Last update: 18 Sep 2026

UK-Japan Symposium on

Smart Robots in the AI Era

Date and Time: Friday, 25 September 2026 (UOS Welcome week), 08.30 - 18:00 BST (16:30-02:00 JST)

Venue: Mappin Hall (E-floor), Sir Frederick Mappin Building, University of Sheffield [map]

Format: In person, open to UOS/NUT/OMU members (hybrid broadcasting with Microsoft Teams will be available to participating institute members)

Participating Institutes:
- Nagaoka University of Technology (NUT), Japan [map][introduction]
- Osaka Metropolitan University (OMU), Japan [map][introduction]
- University of Sheffield (UOS), UK [map][introduction]

Sponsored by: JSPS | Registration: Free

On-site contact: Shuhei Miyashita (UOS), shuhei.miyashita[at]sheffield.ac.uk

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8.30 - 9:00 [Registration and coffee break☕] Catered refreshment provided

9:00 (10 min) [Opening remarks, safety announcement] (Mr Taiki Satow, Deputy Director, JSPS London), Dr Shuhei Miyashita (UOS)

9:10 - 09:25 (15 min) [Introduction to the symposium: background, aims and objectives]
- Prof Tadachika Nakayama (NUT) [Website]

9:30 - 10:00 (30 min) [Keynote research presentations] (15 min per presentation including Q&A)
- Prof Chihiro Nakagawa (OMU) (dynamics and Control, personal mobility vehicles, human-vehicle interaction, autonomous driving/control) [Website]
- Dr Asuka Takai (OMU) (robotics and human-assistive engineering, human-robot collaboration) [Website]

10:00 - 10:30 (30 min) [Coffee break☕] Catered refreshment provided

10:30 - 12:00 (90 min) [Research presentations] (15 min per presentation including Q&A)
- Dr Amir M Ghalamzan Esfahani (UOS/EEE) (world models and predictive controller) [Website]
- Dr Kan Shoji (NUT) (biohybrid robots and molecular robots) [Website]
- Dr Dana Damian (UOS/EEE), (biomedical robotics, robotic implant, soft and resilient robots) [Website]
- Assoc Prof Masaaki Baba (NUT) (thermal engineering / energy management materials) [Website] (online)
- Dr Chaona Chen (UOS/COM) (human-robot teaming, human-centric AI) [Website]
- Prof George Panoutsos (UOS/EEE) Head of School of EEE – Closing remarks for the morning session

12:00 - 13:30 (90min) [Lunch and networking☕] Catered lunch provided (mainly for speakers - apologies)

13:30 - 14:00 (30 min) [JSPS London presentation]
- Prof Masahiko Hara, Director, JSPS London
- Mr Taiki Satow, Deputy Director, JSPS London
- Mr Yuya Yamashita, International Programme Associate, JSPS London

14:00 - 15:30 (90 min) [Research presentations] (15 min per presentation including Q&A)
- Prof Lyudmila S Mihaylova (UOS/EEE) (autonomous systems, sensor data fusion, machine learning and AI, robotics, computer vision, swarm intelligence) [Website]
- Dr Keita Kambayashi (NUT) (computational design, topology optimisation and morphing structures) [Webpage] (online)
- Prof Sanja Dogramadzi (UOS/EEE) (assistive robotics for physical HRI) [Website]
- Mr Praveen Ekanayake (graduate student from NUT) (autonomous agricultural robots, robotic weed removal) [Website]
- Dr Sean Anderson (UOS/EEE) (robotics and biomechatronics, system identification and control) [Website]

15:30 - 16:00 (30min) [Coffee break☕] Catered refreshment provided

16:00 - 17:00 (60 min) [Research presentations] (15 min per presentation including Q&A)
- Dr Lin Cao (UOS/EEE), (biomedical robotics, colonoscopic robots) [Website]
- Dr Kazuya Yokota (NUT) (physics-informed AI) [Website] (online)
- Dr Shuhei Miyashita (UOS/EEE), (micro-bio robotics, self-assembly, origin of life) [Website]
- Mr Haruto Chiba (graduate student from NUT) (Physical Reservoir Computing, Robotic Tactile Sensing) [Website]

17:00 [Closing remarks] Prof Tadachika Nakayama (vice president, NUT)

17:00 - 18:00 [Networking☕] Catered food provided (mainly for speakers - apologies)

Instruction for speakers: please consider covering some or all of the following in your presentation:
- A brief introduction to yourself, your lab, and your institution
- Your research experience and career trajectory
- Your current research
- Your vision for “Smart Robots in the AI Era”
- Ideas for future collaboration

Day 2, Saturday, 26 September 2026 (closed session)

9.30 - 10:30 [Lab tour] Meet at the entrance gate of North Campus [map]
10.30 - 11:30 [Grant discussion]
12:00 [Closing event]