1st Summer School on Robotics & AI

June 29-30, 2026

The 1st summer school on Robotics and AI is organized by HERON - Hellenic Robotics Center of Excellence through the Robotics Institute of Athena Research Center, in collaboration with the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology.

The goal of this two-day event is to introduce students, Ph.D. candidates, and scientists/engineers at a post-doctoral level to some of the most recent state-of-the-art topics at the cross section of Robotics and AI. The summer school is also aimed at engineers in the industrial and service sectors with a strong interest in robotics. The summer school includes both plenary lectures as well as hand-on sessions.

The HERON CoE is funded under the Horizon Europe Widening Program (Teaming for Excellence). It is a team effort between the Athena Research Center (coordinating partner), the Italian Institute of Technology (IIT), and the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT). Its goals include advancing the science and technology of Robotics in the AI era, coupled with industrial innovation.

Those interested in attending the summer school must send a brief CV (not exceeding one page) using the following submission link, by March 30, 2026. The number of participants will be limited to 50 attendees. Notification of acceptance will be sent by April 30, 2026.
Final admission requires payment of a registration fee.
Location: Eugenides Foundation, Palaio Faliro, Athens Greece.
More information: https://heron-robotics-coe.eu/1st-summer-school-in-robotics-and-ai/

Tentative Course Program

June 29
Morning Session
Plenary talk: 90 minutes duration
Prof. T. Asfour (KIT) "Humanoid Robotics: Creating General-Purpose Functional Intelligence"
Hands-on Session: 90 minutes duration
J. Plewnia (KIT) "Robot Memory and Verbalization of Robot Experiences"
Afternoon Session
Plenary Talk: 90 minutes duration
Dr. N. Efthymiou, Dr. P. Filntisis *(HERON/Athena RC) "LLMs/VLMs and Robotics"*
Hands-on Session: 90 minutes duration
T. Birr (KIT) "Task planning with LLMs"

June 30
Morning Session
Plenary talk: 90 minutes duration
Prof. P. Maragos (HERON/Athena RC, NTUA) "Robot Perception and Multimodal AI"
Plenary talk: 90 minutes duration
Prof. E. Papadopoulos, Dr. K. Smyrli, A. Mastrogeorgiou (HERON/Athena RC, NTUA) "Legged Robots: the next steps towards agile mobility"
Afternoon Session
Plenary Talk: 90 minutes duration
Dr. G. Moustris (HERON/Athena RC): "Surgical Robotics and the Emergence of Telesurgery"
Plenary Talk: 90 minutes duration
Prof. P. Vartholomeos (HERON/Athena RC, NTUA) "Soft-robotics in minimally invasive surgery: Key Advancements & Future Directions"

Funded by the European Union
GENERAL SECRETARIAT FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
ATHENA RESEARCH CENTER
ISTITUTO ITALIANO DI TECNOLOGIA
KIT Karlsruher Institut für Technologie