

Isabel Neto, robotic researcher

Curriculum Vitae

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RESEARCH MISSION

To develop human-robot experiences to foster a better life for children with and without disabilities, using technology to provide the same opportunities to all and a more diverse and inclusive society while enabling a seamless integration of robotic technologies into human environments.

My main research interests are: Social Robotics, Children Education, Accessibility, Inclusion, and Human-Robot Interaction.

ABOUT ME

I concluded my Computer Science PhD in March 2024 at IST - Technical Institute, University of Lisbon. My research falls within the domain of Computer Science and Engineering, and I am proudly affiliated with GAIPS at INESC-ID and Interactive Technologies Institute (ITI/Larsys).

During my PhD journey, I had the privilege to be guided by my distinguished advisors, Prof. Ana Paiva and Prof. Hugo Nicolau. And I closely collaborate with Prof. Guy Hoffman and was a visiting scholar at Cornell University. Additionally, I worked closely with Prof. Wafa Johal from the University of Melbourne and Prof. Hadas Erel from Reichman University.

My research focuses in the development of social agents aimed at fostering inclusion within educational settings, particularly in schools. To achieve this, we investigated how different modalities and robot roles, influence interactions among children with and without visual impairment. Our work has gained significant traction, presented in our papers in CHI ('21, '23, '24) and HRI ('22, '23, '24). I am currently collaborating with thirteen Portuguese schools, +300 children. And I was a teaching assistant at IST - Technical Institute within the University of Lisbon.

In addition to my academic pursuits, I bring over two decades of valuable experience in the a Global Telecommunications Company, Vodafone. My career has spanned a wide range of roles, encompassing senior leadership, design, business strategy, people management, and digital transformation. For more than 20 years, I had the privilege of managing and collaborating with numerous talented individuals, shaping the development of digital channels and experiences. My expertise extends to diverse technical and management areas, covering Digital, Customer Operations, and IT.

My doctoral program was in Artificial Intelligence, with a primary focus on social robotics and human interaction, and I am eager to continue my journey in academia as both a researcher and a teacher.

EMPLOYMENT

Research Collaborator | Center of Responsible AI - Halo Project 2023-Present

Research Assistant | INESC-ID GAIPS – AI for People and the Society 2021-Present

Research Collaborator | ITI/Larsys - Inclusive Computing 2022-Present

Visitor Scholar | Cornell University - Guy Hoffman's lab 2022-2022

MSc Co-advisor | IST - University of Lisbon (5 MSc in Social Robotics and HCI) 2020-Present

Teacher Assistant | IST - University of Lisbon (CS, HCI and Interaction Design) 2021-2022

Digital Manager and Senior Product Owner | Vodafone 2018-2020

Responsible for the Digital Channel road-map, engagement, strategy, budget control, delivery web and mobile development, and UX-UI design, for eCommerce, customer care, search and assisted help (such as chat, chatbot and social media). The myVodafone app engaged to more than 13+ million visits monthly, NPS: 35, and Digital tools implementation)

Head of Digital in Customer Operations | Vodafone 2014-2018

Digital (UX-UI, self-care channels, digital tools analytic and search) and Billing Area (finishing and digital Invoice) and social media support (tracking sentiment analysis).

IT Delivery Manager - Online and Finance Projects | Vodafone 2001-2014

Vendor management (outsourcing ADM), Project and Program Management, Delivery manager for Strategic Projects, Demand management and Budget control. Responsible for BI and Online Domain in Vodafone Portugal. Advisor for Oracle (Customer Advisory Board) for WebCenter platform and Speaker in Oracle Open World Conference (2014)

IT Analyst and Project Manager | Telecel 1996-2001

EDUCATION

PhD Candidate in Computer Science and Engineering | IST - University of Lisbon 2019-Apr.2024 edc
Fostering Inclusion in Mixed-visual Abilities Classrooms using Social Robots. Advisors Prof. Ana Paiva and Prof. Hugo Nicolau.

Computer Science and Engineering Degree | IST - University of Lisbon

1990-1995

Leadership-Executive Education | Nova SBE - University of Lisbon

2018-2018

Enterprise Training | Digital Marketing (Google); Agile Certification (Scrum Alliance); Design Thinking; People Management; Finance, ERP & Web Platforms

PUBLICATION

Also see my [Google Scholar](#), [Research-Gate](#), and [ACM](#) profiles.

