

Preface

The five editors of this volume are delighted to present here the Proceedings of the third event in the *Robophilosophy Conference Series*, held February 14-17, at the University of Vienna, Austria. After the first two events in this series, which took place in Aarhus in 2014 and 2016, this volume collects the results of an intense, exciting and very productive research exchange that featured close to 100 research presentations and brought together about 250 researchers from all over the world.

The *Robophilosophy 2018* conference, entitled *Envisioning Robots in Society—Politics, Power, and Public Space*, prominently focused on societal, economic, and political issues related to social robotics, including the organization of work and labor, policy, education, economics, law, medicine and care, and the arts. Within these and other socio-political domains social robots will appear in ever more intelligent, connectable, and extensive ways, producing artificial agents that function in ever more complex physical and social surroundings, and transform the practices and organizations in which they are embedded. This raises a host of difficult and highly complex questions for policy-makers, engineers, and researchers. Which socio-political, socio-cultural, economic, and ethical challenges will we humans be confronted with as social robots are included into a growing number of contexts of everyday life? How can philosophy and other disciplines contribute to asking these questions and addressing these challenges?

Our conference was to send yet another signal to researchers, policy makers, engineers, and corporations that this is the time to (pro)actively engage with these issues and realize that they jointly share the burden of responsibility for shaping the course of the “robot revolution”.

The papers in this volume address the difficult questions of the impending socio-cultural changes due to the ‘robot revolution’. They ask these questions in different ways, ranging from reflections on the future of the economy and work to ethical questions about responsibility and philosophical discussions about the moral status of artificial agents. The Proceedings offer an interesting spectrum of the questions, answers, and approaches that currently are at the center of both academic and public discussions. We are confident that the short contributions collected here advance the state of the art and are helpful to researchers and policy makers alike, as well as of interest for other stakeholders.

As the *Robophilosophy Conference Series* in general, these Proceedings aim to present philosophical and interdisciplinary humanities research in and on social robotics that can inform and engage with policy making and political agendas—critically and constructively. During the conference we explored how academia and the private sector can work hand in hand to assess benefits and risks of future production formats and employment conditions. We have talked about how research in the humanities, including art and art research, and research in the social and human sciences can contribute to imagining and envisioning the potentials of future social interactions in the public space. We hope that the contributions in this volume will further discussion and exchange on the difficult yet eminently important questions that arise when we envision the introduction of robots into our societies.