

KRS 2026

King's College London Robotics Symposium 2026

January 16, 2026

Great hall, King's building, Strand campus, King's College London (KCL), UK



Programme (timing TBC):

- 10:00-10:15 Welcome by Sir Bashir M. Al-Hashimi, vice-president KCL
- 10:15-11:45 **Session: Surgical robotics** (12+3 mins talks)
Christos Bergeles (BMEIS), Microsurgical robots: from concept to clinical translation
Prokar Dasgupta (BMEIS), Robotics in surgery (TBC)
Kawal Rhode (BMEIS), Robotics for cardiovascular interventions
Rachel Sparks (BMEIS), Computer assisted planning for robotic surgical interventions
Alejandro Grandos (BMEIS), Surgical robotics and autonomy
Tom Vercauteren (BMEIS), Image understanding for surgical robotics
- 11:45-12:45 **Invited talk**
Antonio Bicchi, Senior Scientist at the Italian Institute of Technology, Genoa, Italy;
Chair of Robotics at the University of Pisa, Italy (see biography below)
- 12:45-14:00 lunch
- 14:00-15:15 **Session: Autonomous robotics** (12+3 mins talks)
Shan Luo (DoE), Visual-Tactile Intelligence for Robot Dexterity
Emmanuel Spyarakos (DoE), Towards Unified Control of Fixed- and Floating-Base Articulated-Soft Robots for Enhanced Physical Interaction
Matthew Howard (DoE), Teaching Humans to Teach Robots
Hak-Keung Lam (DoE), Explainable AI for control applications
Martim Brandão (DoI), Wellbeing, Fairness, and Explainability in Robotics
Matteo Leonetti (DoI), Model-based Reinforcement Learning for Autonomous Service Robots
Yali Du (DoI), From Human Knowledge to Cooperative AI: Leveraging LLM-based Reasoning
- 15:15-15:45 coffee break
- 15:45-17:00 **Session: Human-robot interaction and assistive technology**
Letizia Gionfrida (BMES/DoI), Vision-based robotics for mobility assistance
Nicola Bailey (DoE), Flexure mechanisms for high performance robotics and automated processes
Oya Celiktutan (DoE), Designing socially acceptable interactions with embodied agents
Gerard Canal (DoI), Autonomous assistive robots
Ildar Farkhatdinov (BMEIS), Physical human-robot interaction for medical robotics
- 17:00-19:00 networking drinks reception

BMEIS – School of Biomedical Engineering and Imaging Sciences

DoE – Department of Engineering

DoI – Department of Informatics

Organisers:

- Ildar Farkhatdinov, ildar.farkhatdinov@kcl.ac.uk
- Letizia Gionfrida, letizia.gionfrida@kcl.ac.uk
- Shan Luo, shan.luo@kcl.ac.uk

Invited Speaker – Professor Antonio Bicchi

Antonio Bicchi is Senior Scientist at the Italian Institute of Technology in Genoa and the Chair of Robotics at the University of Pisa. He graduated from the University of Bologna in 1988 and was a postdoc scholar at M.I.T. Artificial Intelligence lab. He teaches Robotics and Control Systems in the Department of Information Engineering of the University of Pisa. He leads the Robotics Group at the Research Center "E.Piaggio" of the University of Pisa since 1990. He is the head of the SoftRobotics Lab for Human Cooperation and Rehabilitation at IIT in Genoa. Since 2013 he serves as Adjunct Professor at the School of Biological and Health Systems Engineering of Arizona State University.



He is the Editor in Chief of the International Journal of Robotics Reserach, the first scientific journal in Robotics. He has been the founding Editor-in-Chief of the IEEE Robotics and Automation Letters (2015-2019), which rapidly became the Robotics journal receiving most submissions. He has organized the first WorldHaptics Conference (2005), today the premier conference in the field. He is a co-founder and President emeritus of the Italian Institute of Robotics and Intelligent Machines (I-RIM)

His main research interests are in Robotics, Haptics, and Control Systems. He has published more than 500 papers on international journals, books, and refereed conferences. In 2025 he has been recognized by IEEE as a Pioneer in Robotics and Automation “for fundamental contributions to artificial hands, haptics, and human-robot collaboration, and for their applications to robotics and prosthetics”. His research has been generously supported by the European Research Council with an Advanced Grant in 2012, a Synergy Grant in 2019, and four Proof-of-Concept grants (brief descriptions here). He originated and is today the scientific coordinator of the JOiiNT Lab, an advanced tech transfer lab with leading-edge industries in the Kilometro Rosso Innovation District in Bergamo, Italy.