

# Pr. Séverin Lemaignan

## *Social Robotics and AI*

☎ +44 117 328 5478  
☎ +44 790 798 6893 (M)  
✉ [severin.lemaignan@brl.ac.uk](mailto:severin.lemaignan@brl.ac.uk)  
<https://academia.skadge.org>  
37 years old



Scientific Focus **Robot cognition and decision making for safe social interactions:** data-driven understanding of social interactions; explainable AI; ethics of safe human-robot interactions; robust human-robot multi-modal interaction; symbolic and sub-symbolic knowledge representation.

Keywords **Social Robotics, Robotic Cognition, Responsible Human-Robot Interaction, Cognitive Architectures**

## Education & Research Activities

- 2019– **Associate Professor in Social Robotics and AI, Bristol Robotics Lab, United Kingdom.**  
Supervision of the Human-Robot Interaction research group; Supervision of the Driverless Vehicle research group.  
Directly managing 20+ students and early career researchers.
- 2018–2019 **Senior Research Fellow in Robotics and Artificial Intelligence, Bristol Robotics Lab, United Kingdom.**
- 2017–2018 **Lecturer in Robotics, Plymouth University, Plymouth, United Kingdom.**
- 2015–2017 **EU Marie Skłodowska-Curie Post-doctoral fellow, Centre for Neural Systems and Robotics, Plymouth University, Plymouth, United Kingdom.**  
Development and Implementation of a Theory of Mind for robots.
- 2013–2015 **Post-doctoral fellow, CHILI, EPFL, Lausanne, Switzerland.**  
Interaction with Robots in Learning Environments – Supervision of the robotic group.
- 2012–2013 **Post-doctoral fellow, LAAS-CNRS, Toulouse, France.**  
Spatial and Temporal Reasoning for Cognitive Robotic Architectures.
- 2008–2012 **Joint German-French PhD in Cognitive Robotics, LAAS-CNRS, Toulouse, France / Technical University of Munich, Germany.**  
**with High Distinction** “Summa Cum Laude” – awarded CNRS’ **Best PhD in Robotics 2012**  
Supervisors: Pr. Rachid Alami, CNRS; Pr. Michael Beetz, TUM.
- 2006–2007 **Research Engineer, INRIA, Paris, France.**  
Development of semantic-aware control architectures for autonomous vehicles.
- 2002–2006 **Joint German-French MSc of Engineering, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology / ENSAM ParisTech.**
- 2004–2005 **MSc Artificial Intelligence for Learning Technologies, University Paris V, College of Mathematics and Computer Sciences, With Honours.**

## Scientific Impact & Dissemination Activities

**Active figure of the Intelligent Robots community, invited to high-profile editorial roles.**

**As of Dec 2020, 70+ publications, 2700+ citations, h-index = 26, i10-index = 43 .**

Recent International expert & advisory roles

- 2017– **EU H2020 member on the Peer Review College.**
  - 2019– **Full member of the UK EPSRC College.**
  - 2019– **Invited PhD committee examiner, 6 times since 2019, in Sweden (Örebro, Uppsala, KTH), Germany (Bielefeld), France (LAAS-CNRS), UK (Bristol Robotics Lab).**
  - 2019 **Invited Expert in Child-Robot Interaction, robot4SEN project, VTC, Hong Kong.**
  - 2018– **Senior Scientific Adviser for South-West UK SMEs, EU H2020 SABRE project.**
- Significant National & International Editorial roles
- 2018– **Associate Editor, Frontiers in Robotics and AI.**
  - 2018– **Program Committee of major international conferences in AI and robotics, IROS'16–'18; IJ-CAT'17'18'20'21; HRI'16–'20; HAI'18; AAMAS'19; RSS'20.**
  - 2017–2021 **Organisation of the IEEE/ACM HRI conference, alt.HRI chair '17, local chair '20, Student Design Competition chair '21.**

- 2019 **UK TAROS conference on Autonomous Robotic Systems**, *co-coordinator*.  
Policy making
- 2020 – **Expert Collaborator for the European Joint Research Centre**, *contributing to the UNICEF Guidelines for Responsible Child-Robots Interactions*.
- 2019 **Invited panel by the EU Research Executive Agency, MSCA AI Cluster**, *sharing expertise in Human-Robot Interaction*.
- 2018–2020 **BRL strategic planning**, *involved in discussion about Intelligent Manufacturing; HRI systems; Assistive robotics with key UK policy makers, incl. BEIS Secretary of State Greg Clark; Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation Chris Skidmore; West of England CA Tim Bowles*.

