

The New Partnership in AI, Data and Robotics

As a Member of euRobotics you will know that we have been working with other associations towards creating the proposed new partnership in AI, Data and Robotics with the European Commission. If this work is successful, the result will be the Public Private Partnership (PPP) guiding research and innovation in these topics for Horizon Europe (2021-2027). With this, euRobotics wishes to build on the success of the SPARC partnership and we welcome the opportunity to help construct this new partnership to bring even greater benefit to our own members. The Board of Directors of euRobotics knows that you will be keen to understand where we are in establishing this new Partnership. That is the purpose of this note to our Members.

Since 2019 we have been working with the Big Data Value Association (BDVA) and the three AI associations (CLAIRE, ELLIS and EurAI) to create the private side of this Partnership. The most visible public outcomes have been a series of strategic documents, a joint vision paper and three versions of a Strategic Research, Innovation and Deployment Agenda (SRIDA) (see [news](#) and [documents](#)). As with all important negotiations there have been differences to overcome and new perspectives to embrace. However, following a very constructive Round Table discussion with the five associations and the Commission the associations have reached agreement within the last few days and are now in a position to establish a new and fully serviceable private side association that can enter into agreement with the Commission during April 2021 (which is the expected timescale).

In all our negotiations and deliberations euRobotics has been driven by five key principles:

1. Each of the three broad technical “areas” (AI, Data & Robotics) should be **equally represented** at the Board of Directors and in all key decisions. This means that in all key decisions the views of the three areas should be fairly represented and also that **none of the three areas should be capable of being outvoted** by the other two on strategic decisions concerning the Association.
2. That the Association should be **balanced** in its representation of both Academia and Industry, based on our successful experience within euRobotics, and **fully represent** all aspects of the three areas.
3. The Association should be **fully democratic** with no special rights or privileges for any particular members.
4. The Association should be fully **open and inclusive for all members** with legitimate interest in any of the three areas and that active participation by new and prospective members should be encouraged and facilitated.
5. The Association should be **transparent** in all its dealings.

We are now in the process of creating a new association to be the private side of this Partnership. In consensus with BDVA and the three AI associations, with whom we have built a strong working relationship, we have established a governance model that from our point of view provides a fair and democratic balance and which will allow each of the three areas to work together for the benefit of Europe. A draft set of statutes has now been sent for legal

scrutiny prior to establishing the new association. The draft set of statutes sent to the lawyers can be found [here](#). Once we receive the final legal version we will send it to you.

As a Member of euRobotics, you will know that euRobotics has interests beyond the EC Framework programmes. In order to continue to provide scope for these, the Board of Directors believes that euRobotics should remain as a distinct association to represent the broad range of robotics activities. This view is shared by the existing associations. The proposed structure of the new Association allows for other associations, such as ours, to join as strategic members so that their members in turn can become affiliated to the partnership. However, it may well be that some Members of euRobotics (and the AI and Data associations) may individually wish to also join the new Association directly as full members and we are looking for ways to facilitate this.

Before the formal commencement of the new Association **all members of euRobotics will be asked to approve, by written consent in lieu of a meeting, that euRobotics should become a founding member of the association it is setting up**. We will shortly announce information meetings you can attend to find out more about the Partnership and the new Association. The outline timeline for launching the Partnership is set out below.

It is important to emphasise that the governance model being proposed is heavily based on the one we already use within euRobotics. The model guarantees and embeds fair representation, just as we guarantee fair representation both in our Board of Directors and our General Assembly. This has been the cornerstone of the close relationship we have built between our own industrial and research communities and we want to strengthen and extend this relationship within the new partnership. It follows that if the new partnership was based on a one-sided governance model instead, or one that cannot protect the interests of robotics in Europe, then euRobotics could not support it.

It is also vital that the new association creates a space where all three areas - AI, Data and Robotics - can collaborate with trust at a strategic level, where common roadmaps can be developed and where common approaches to standards, infrastructure and research can be promoted and fostered. The new partnership and the new association need to be able to cover all the areas of interest set out in the SRIDA ([link to most recent version](#)).

We, your Board of Directors, will continue to support a fair and democratic partnership that protects the interests of robotics in Europe and provides the best opportunity to connect AI, Data and Robotics for the benefit of Europe. However, if the proposed model for a new Association and Partnership does not meet the principles for fairness and representation that have served us so well in the past then we could not recommend that euRobotics supports such a venture. We believe you would expect us to do no less.

The euRobotics Board of Directors.

Overview of Required Actions for Launching new AI, Data & Robotics PPP	
Mid March 2021	Draft Statutes are legally formulated
Mid-End March 2021	Information sessions for euRobotics members
End March 2021	euRobotics members asked to agree, by written consent, that euRobotics should join the new Association under the proposed governance terms
Early April 2021	New Association formed with founding members representing AI, Data & Robotics
April 2021	New Association signs MoU with Commission to enter into the AI, Data and Robotics PPP
End April 2021	Regular General Assembly of euRobotics