

I am writing to express my gratitude for the CHF 500 grant I received from the Swiss Friends of Oxford University to attend the International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA) 2023 in London, UK, from May 29 to June 2, 2023. This grant was instrumental in covering my travel and accommodation expenses, enabling me to participate in this prestigious event.

The conference featured numerous keynote speeches, workshops, and panel discussions, all offering deep insights into the latest robotics advancements. One of the most impactful sessions I attended was on Boston Dynamics by its founder, Marc Raibert, which provided new perspectives, insights, and techniques for highly advanced robot design. Additionally, I participated in workshops and other sessions where I learned about cutting-edge methods and their practical applications in real-world scenarios, particularly for legged robotics problems using reinforcement learning as a controller.

Networking was a significant highlight of the conference. I had the opportunity to meet past connections and make new ones, too! These interactions were inspiring and opened potential avenues for future collaborations. We discussed possible joint research projects and the exchange of datasets, which could significantly enhance the scope and impact of my research.

The ICRA 2023 was particularly special as it was my first in-person conference since the pandemic began. The energy and enthusiasm of the attendees, combined with the opportunity to engage in face-to-face discussions, were genuinely invigorating. This experience underscored the unique value of in-person conferences for fostering meaningful connections and collaborations in the academic community. This opportunity would not have been possible without your support.

Beyond the academic and professional benefits, attending ICRA 2023 allowed me to explore London, a city rich in history and culture.

In conclusion, attending the ICRA 2023 was a transformative experience that significantly contributed to my academic and professional development. I am deeply grateful to the Swiss Friends of Oxford University for their generous support, without which this opportunity would not have been possible. The knowledge gained, connections made, and experiences shared at this conference will undoubtedly shape my future research and career in robotics.

Thank you very much for your support and for making this invaluable experience possible.

Sincerely,

David Rytz