## Recent International Keynotes and Invited Talks

- **Robots for Learning** – *invited speaker*, 2019  
Robot4SEN, Vocational Training Council, Kong Kong
- **From Big Data to Social Robotics** – *keynote*, 2019  
UK RAS conference, Loughborough, UK
- **Big Data and Social Robotics** – *invited speaker*, 2018  
LAAS-CNRS, Toulouse, France
- **Child-robot Social Interactions** – *invited speaker*, 2018  
IIT, Genoa, Italy
- **Theory of Mind and Joint-action** – *keynote*, 2018  
Robotics Science and System, Pittsburgh, USA
- **Immersive Technologies for Safe Driverless Vehicles** – *invited speaker*, 2018  
South West Creative Technology Network, Bristol, UK
- **Human-Robot interaction in the context of safe driverless vehicles** – *invited speaker*, 2018  
HRI Symposium, Stanford University, Stanford, USA
- **Robots for Learning** – *keynote*, 2018  
Symposium on Robots for Language Learning, Koç University, Istanbul, Turkey

## Awards and Honours

- HRI'2017 **Best Paper Award 'Design'**.
- HRI'2016 **Best Paper Award 'Methods and Theory'**.
- AAAI'2015 **Best Video Award in Artificial Intelligence**.
- AAAI'2014 **Best Late Breaking Report Award**.
- 2012 **Best PhD in Robotics**, *CNRS*.
- 2012 **PhD with High Distinction**, (*"Summa Cum Laude"*), *TU Munich*.
- Ro-Man'2010 **Best Paper Award**.

## Publications

→ *Link to complete list of publications, workshops and seminars.*

### International peer-reviewed journals

- Senft, E., Lemaignan, S., Baxter, P., Bartlett, M., Belpaeme, T.  
**Teaching robots social autonomy from in situ human guidance**  
*Science Robotics* 2019. DOI: 10.1126/scirobotics.aat1186.
- Wallbridge, C., Lemaignan, S., Senft, E., Belpaeme, T.  
**Generating Spatial Referring Expressions in a Social Robot: Dynamic vs Non-Ambiguous**  
*Frontiers in AI and Robotics* 2019. DOI: 10.3389/frobt.2019.00067.
- Bartlett, M., Edmunds, C. E. R., Belpaeme, T., Thill, S., Lemaignan, S.  
**What Can You See? Identifying Cues on Internal States from the Kinematics of Natural Social Interactions**  
*Frontiers in AI and Robotics* 2019. DOI: 10.3389/frobt.2019.00049.

