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## Swiss researcher won the Robotdalen Scientific Award

The young researcher Sylvain Calinon from Ecole Polytechnique Federale de Lausanne in Switzerland is the winner of the Robotdalen Scientific Award 2008 and receives €20 000. The prize ceremony took place on September 10 at the annual event the Robotdalen Day in Sweden. Three finalists competed for the award and the Swedish Minister for EU-affairs, Cecilia Malmström, presented the winner.

The Swedish Robotics initiative Robotdalen (Robot Valley) established the Robotdalen Scientific Award in 2007 to support young researchers and to build an international network of prominent researchers for increased international cooperation within the field of robotics.

Three finalists attended the prize ceremony for the Robotdalen Scientific Award 2008 that took place on the annual event the Robotdalen Day in Sweden, on September 10. Sylvain Calinon from Ecole Polytechnique Federale de Lausanne in Switzerland was announced the winner and received € 20 000. The prize was presented by the Swedish Minister for EU-affairs Cecilia Malmström. The other finalists, Pinhas Ben-Tzvi from University of Toronto in Canada and Antonios Bouloubasis from University of Reading in Great Britain, both received honorary mentions and € 1 000.

### Impressive human-robot interaction research

Sylvain Calinon's winning thesis is titled "Continuous Extraction of Task Constraints in a Robot Programming by Demonstration Framework" and examines how a human instructor can teach manipulation skills to a robot by first demonstrating the required motions, then leading the robot through them, then coaching the robot's refinement of its skill level by providing feedback using gestures and voice emphasis.

The jury was impressed by the practical and economic importance of the problem, the systematic analysis and innovative layered approach of its implementation, the completeness of the solution, and the open release of source code, demonstrating confidence in the solution's independence from specifics of any particular robot hardware or manipulation task.

The members of the jury are: Peter Wide, Head of the jury and Professor at Örebro University, Sweden; Charlotte Brogren, Vice President R&D, Robotics Division, ABB; Emil M. Petriu, Dr.Eng., P.Eng., Professor and University Research Chair at the School of Information Technology and Engineering (SITE), University of Ottawa, Canada; Mel Siegel, Professor, Robotics Institute, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, USA and Dr Amy Loutfi, Senior Researcher at Örebro University in Sweden.

For further information please visit [www.robotdalen.se](http://www.robotdalen.se) or contact Evelyn Karlsson, Project manager of the Robotdalen Scientific Award, telephone +46 (0)70-591 70 70, e-mail [award@robotdalen.se](mailto:award@robotdalen.se) or Professor Peter Wide, telephone +46 (0)705-33 04 74, e-mail [peter.wide@oru.se](mailto:peter.wide@oru.se)

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*In Robotdalen (Robot Valley) companies collaborate with the academic and public institutions to secure Central Sweden in its position as a world leader in the manufacturing, research and development of robot-based automation.*

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