

FAQs for applicants of the IERA Award

IEEE/IFR Award on Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Robotics and Automation

Dear Applicant,

1. What is robotics and automation and which technologies can be awarded?

The technologies that are built into most, if not all robotic and automation systems are: *sensing*, *planning* and *control* (including decision making), and *actuation*. So, any technology, which falls under this rather broad definition, in principle, qualifies for the IERA award. The technology can be just a component of a robot or an automation system or it can be a whole system. It can be for an industrial application as well as for the automation of a service (professional or domestic).

2. Can automation systems of components be rewarded that do not qualify as robots?

Absolutely! The award is on robotics and automation.

3. Is a sensor, an actuator or a piece of software qualified for application?

Yes, but it should be a key technology for a robot or an automation system. A new 3D range sensor, for example, would certainly qualify as an innovation in robotics and automation since it might enable more robust and reliable sensing and hence improve the robustness and reliability of the entire system.

4. How important are innovation and entrepreneurship in an application?

As the title indicates innovation and entrepreneurship are at the core of the award. If an application does not include a serious entrepreneurial effort, then it is not qualified for application. What is a serious entrepreneurial effort? What is common to most entrepreneurial efforts in our domain is that a single person or a group of persons or even an organization takes a significant financial risk to bring a new technology or service to the market.

5. How innovative does the technology have to be?

The award should be preferably given to disruptive innovation rather than incremental innovation and to recent innovation rather than to technology, which was innovative several years ago but today counts as state of the art.

6. Does the technology have to be on the market and how big does the sales volume have to be?

The technologies must commercially available products by the time of application. How big does the sales volume have to be? Highly innovative products often need time to penetrate a market, so the sales volume may be considered in the evaluation, but is not a dominant criterion. What should be elaborated, however, is the potential market volume and the likelihood that the described technology can really exploit the potential. **Technologies, which only exist in form of laboratory prototypes, will not qualify for application.**

7. May I apply again with the same technology?

Yes, re-application is possible.

8. Do I need to present in person at the final?

Yes, we expect the nominated finalists to present in person at the hosting event.



9. Are my colleagues allowed to attend the final session and the awards ceremony?

This decision is up to the host organization.

10. Do I need to be member of IEEE or IFR to apply?

No, the award is open to everybody and membership in one of the awarding organizations is neither a prerequisite nor an advantage.