

IEEE RAS ICRA 2025 LA@Chile Satellite Event: Expanding Robotics Horizons in Latin America [Education]

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[Javier Ruiz-del-Solar](#) ; [Julio Godoy](#) ; [Rodrigo Verschae](#) ; [Karinne Ramírez-Amaro](#) ; [Stefan Escaida](#) ; [Daniel Luhr](#) [All Authors](#)

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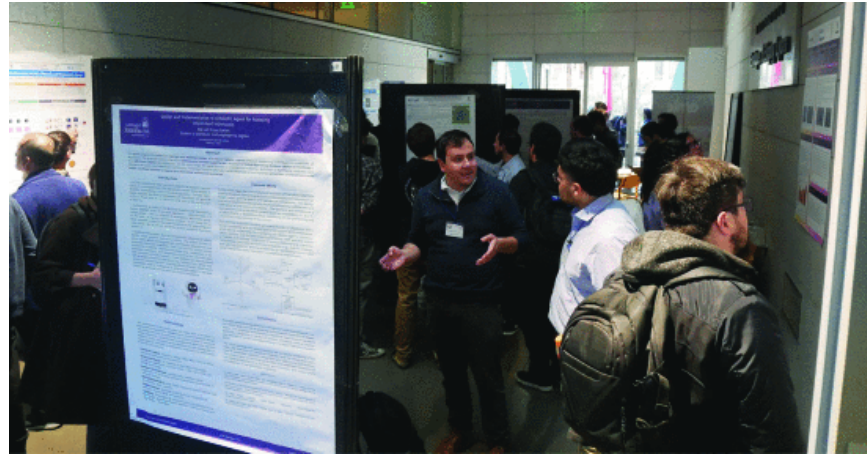
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The IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA) is the largest annual conference in the field of robotics, where researchers and engineers from all over the world gather to share and discuss the most recent advancements. Robotics is firmly established across North America, Europe, and Asia. Meanwhile, regions like Latin America and the African continent as well as others are still underrepresented in this community. Barriers such as high travel costs and visa restrictions often limit participation. However, students and researchers from these underrepresented regions are very eager to catch up with the global developments in this field, which is reflected by the growing number of RAS memberships. With the support of the RAS Educational Activities Board (EAB), we were able to host the “ICRA25 @Latin America” satellite event at the University of Chile in Santiago [1] in parallel with the ICRA 2025 main event in Atlanta, GA, USA. Our event was targeted at undergraduate students, graduate students, young researchers, and faculty members from Latin America, with undergraduates forming the largest participant group. This event is part of the “Satellite Events” initiative by RAS to foster worldwide participation in ICRA, reducing the access barrier and thus achieving a truly global reach for ICRA.

Thanks to the similar time zones of Atlanta and Santiago, we were able to propose a hybrid schedule that combined remote participation through streaming of ICRA plenaries and keynotes with a rich on-site program consisting of invited talks, a poster session, tutorials, and hands-on workshops. A total of around 85 students and researchers from several different countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Germany, Perú, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States) attended our satellite event. The support by the RAS enabled us to invite renowned international speakers, such as Jan Peters (TU Darmstadt), Darius Burschka (TU Munich), Paulo Drews Jr. (Federal University of Rio Grande), Jorge Solís (Karlstad University), and Martin Adams (University of Chile). These were complemented by technical presentations from young Chilean professors Rodrigo Verschae and Stefan Escaida from the Universidad de O’Higgins and Julio Godoy from the Universidad de Concepción as well as an early-career session with presentations from young researchers from Chile, Brazil, and the United Kingdom. Two tutorial courses were offered by Matías Mattamala (Oxford University) and by Felipe Inostroza (University of Chile). The poster session featured 23 posters by students from all over Latin America. An awards committee consisting of some of our invited speakers reviewed the posters for the Best Poster Award, which was a great opportunity for the students to showcase their work to an expert audience. Of course, the poster session also fostered the exchange between the participants of the event overall.

Finally, the program also featured three hands-on courses: “Quadruped Robot Leg Design and Construction,” “Event-Based Robot Vision,” and “3D Object Modeling and Scanning.” The mixture of global and Latin American specialists significantly helped foster the link between the local and global communities. For many students, this was a rare and impactful opportunity to engage directly with cutting-edge developments in the field. The scientific program was complemented by a dinner on the last day of the event, which turned out to be a joyful way of rounding up the three days of activities.