- Flook, R., Shrinah, A., Wijnen, L., Eder, K., Melhuish, C., Lemaignan, S.  
**On the Impact of Different Types of Errors on Trust in Human-Robot Interaction: Are laboratory-based HRI experiments trustworthy?**  
*Interaction Studies* 2019. DOI: 10.1075/is.18067.flo.
- Lemaignan, S., Edmunds E. R., C., Senft, E., Belpaeme, T.  
**The PInSoRo dataset: Supporting the data-driven study of child-child and child-robot social dynamics**  
*PLOS ONE* 2018. DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0205999.
- Senft, E., Baxter, P., Kennedy, J., Lemaignan, S., Belpaeme, T.  
**Supervised Autonomy for Online Learning in Human-Robot Interaction**  
*Pattern Recognition Letters* 2017. DOI: 10.1016/j.patrec.2017.03.015.
- Lemaignan, S., Warnier, M., Sisbot, E.A., Clodic, A., Alami, R.  
**Artificial Cognition for Social Human-Robot Interaction: An Implementation**  
*Artificial Intelligence* 2017. DOI: 10.1016/j.artint.2016.07.002.
- Lemaignan, S., Jacq, A., Hood, D., Garcia, F., Paiva, A., Dillenbourg, P.  
**Learning by Teaching a Robot: The Case of Handwriting**  
*IEEE Robotics and Automation Magazine* 2016. DOI: 10.1109/MRA.2016.2546700.
- Dillenbourg, P., Lemaignan, S., Sangin, M., Nova, N., Molinari, G.  
**The Symmetry of Partner Modelling**  
*Intl. J. of Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning* 2016. DOI: 10.1007/s11412-016-9235-5.
- Lemaignan, S.  
**Grounding the Interaction: Knowledge Management for Interactive Robots [dissertation abstract]**  
*Künstliche Intelligenz* 2013. DOI: 10.1007/s13218-013-0246-3.
- Lallée, S., Pattacini, U., Lemaignan, S., Lenz, A., Melhuish, C., Natale, L., Skachek, S., Hamann, K., Steinwender, J., Sisbot, E.A., Metta, G., Pipe, T., Alami, W., Warnier, M., Guitton, J., Warneken, F., Dominey, P.F.  
**Towards a Platform-Independent Cooperative Human-Robot Interaction System: III. An Architecture for Learning and Executing Actions and Shared Plans**  
*IEEE Transactions on Autonomous Mental Development* 2012. DOI: 10.1109/TAMD.2012.2199754.
- Lemaignan, S., Ros, R., Sisbot, E. A., Alami, R., Beetz M.  
**Grounding the Interaction: Anchoring Situated Discourse in Everyday Human-Robot Interaction**  
*International Journal of Social Robotics* 2011. DOI: 10.1007/s12369-011-0123-x.

#### International peer-reviewed conference articles

- Chance, G., Ghobrial, A., Lemaignan, S., Pipe, T., Eder, K.  
**An Agency-Directed Approach to Test Generation for Simulation-based Autonomous Vehicle Verification**  
*AI Test* 2020. DOI: 10.1109/AITEST49225.2020.00012.
- Wijnen, L., Bremner, P., Lemaignan, S., Giuliani, M.  
**Performing Human-Robot Interaction User Studies in Virtual Reality**  
*RoMAN* 2020.
- Winkle, K., Lemaignan, S., Caleb-Solly, P., Leonards, U., Turton, A., Bremner, P.  
**In-Situ Learning from a Domain Expert for Real World Socially Assistive Robot Deployment**  
*RSS* 2020.
- Sallami, Y., Lemaignan, S., Clodic, A., Alami, R.  
**Simulation-based physics reasoning for consistent scene estimation in an HRI context**  
*IROS* 2019. DOI: 10.1109/IROS40897.2019.8968106.
- Winkle, K., Lemaignan, S., Caleb-Solly, P., Leonards, U., Turton, A., Bremner, P.  
**Effective Persuasion Strategies for Socially Assistive Robots**  
*HRI* 2019. DOI: 10.1109/HRI.2019.8673313.
- Wallbridge, C., van den Berghe, R., Hernández García, D., Kanero, J., Lemaignan, S., Edmunds, C., Belpaeme, T.  
**Using a Robot Peer to Encourage the Production of Spatial Concepts in a Second Language**  
*HAI* 2018. DOI: 10.1145/3284432.3284433.
- Lemaignan, S., Sallami, Y., Wallbridge, C., Clodic, A., Alami, R.  
**underworlds: Cascading Situation Assessment for Robots**  
*IROS* 2018. DOI: 10.1109/IROS.2018.8594094.
- Senft, E., Lemaignan, S., Bartlett, M., Baxter, P., Belpaeme, T.  
**Robots in the classroom: Learning to be a Good Tutor**  
*HRI – Workshop R4L 'Robots for Learning'* 2018.

