning and continued growing-together of the European robotics community. "Clear progress" as a result of the coordination of

research and training and through the promotion of technology transfer is seen also by Thilo Brodtmann, Director of EUnited Robotics: "The activities of the EURON research network and of EUnited Robotics as the leading European association of robotics industries complement each other excellently."

The European robotics association EUnited Robotics was established in June 2004 by leading robot manufacturers and system integrators to act as a mouthpiece and platform for cooperation between all stakeholders from research institutes through national associations to end customers. EURON sees its role as an excellence network which is aimed at advancing European research, teaching, publications and cooperation between universities and industry in the field of robot technology and at making Europe the "world's number one" in robotics.

The EURON/EUnited Robotics Tech Transfer Award is jointly presented each year by both institutions 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. The award is financially supported by the European Community and by the following industrial sponsors from the automation industry which are members of EUnited Robotics: ABB Automation Technologies, COMAU, FANUC Robotics Europe, Güdel, KUKA Roboter, Reis Robotics and Schunk.

More information: www.euron.org
<http://www.eu-nited-robotics.net>