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Poster competition at the end of day 1.



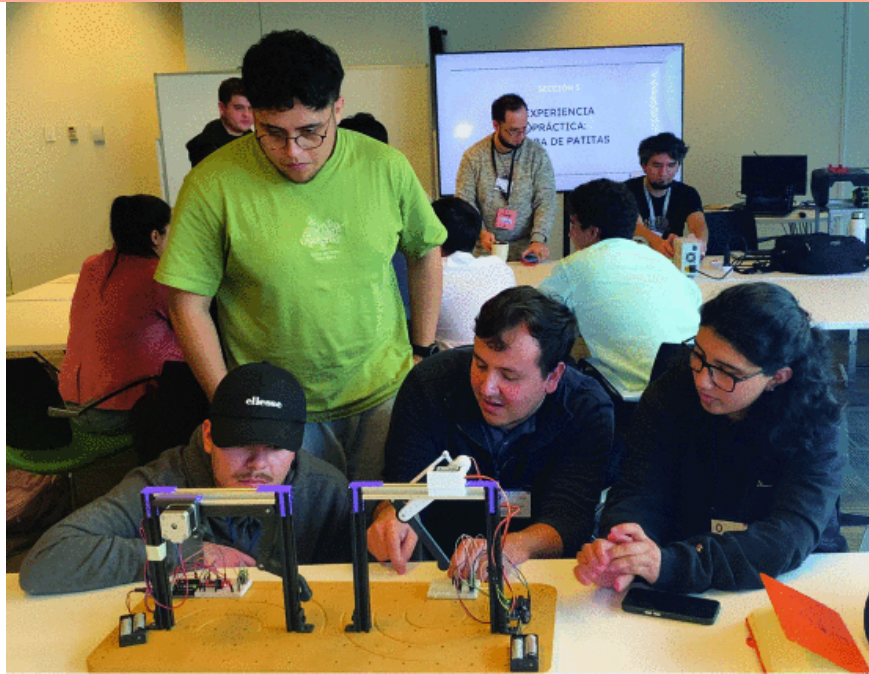
Visit to the Social Robotics Laboratory of the AMTC Center at the University of Chile on day 2.



A group of participants in front of the main building of the School of Engineering at the University of Chile.



Exterior view of the auditorium of the School of Engineering at the University of Chile, where the plenary talks took place.



Participants building the controller of a quadrupedal leg on day 2 of the hands-on course.

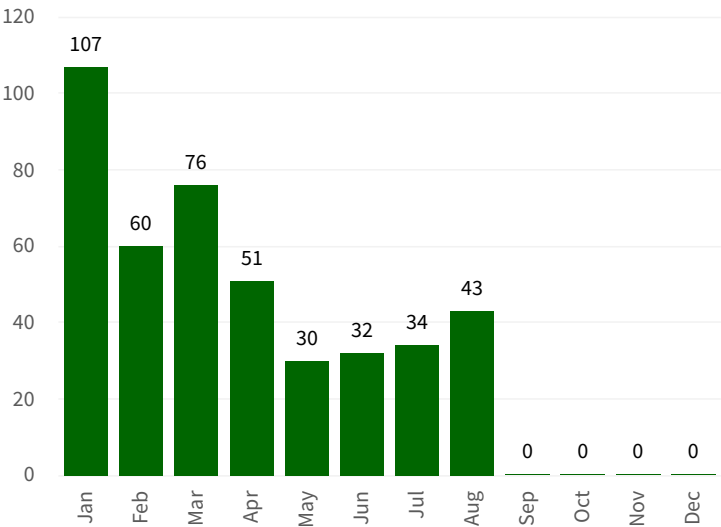
We believe that providing remote participation opportunities for researchers and students who face challenges to directly participate in ICRA conferences is an effort that should continue in Latin American countries and other parts of the world. As the organizing team of the IEEE RAS ICRA 2025 LA@Chile satellite event, we are committed to organizing future satellite events. These types of events allow us to build a sustainable community of students and researchers in robotics and automation in Latin America, to make cutting-edge scientific topics accessible to Latin American researchers and students, and to foster intercultural student collaboration within and outside Latin America.

Finally, we want to highlight again the importance of the support of the RAS and the AMTC Center at the University of Chile, which allowed us to take this important step toward achieving the mentioned goals.

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