Conference Proceedings

- Neto, I.; Hu, Y.; Correia, F.; Rocha, F.; Buckmayer, K.; Nogueira, J.; Hoffman, G.; Nicolau, H.; Paiva, A. "I'm Not Touching You. It's The Robot!": Inclusion Through A Touch-Based Robot Among Mixed-Visual Ability Children. HRI'24
- Neto, I.; Correia, F.; Rocha, F.; Piedade, P.; Nicolau, H.; Paiva, A. Conveying Emotions through Shape-changing to Children with and without Visual Impairment. CHI'24
- Correia, F.; Neto, I.; Paulo, S.; Piedade, P.; Paiva, A.; Nicolau, H. The Effects of Observing Robotic Ostracism on Children's Prosociality and Basic Needs HRI'24
- Correia, F.; Neto, I.; Fortes-Ferreira, M.; Oogjes, D.; Almeida, T. More-than-human Perspective on the Robomorphism Paradigm HRI'24
- Neto, I.; Correia, F.; Rocha, F.; Piedade, P.; Nicolau, H.; Paiva, A. The Robot Made Us Hear Each Other: Fostering Inclusive Conversations among Mixed-Visual Ability Children. HRI'23
- Rocha, F.; Correia, F.; Neto, I.; Pires, A.; Guerreiro, J.; Guerreiro, T.; Nicolau, H. Coding Together: On Co-located and Remote Collaboration between Children with Mixed-Visual Abilities. CHI'23.
- Piedade, P.; Neto, I.; Pires, A.; Prada, R.; Nicolau, H. PartiPlay: A Participatory Game Design Kit for Neurodiverse Classrooms. SIGACCESS'23.
- Hu, Y. and Neto, I.; Ryu J.; Shtarbanov, A.; Nicolau, H.; Paiva, A.; Hoffman G. Touchibo: Multimodal Texture-Changing Robotic Platform for Shared Human Experiences. UIST'22.
- Piedade P.; Matur, N.; Rodrigues, C.; Cecilio, F.; Marques A.; Neto, I.; Nicolau, H. Co-designing a Bespoken Wearable Display for People with Dissociative Identity Disorder. SIGACCESS'22.
- Antunes, C.; Neto, I.; Correia, F.; Nicolau, H.; Paiva, A. Inclusive'R'Stories: An Inclusive Storytelling Activity with an Emotional Robot. HRI'22.
- Neto, I.; Paiva, A.; Nicolau, H. Community Based Robot Design for Classrooms with Mixed Visual Abilities Children. CHI'21.
- Neto, I.; Nicolau, H.; Paiva, A. Fostering Inclusive Activities in Mixed-visual Abilities Classrooms using Social Robots. HRI'21.
- Rocha, F.; Pires, A.; Neto, I.; Nicolau, H.; Guerreiro, T. Assembly at Home: Accessible Spatial Programming for Children with Visual Impairments and their Families. IDC'21.
- Neto, I.; Johal, W.; Couto, M.; Nicolau, H.; Paiva, A.; Guneyasu, A. Using Tabletop Robots to promote Inclusive Classroom Experiences. IDC'20.
- Neto, I. Using Social Robots to Create Inclusive Classroom Experiences for Children with Mixed Visual Abilities.

Talks

- Fostering Inclusion Using Texture Changing Social Robots in Mixed-visual Abilities Classrooms, University of Chicago, Tufts University, Rochester University, MIT Media Lab and Reichman University (2022)
- Can social robots be part of Diversity and Inclusion ? Lean Circle (January 2021).
- The future of content management. Oracle Open World. San Francisco (May 2014).

Honors

- I'm Not Touching You. It's The Robot!". Honorable Mention. HRI '24
- The Effects of Observing Robotic Ostracism on Children's Prosociality and Basic Needs. Honorable Mention. HRI '24
- "The Robot Made Us Hear Each Other". Honorable Mention. HRI '23
- HRI '21 Pioneer & ASSETS'20 Doctoral Consortium

Projects

- TAILOR (2020-x) - Scientific Board - (<https://tailor-network.eu/>)
- Center of Responsible AI (2023-x) - Research collaborator - Halo Project (<https://centerforresponsible.ai/>)
- Arcade Research collaborator (2020-2021) - technology for physical rehabilitation (<https://arcade.inesc-id.pt/>)

Community Services

- TAILOR Connectivity Fund Scientific Board
- Reviewer Frontier Robotics'24, CSCW '24, CHI '24 &'23; DIS '24 &'23, HRI '24. ASSETS '23 &'21, ICMI '21, IS '21, HAI '20.
- Program committee HRI '25 &'22, ICAART '24, ECAI '24, IDC '24
- Workshop Chair HRI '24, IDC '22
- Student Volunteer HRI '21, ASSETS '21 &'20.
- ORACLE Customer Advisor Board (2013-2017).