

The Future of Robotics in Australia

By Natalie Fletcher

Non-profit organisation Robotics Australia Group (RAG) have released details on their 2022 roadmap, promising greater investments into the future of robotics and AI in Australia.

RAG board chair Doctor Sue Keay said the organisation was formed to promote growth within the robotics industry in Australia and to create a better understanding of robotics in the workplace.

“We were formed to help facilitate the growth of a sustainable robotics industry,” Dr Keay said.

“People often associate the term robots with job loss, but those of us in the industry know there’s very little evidence of that.

“Robots create jobs, they impact all sectors of the Australian economy and we wanted to make sure we represented those sectors,” she said.

RAG hosted an online webinar, attended by over five-hundred people from across the globe, discussing the organisation’s future investments, grants, and partnerships.

One of RAG’s goals is to further the robotics industry in Australia, particularly in the manufacturing and industrial robots sector where Australia ranks thirty-five out of thirty-eight, while Singapore leads the industry.

Dr Keay said the reason for this fall in the global ranking is the closure of many car manufacturing plants in Australia.

“Our robot ranking is falling and has unfortunately been falling for some time. It’s mainly related to the closure of motor vehicle manufacturing in Australia,” Dr Keay said.

“In general Australia does not manufacture robots that can be used in manufacturing.

“Australia’s strength lies in service robots,” she said.

RAG also has plans to increase opportunities for students and graduates in the industry.

One such way is through government and organisational grants advertised through RAG and their membership program.

RAG general manager Nicole Ireland said the organisation is working on facilitating these relationships with young minds and local talent through these grants and are facilitating partnerships and connections with other companies to help make it happen.

“In addition to the work that we’re doing in engaging with government and promotion, we’re making sure we’re bringing opportunities in the grant space,” Ms Ireland said.

“I’m wanting to grow the connections and sponsorships of RAG and getting exciting opportunities and partnerships,” she said.

Dr Keay said there are many opportunities within Australia as robotics is an emerging field, and RAG plans to be a large part of getting people involved.

“What doesn’t get highlighted, is this is really a new industry opportunity for Australia where’s there’s a lot of growth opportunities which need some support,” Dr Keay said.

RAG has plans to officially launch their 2022 roadmap in March.

As it stands the roadmap details plans for a new technology park and a robotics venture facility, the acquisition of government grants, community events and more to help create conversation and interest into the world of robotics.