

ICRA 2018 International Conference on Robotics and Automation

Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre (BCEC)

21 - 25 May, 2018

Event Snapshot



More than **3,000**
delegates from 60
countries



First time to
Australia



More than **30,000**
meals served



1,052 papers
presented



\$10.5 million in
economic benefit
to Queensland

Robots on the march in Brisbane...

Overview

Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre (BCEC) welcomed more than 3,000 of the world's leading robotic experts together with a small army of robots for the 2018 IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA) for six days in May.

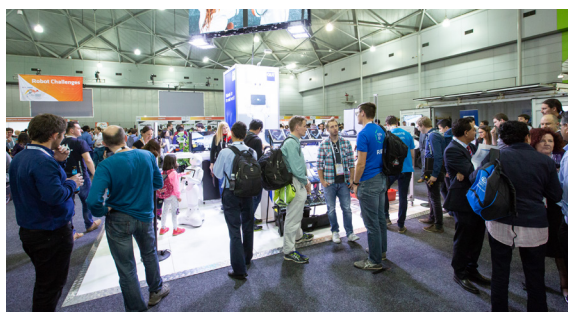
Leading robotics and automation researchers, engineers and designers converged on Brisbane to share their ground breaking research and their vision on what our lives will look like in 20 years with robotics and artificial intelligence the next big technical compass.

Robots ruled - in the foyers and exhibition halls of the Centre – robots that protect the Great Barrier Reef, fruit picking robots, giant automated diggers, robotic portrait artists and then there was Pepper, the companion robot who can interpret emotions, have a chat, run errands and even provide counselling!

Record delegate numbers, a leading edge program and a destination and venue that embraced the event and ticked all the boxes, combined to deliver an outstanding conference.

This was the first time in the 35 year history of the flagship international conference that it had been held south of the equator and Brisbane, as an international research hub for robotics, attracted the international Who's Who in the very fast paced robotics space, exceeding expectations on all fronts with more than 80% of delegates from overseas.

Queensland Innovation and Tourism Industry Development Minister, Kate Jones who officially welcomed delegates to the Conference, said being the first city in Australia to host the world's peak robotics conference was recognition of the investment and work being done by local innovators and entrepreneurs.



Bidding process

A motivated and united Team Brisbane including Tourism and Events Queensland, Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre and the Brisbane Convention Bureau, together with the strong collaboration of Australia's world leading robotic experts, presented a formidable front in helping to secure the event for Australia and Brisbane.

Conference Program Chair, Professor Peter Corke, Director of the Centre for Robotic Vision at the Queensland University of Technology and Conference Chair, Dr Alex Zelinsky, Australia's Chief Defence Scientist, both well known internationally across the robotics and automation sector were the real prime movers in bringing the highly regarded international forum to Brisbane.

Professor Corke said the collaborative Team Brisbane approach was very effective in the bidding process and undoubtedly played a part in helping to secure the bid. Dr Zelinsky said that the financial support from Tourism and Events Queensland, the Brisbane Convention Bureau and Brisbane City & Accommodation Bid Fund demonstrated strong commitment from the city and contributed to the selection decision in a highly competitive process.

Conference organisers, ICMS Australasia said local support from the Brisbane Convention Bureau and city stakeholders was a huge help to the conference citing the pre-conference delegate boosting activities and presence at preceding meetings as playing a part in the event's record delegate attendance.

The Conference

During the Conference, the plenary and keynote sessions addressed key issues and the hot topics around robotics and automation including driverless cars and bridging the gap between robotics and artificial intelligence in the building of robots.

A new approach to the format of the Conference program, bringing together interactive sessions, poster displays and robot competitions into the exhibition area for maximum engagement was the biggest positive of the Conference. The Centre's facilities with the exhibition space directly adjacent to the main auditorium and convention space proved ideal for this activity.

Delegates who could not attend the Conference in person could connect with ICRA from anywhere in the world via the Beam Telepresence Robot Service – they could hear and see keynote speakers, visit the exhibition, talk to other attendees all via their own robotic avatar.

Organisers, ICMS Australasia said the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre was an extremely large factor in the success of ICRA2018.

“All of the team worked with us proactively to find solutions to all the challenges thrown at them and the event ran seamlessly. There was a lot of ‘never been done before’ asked for at ICRA and BCEC accommodated all of them, even when numbers increased at the last minute, the kitchen pulled out all the stops at very short notice to ensure every delegate was taken care of. I felt that BCEC was not just a venue, but a true partner invested in ICRA and every team member contributed to the outstanding success of the event.”

Why Brisbane?

Professor Corke cited a number of contributing factors for Brisbane being chosen as the host city; Brisbane’s strong reputation in robotics research and expertise internationally, the appeal of Australia and Brisbane to the international community and the world class facilities of the BCEC. Brisbane is also home to the world’s first research centre specialising in robotic vision of which Peter Corke is the Director.

Brisbane was in fact a clear choice for this conference with ground breaking research and development being carried out in the Queensland capital with CSIRO, the University of Queensland and Queensland University of Technology leading in areas such as field robotics, drones, autonomous vehicles and mining technology.

Dr Zelinsky cited that Defence had elected to headquarter the new Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Trusted Autonomous Systems in Brisbane. ICRA 2018 was used as the public launch pad for the CRC.

Legacies

With the Brisbane event attracting record delegate numbers, organisers believe ICRA 2018 will cement people’s vision of the future of robotics in Australia and put Brisbane and Australia on the map for the technology revolution. “I think this has been a lightbulb moment and Brisbane and Australia will now be considered an international robotics hub”, Professor Corke said.

For Queensland tourism and investment there will be legacies into the future with a large number of delegates taking advantage of the state’s great tourism offering while being able to collaborate with local innovators and entrepreneurs. 37% of ICRA delegates surveyed spent time in other parts of Queensland while 67% indicated they would recommend visiting Brisbane to family and friends.

Destination

Idyllic Brisbane winter weather, the buzz of South Bank and BCEC as it hosted the Conference and hordes of friendly locals was the formula for a great Brisbane welcome for delegates.

Conference Organisers, ICMS Australasia, said from the general feedback received it was clear that Brisbane as a destination was a winner. Everyone was very positive about the city, the climate, the outdoor dining lifestyle and the friendly people.

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At a glance...	
1000	Interactive Pod Presentations
35	Workshops/Tutorials
7	Forums
24	Spotlight Viewing Sessions
10	Award Track Sessions
3	Plenaries
18	Keynotes

Plus a welcome reception, farewell function and two conference dinners