- Irfan, B., Kennedy, J., Lemaignan, S., Papadopoulos, F., Senft, E., Belpaeme, T.  
**Social psychology and Human-Robot Interaction: an Uneasy Marriage**  
*alt.HRI* 2018. DOI: 10.1145/3173386.3173389.
- Wallbridge, C., Lemaignan, S., Belpaeme, T.  
**Qualitative Review of Object Recognition Techniques for Tabletop Manipulation**  
*HAI* 2017. DOI: 10.1145/3125739.3132593.
- Senft, E., Lemaignan, S., Baxter, P., Belpaeme, T.  
**Toward Supervised Reinforcement Learning with Partial States for Social HRI**  
*AAAI Fall Symposium – AI-HRI* 2017.
- Özgür, A., Lemaignan, S., Johal, W., Beltran, M., Briod, M., Pereyre, L., Mondada, F., Dillenbourg, P.  
**Cellulo: Versatile Handheld Robots for Education**  
*HRI* 2017. DOI: 10.1145/2909824.3020247.
- Kennedy, J., Lemaignan, S., Montassier, C., Lavalade, P., Irfan, B., Papadopoulos, F., Senft, E., Belpaeme, T.  
**Child Speech Recognition in Human-Robot Interaction: Evaluations and Recommendations**  
*HRI* 2017. DOI: 10.1145/2909824.3020229.
- Chandra, S., Alves-Oliveira, P., Lemaignan, S., Sequeira, P., Paiva, A., Dillenbourg, P.  
**Children's Peer Assessment and Self-disclosure in the Presence of an Educational Robot**  
*RoMAN* 2016. DOI: 10.1109/ROMAN.2016.7745170.
- Hostettler, L., Özgür, A., Lemaignan, S., Dillenbourg, P., Mondada, F.  
**Real-Time High-Accuracy 2D Localization with Structured Patterns**  
*ICRA* 2016. DOI: 10.1109/ICRA.2016.7487653.
- Baxter, P., Kennedy, J., Senft E., Lemaignan, S., Belpaeme, T.  
**From Characterising Three Years of HRI to Methodology and Reporting Recommendations**  
*alt.HRI* 2016. DOI: 10.1109/HRI.2016.7451777.
- Lemaignan, S., Garcia, F., Jacq, A., Dillenbourg, P.  
**From Real-time Attention Assessment to “With-me-ness” in Human-Robot Interaction**  
*HRI* 2016. DOI: 10.1109/HRI.2016.7451747.
- Jacq, A., Lemaignan, S., Garcia, F., Dillenbourg, P., Paiva, A.  
**Building Successful Long Child-Robot Interactions in a Learning Context**  
*HRI* 2016. DOI: 10.1109/HRI.2016.7451758.
- Baxter, P., Ashurst, E., Kennedy, J., Senft, E., Lemaignan, S., Belpaeme, T.  
**The Wider Supportive Role of Social Robots in the Classroom for Teachers**  
*WONDER Workshop - ICSR* 2015.
- Lemaignan, S., Fink, J., Mondada, F., Dillenbourg, P.  
**You're Doing It Wrong! Studying Unexpected Behaviors in Child-Robot Interaction**  
*ICSR* 2015. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-319-25554-5\_39.
- Lemaignan, S., Hosseini, A., Dillenbourg, P.  
**pyRobots: a Toolset for Robot Executive Control**  
*IROS* 2015. DOI: 10.1109/IROS.2015.7353769.
- Karim, M. E., Lemaignan, S., Mondada, F.  
**A Review: Can Robots Reshape K-12 STEM Education?**  
*ARSO* 2015.
- Chandra, S., Alves-Oliveira, P., Lemaignan, S., Sequeira, P., Paiva, A., Dillenbourg, P.  
**Can a Child Feel Responsible for Another in the Presence of a Robot in a Collaborative Learning Activity?**  
*RoMAN* 2015. DOI: 10.1109/ROMAN.2015.7333678.
- Lemaignan, S., Dillenbourg, P.  
**Mutual Modelling in Robotics: Inspirations for the Next Steps**  
*HRI* 2015. DOI: 10.1145/2696454.2696493.
- Hood, D., Lemaignan, S., Dillenbourg, P.  
**When Children Teach a Robot to Write: An Autonomous Teachable Humanoid Which Uses Simulated Handwriting**  
*HRI* 2015. DOI: 10.1145/2696454.2696479.
- Fink, J., Rétornaz, P., Vaussard, F., Wille, F., Franinovi, K., Berthoud, A., Lemaignan, S., Dillenbourg, P., Mondada, F.  
**Which Robot Behavior Can Motivate Children to Tidy up Their Toys? Design and Evaluation of “Ranger”**  
*HRI* 2014. DOI: 10.1145/2559636.2559659.
- Lemaignan, S., Hanheide, M., Karg, M., Khambhaita, H., Kunze, L., Lier, F., Lütkebohle, I., Milliez, G.  
**Simulation and HRI - Recent Perspectives with the MORSE Simulator**  
*SIMPAN* 2014. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-319-11900-7\_2.

