EuRoC, a €7M Grant Robotics Challenge Programme has Launched

EuRoC aims at questioning the status quo and bringing new innovative solutions to the European manufacturing industry

Naples, Italy (April 1st, 2014): A consortium consisting of the leading robotics companies and research institutions in Europe has announced the launch of the European Robotics Challenges (EuRoC), a 4-year long programme aimed at developing competitive solutions to keep the European manufacturing industry's global leadership in products and services.

To fulfil the objective of spurring sustainable and applicable innovations, EuRoC consists of three industry-relevant Challenges in the scenarios of 1) Reconfigurable Interactive Manufacturing Cell, 2) Shop Floor Logistics and Manipulation and 3) Plant Servicing and Inspection. All three Challenges are launched in an open call framework aimed at involving whole supply chains and fostering collaboration among application experts, technology suppliers, system integrators, service providers and potential end users. With substantial support to the Challenger teams, mounting up to a cumulative sum of €7 million of grant money, access to the leading robotics platforms in Europe, and excellent network and business opportunities, Project Coordinator Bruno Siciliano from University of Naples Federico II is confident that EuRoC will attract a large number of competitive Challengers and end users.

"The EuRoC programme represents an unprecedented grant scheme for funding robotics challenges not only in Europe but world-wide. Different from previous similar initiatives, End users will be recruited by the candidate Challengers upfront during a targeted brokerage workshop in a competitive way. The opportunity to develop use-case oriented projects on top European platforms and bring them to the end-user sites with full financial support throughout is a unique lure for the Challenger teams engaged in EuRoC."

The three EuRoC Challenges are organised into three successive stages, which increase in complexity from simulation to real work environments. Stage 1 consists of a simulation contest and a written proposal from which 15 Challenger Teams (5 per Challenge) will advance to Stage 2 and receive funding up to **€ 375K** each to further develop their solutions. In Stage 2, the 15 Challengers will be taken on to realistic lab tests, with only 6 teams (2 per Challenge) making it into the final Stage 3 with an additional funding of **€ 210K** each, where the finalists will compete at a public event to demonstrate their solutions in practical field tests, before 1 EuRoC winner is finally announced. The real use cases and objective benchmarking criteria are essential to ensure sustainability and applicability to the end users and eventually the successful transfer of technology from the laboratory to the market.

"Shared resources, benchmarking and performance evaluation are of the utmost importance for the next seven years of robotics research to be funded by the European Commission within Horizon 2020. EuRoC represents an important step in that direction. For the first time in public-funded research, teams of Challengers and end users will work hand in hand on common

platforms and compete to achieve technology transfer where performance success is keenly benchmarked", states Siciliano.

The call for Challengers is open until June 30th, 2014 and the call for end users until November 15th, 2014. To learn more about EuRoC and how to get involved as either a Challenger or end user go to www.euroc-project.eu.