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News Release

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Expert debate gets measure of how smart robots will be in future

How intelligent machines could impact on peoples' lives will come under the spotlight at a public event.

Experts will share their views on how developments such as driverless vehicles, advanced industrial robots, or surgical devices might affect us in the coming decades.

Researchers will share their informed views and take part in an audience discussion at the debate.

They will discuss commonly held perceptions about how advanced robots might take over jobs done by human workers.

The panel will also explore the advantages that smart machines might offer. These could include creating robots that can monitor medical conditions, or designing reading robots that can process vast amounts of text quickly.

Computer scientists from the Edinburgh Centre for Robotics – a partnership between the University of Edinburgh and Heriot-Watt University – will discuss the limits of intelligence for smart machines. They will consider how people might best adapt to living and working alongside robots.

Professor Sethu Vijayakumar, Professor of Robotics at the University of Edinburgh and Director of the Edinburgh Centre for Robotics, who will chair the debate, said: “Advances in robotics mean that machines are becoming smarter, and are set to play a bigger role in many aspects of our lives.

“We hope this debate will be an opportunity for the public to air their views and to learn more about how intelligent robots might fit into our lifestyles in years to come.”

‘How robotics will reshape our lives in the next two decades’, takes place at the Informatics Forum, Crichton St, Edinburgh at 6.30pm on Thursday 4 February. Tickets are free but limited, and can be booked online at www.bsa.sc/edinburgh.

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