

Robotics Center of South Africa

A means to encourage national collaboration

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With the follow up work of the north-south collaboration published in 2015 [1], and the work published in 2016 at the IEEE PRASA/RobMech conference [2], the Robotics Center of South Africa was established under the Robotics Association of South Africa (RASA). The Robotics Association of South Africa (RASA) has been established since 2009, with the vision of working with different organizations, institutions, organizations, disciplines and individuals to promote mechatronics, robotics and related activities.

This Robotics Center has a similar goal and vision as RASA, to promote multi-disciplinary and robotics education, research, and collaboration within South Africa.

The objective of the Robotics Association of South Africa is the formation of a Local Association that galvanises and coordinates the efforts of the various Robotics and Artificial Intelligence (AI) research initiatives across South Africa.

- To galvanises and coordinate the efforts of the various Robotics and Artificial Intelligence (AI) development and research initiatives across Southern Africa.
- Promote awareness of the Robotics and AI research initiatives taking place at the primary and tertiary education institutions in the region.
- Participating in and hosting International Robotics events in South Africa.
- Building a stronger network among the Robotics and AI research and interest group community in Southern Africa and Internationally.
- Attracting stronger Industry and Government support and participation in the encouragement and development of higher level engineering skills in Southern Africa.
- Recognition for the efforts of or local Robotics and AI research teams and practitioners.

Four different Google groups have been developed, which are focused specifically for South African members of RASA, who will be able to benefit. With these groups, circulation of filtered information can be sent to members in a specific group.

The links below, of the specific groups, allow South Africans to join automatically from a Gmail email account. In the event that they would like to join from a non-Gmail email account, then it is possible to do so by sending an email to associationrobotics@gmail.com, and the email address will be added to the system. It must be noted that this is a service

ONLY for South Africans and residence, or the small associated countries where prior agreements have been made.

The 4 groups are:

1. **General:** This group will consist of general robotics videos and information. Similar information will be available on the RASA Facebook page. The link to this group is: <https://groups.google.com/d/forum/rasa-general>

2. **Student:** This group will be for school level, undergraduate and post graduate students, consisting of competitions, scholarships/bursaries opportunities, a similar activities. The link to this group is: <https://groups.google.com/d/forum/rasa-student>

3. **Research:** This group is more specific for academics with research collaboration initiatives, funding opportunities, searching for examiners, and alike. The link to this group is: <https://groups.google.com/d/forum/rasa-research>

4. **Industry:** This is a group that will be more industry specific, which will have information specific to manufacturing environments, corporations, industry and the private sector. The link to the group is: <https://groups.google.com/d/forum/rasa-industry>

Information or requests can be sent to associationrobotics@gmail.com that might be appropriate to be sent to these groups. It is the vision that the Robotics Center within South Africa will boost the robotics sector within the country, and the collaboration with other countries when the opportunity becomes available.

Updates can also be found on the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Robotics-Association-of-South-Africa-298753050143370/>

REFERENCES

- [1] R. Stopforth, A. Ferrein, G. Steinbauer, "Europe and South African Collaboration on the mechatronics and orboics systems as part fo the SA Robotics Center", IEEE International conference on on Robotics and Automation (ICRA) 2015, Developing Countries Forum, Washinton, USA, pp 1 – 3.
- [2] R. Stopforth, S. Davrajh, A. Ferrein, "South African Robtoics Entity for a Collaboaration Initiative", IEEE International conference PRASA/RobMech 2016, South Africa, pp 1 – 6.