- Lemaignan, S., Fink, J., Dillenbourg, P., Braboszcz, C.  
**The Cognitive Correlates of Anthropomorphism**  
*Workshop A bridge between Robotics and Neuroscience - HRI* 2014.
- Lemaignan, S., Alami, R.  
**Explicit Knowledge and the Deliberative Layer: Lessons Learned**  
*IROS* 2013. DOI: 10.1109/IROS.2013.6697182.
- Echeverria, G., Lemaignan, S., Degroote, A., Lacroix, S., Karg, M., Koch, P., Lesire, C., Stinckwich, S.  
**Simulating complex robotic scenarios with MORSE**  
*SIMPAN* 2012. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-642-34327-8\_20.
- Warnier, M., Guitton, J., Lemaignan, S., Alami, R.  
**When the Robot Puts Itself in Your Shoes. Managing and Exploiting Human and Robot Beliefs**  
*RoMAN* 2012. DOI: 10.1109/ROMAN.2012.6343872.
- Alami, R., Warnier, M., Guitton, J., Lemaignan, S., Sisbot, E. A.  
**When the robot considers the human...**  
*ISRR* 2011.
- Lallée, S., Pattacini, U., Boucher, J.D., Lemaignan, S., Lenz, A., Melhuish, C., Natale, L., Skachek, S., Hamann, K., Steinwender, J., Sisbot, E.A., Metta, G., Alami, R., Warnier, M., Guitton, J., Warneken, F., Dominey, P.F.  
**Towards a Platform-Independent Cooperative Human-Robot Interaction System: II. Perception, Execution and Imitation of Goal Directed Actions**  
*IROS* 2011. DOI: 10.1109/IROS.2011.6094744.
- Lemaignan, S., Ros, R., Alami, R., Beetz, M.  
**What are you talking about? Grounding dialogue in a perspective-aware robotic architecture**  
*RoMAN* 2011. DOI: 10.1109/ROMAN.2011.6005249.
- Echeverria, G., Lassabe, N., Degroote, A., Lemaignan, S.  
**Modular Open Robots Simulation Engine: MORSE**  
*ICRA* 2011. DOI: 10.1109/ICRA.2011.5980252.
- Lemaignan, S., Ros, R., Mösenlechner, L., Alami, R., Beetz, M.  
**ORO, a Knowledge Management Module for Cognitive Architectures in Robotics**  
*IROS* 2010. DOI: 10.1109/IROS.2010.5649547.
- Ros, R., Lemaignan, S., Sisbot, E. A., Alami, R., Steinwender, J., Hamann, K., Warneken, F.  
**Which One? Grounding the Referent Based on Efficient Human-Robot Interaction**  
*RoMAN* 2010. DOI: 10.1109/ROMAN.2010.5598719.
- Lallée, S., Lemaignan, S., Lenz, A., Melhuish, C., Natale, L., Skachek, S., van Der Zant, T., Warneken, F., Dominey, P.F.  
**Towards a Platform-Independent Cooperative Human-Robot Interaction System: I. Perception**  
*IROS* 2010. DOI: 10.1109/IROS.2010.5652697.
- Mallet, A., Pasteur, C., Herrb, M., Lemaignan, S., Ingrand, F.  
**GenoM3: Building middleware-independent robotic components**  
*ICRA* 2010. DOI: 10.1109/ROBOT.2010.5509539.
- Mehani, O., Benenson, R., Lemaignan, S., Ernst, T.  
**Networking Needs and Solutions for Road Vehicles at Imara**  
*ITST* 2007. DOI: 10.1109/ITST.2007.4295894.
- Stinckwich, S., Lemaignan, S., Saidani, S.  
**SqueakBot: a Pedagogical Robotic Platform**  
*C5 Conference* 2007. DOI: 10.1109/C5.2007.28.
- Lemaignan, S., Siadat, A., Dantan, J.Y., Semenenko, A.  
**MASON: A proposal for an ontology of manufacturing domain**  
*IEEE Workshop on Distributed Intelligent Systems (DIS)* 2006. DOI: 10.1109/DIS.2006.48.

