



## The finalists for the 2017 Innovation Award have been selected

**Augsburg, 9 December 2016 – Five young research teams have made it to the finals for the 2017 KUKA Innovation Award. They now have until April to implement their concepts using KUKA hardware. The finalists will show the results at Hannover Messe 2017 – where a jury of experts will determine the winner.**

“We are delighted that so many exciting concepts were sent in from all over the world for this year’s topic of ‘Advanced Mechatronics’,” says Dr. Bernd Liepert, Chief Innovation Officer at KUKA AG and patron of the competition. “Selecting the best five teams was a difficult decision for the jury.”

The task for the finalists is now to develop a robot application. KUKA will make the hardware available for this. To enable fair comparison of the developments, all of the teams will implement their concepts on a KUKA LBR iiwa – a sensitive lightweight robot for safe human-robot collaboration. In addition, the Augsburg-based automation specialist is providing flexFellows (a mobile robot unit). Optionally, the teams can make use of stereo vision sensors from Roboception.

### The 2017 KUKA Innovation Award finalist teams

Team Tele-MAGMaS: The international research team led by LAAS-CNRS in Toulouse (a lab of the French National Center for Scientific Research), with members from the University of Siena, Seoul National University and CNRS at the research center IRISA in Rennes, is addressing search and rescue operations in regions which are difficult to access or dangerous following disasters. For this, they use stationary and flying robots which collaboratively carry and position objects.

#### KUKA Aktiengesellschaft

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Team Advanced Robotic Finishing: The project group from the University of Southern California is working on the automation of finishing processes such as deburring, grinding or polishing. Using automatic algorithms for workpiece detection and path planning, the team aims to make the machining of small batch sizes more cost-efficient.

Team MANCHU: The Swiss researchers from the École polytechnique fédérale in Lausanne are demonstrating their concept for two robots that cooperate with each other and collaborate with the human operator – for example, to move heavy parts such as car doors without the risk of a collision and to support the human operator in positioning these parts correctly.

Team Machamp: With its project, the team from the Italian Istituto Di Tecnologie Industriali E Automazione is seeking a human-robot collaboration solution for the assembly of heavy parts in the aerospace industry. First and foremost, the goal is to relieve production employees of physically strenuous work.

Team RAS: The research team from the German Aerospace Center DLR is vying for the Innovation Award with an airbag system for safe human-robot collaboration.

The finalist teams will present their implemented ideas directly at the KUKA booth at the upcoming Hannover Messe. “The participants get the opportunity to show what they have achieved in front of an international audience of specialists at the world’s largest industrial trade fair,” says Dr. Liepert. At the end, a jury of experts crowns the winner of the competition and the 20,000 euro prize.

## About the KUKA Innovation Award

KUKA launched the research competition in 2014 to promote innovation in the field of robot-based automation and to support technology transfer from science to industry. It is aimed at developers, graduates and research teams from companies or universities. The participants develop ideas for tackling challenges specified by KUKA. A jury of experts selects the finalists from all of the entries submitted. The best teams implement their projects using KUKA hardware and present the results to wide-ranging specialist audiences at major trade fairs. The winners receive a monetary prize of 20,000 euro. The award was first presented at AUTOMATICA 2014.

Information about the previous years’ winners is available here:

<https://www.kuka.com/de-de/presse/events/kuka-innovation-award>



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## KUKA Aktiengesellschaft

KUKA Aktiengesellschaft is a global automation company with sales revenues of around 3 billion euro and a workforce of 12,300 worldwide. The company is one of the world's leading suppliers of automation solutions. KUKA offers its customers tailored solutions ranging from the core Component – the robot – to cells and large-scale systems. The company is headquartered in Augsburg. KUKA operates internationally for customers from the automotive industry and general industry. (31.12.2015)