

Special Session Information for Website

Title: Designing Social Robots with Stakeholders: Co-Design in Practice

Organizers and Contacts:

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Short Description of Aims and Scopes (around 200 words): As social robots move into real-world settings such as healthcare and education, it becomes increasingly important that these systems are designed not just for users, but with the users. This Special Session centers on research that focused on sustained, collaborative co-design processes in social robotics, where stakeholders actively shape the development of robotic systems over time.

We focus on work that goes beyond one-time consultations or short-term feedback. Instead, we highlight iterative, participatory engagements in which end users and other stakeholders contribute meaningfully to decisions about a robot's roles, behaviors, embodiment, interaction strategies, and deployment contexts. These collaborations may involve long-term workshops, living labs, prototyping cycles, focus groups, one-on-one interviews, and field partnerships that integrate stakeholder perspectives directly into system development.

Co-design research often produces deep, context-rich insights but faces challenges within traditional evaluation frameworks that favor large samples and controlled experiments. This session provides a dedicated venue to recognize the methodological rigor, ethical care, and real-world impact of such work. By fostering dialogue around participatory methods, practical challenges, and interdisciplinary collaboration, this session supports more inclusive, responsible, and human-centered innovation in social robotics.