## Book chapters

- Mondada, F., Fink, J., Lemaignan, S., Mansolino, D., Wille, F., Franinovič, K.  
**Ranger, an Example of Integration of Robotics into the Home Ecosystem**  
2015.

## Selected Fellowships & Grants

- 2020–2021 **University of the West of England, Robots4SEN: Social Robots to Support Children with Autism**, Principal Investigator, £25K.
- 2019–2022 **InnovateUK, CAV Forth – Verification for Connected Autonomous Vehicles**, Co-Investigator, £600K.
- 2015–2017 **EU H2020 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowship**, Principal Investigator, € 195K.

## Supervision & Teaching Experience

**Students supervision**, Supervised 9 PhD and 20+ MSc students to date, (click here for full list).

- o N. Webb (PhD, 2019-): *Data-Driven Human Robot Interaction*
- o M. Bartlett (PhD, 2017-): *Data-Driven Social Robotics*
- o K. Winkle (PhD, 2016-): *Persuasive human-robot interactions*
- o C. Wallbridge (PhD, 2016-): *Spatial reasoning for Child-Robot Interaction*
- o E. Senft (PhD, 2015-2018): *Shared autonomy for social human-robot interactions*
- o A. Jacq (PhD, 2014-2015): *Mutual modeling and repair strategies in HRI*
- o A. Özgür (PhD, 2014-2015): *Cellulo: haptic robotics for learning*
- o S. Chandra (PhD, 2013-2017): *CoWriter project: learning by teaching handwriting to a robot*
- o J. Fink (PhD, 2011-2014): *Long-term acceptance of robots in daily life & anthropomorphism*

- 2018– **University of the West of England, associate professor.**  
teaching at MSc level; Human-Robot Interaction, data science, software engineering for robotics, ROS
- 2016–2018 **Plymouth University, lecturer.**  
teaching at BSc & MSc level robotics, including HRI, ROS, Kalman filtering, localisation and planning, control architectures
- 2018–2016 **Guest lectures & Seminars, Plymouth University, EPFL, Université de Toulouse.**  
ROS, simulation, ontologies, Python/C++ software engineering, computer graphics & 3D modelling.
- 2008–2011 **Teaching assistant, INSA Toulouse, Écoles des Mines de Paris.**  
Prolog, Ontology Modeling, Java, ADA, SQL, Mechatronics.

## Selected outreach activities

- 2019– **Cluster Lead for STEM outreach, University of the West of England.**
- 2019– **Scientific advisor for the WeTheCurious Bristol's science museum, Open City Lab project.**
- 2016– **UK & EU Robotics Weeks coordinator, University of Plymouth, University of the West of England.**
- 2011 **'Roboscopia' Human-Robot public theater performance, Science Day'11.**  
<http://bit.ly/1LQpNWA>
- 2008–2011 **Toulouse's Cognitive Sciences Students Association, Co-chair.**
- 2008–2009 **South African SciFest festival, Science facilitator.**
- 1997–2012 **Executive Committee & Head of Educational Robotics, Planète Sciences, including coordination of the EU-ROBOT Robotic Competition .**

## Technical Skills and Spoken Languages

- |          |   |  |
|----------|---|--|
| Robotics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Expert in cognitive robotics and human-robot interaction</li><li>o ROS, Symbolic knowledge manipulation expert</li><li>o Expert PR2, Pepper, Nao developer</li><li>o Contributor to ROS, OpenCV</li><li>o Lead dev. MORSE simulator</li></ul> | Programming <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Python, modern C++, Prolog, SmallTalk</li><li>o Deep-learning frameworks: pytorch, TensorFlow</li><li>o Open-source enthusiast</li></ul> GitHub: <a href="https://github.com/severin-lemaignan">github.com/severin-lemaignan</a> |
|----------|---|--|

### Languages

- |         |          |
|---------|----------|
| French  | Native   |
| English | Fluent   |
| German  | Advanced |