



## Erik Derner, ELLIS Alicante Researcher, awarded by the Czech Technical University in Prague

- The award recognises the quality of his doctoral research on data and robotics.

**Alicante, 18 of January, 2024.** – ELLIS Alicante is pleased to announce that Dr. Erik Derner, currently a postdoctoral researcher at ELLIS Alicante, has been awarded the Best Doctoral Thesis Prize by the Dean of the Czech Technical University in Prague. This prestigious recognition highlights the exceptional quality of Dr. Derner's work, based on rigorous criteria including publications in leading international journals and conferences with a significant number of citations. In addition, his research has been praised by experts from leading European academic institutions.

The PhD thesis, entitled "Data-efficient methods for model learning and control in robotics", has been developed under the supervision of the distinguished Prof. Dr. Ing. Robert Babuška. It presents a set of methods for teaching robots to learn and interact with their environment using less data than traditional methods. This approach is particularly useful in situations where collecting large amounts of data is a challenge, making it a practical solution for real-world applications.

Erik Derner's current research at ELLIS Alicante focuses on the social and ethical implications of interaction between humans and Artificial Intelligence (AI). His work is addressing biases in conversational AI systems (chatbots), especially in underrepresented languages. With this approach, he aims to contribute to the development of more equitable and fair AI systems. Another goal of his work is to improve the security, privacy and reliability of generative AI systems. Part of Erik's scientific work is framed within RESUM AIS, the Centre of Scientific Excellence in Responsible AI of which ELLIS Alicante is a part, co-funded by Intel.

The addition of Dr. Erik Derner to the ELLIS Alicante Unit strengthens our commitment to responsible AI research.

For more information about the research at ELLIS Alicante and Dr. Erik Derner's contributions, please visit <https://ellisalicante.org>.

About ELLIS Alicante | [www.ellisalicante.org/ia](http://www.ellisalicante.org/ia)



**ELLIS Alicante is a non-for-profit research foundation** focused on **ethical and responsible Artificial Intelligence (IA)** for social good. Hence, it is also known as the **Institute of Humanity-centric AI**. ELLIS Alicante aims to be an international reference in **AI research by and for people**, by focusing on three areas of fundamental research in the intersection between humans and AI: 1) **AI that understands us**; 2) **AI that interacts with us**; 3) **AI that we trust**.

ELLIS Alicante is part of the European network of excellence in Artificial Intelligence ELLIS (European Laboratory for Learning and Intelligent Systems - [www.ellis.eu](http://www.ellis.eu)), being the only ELLIS unit dedicated exclusively to this area. ELLIS Alicante is the only ELLIS unit created from scratch, with the spirit of a scientific startup.

It was launched thanks to the vision, commitment, and generous financial support of the Generalitat Valenciana. It is also funded by other public and private institutions, including the Banc Sabadell Foundation, Balearia Foundation and Intel Corporation. Our headquarters are located at the Alicante Science Park ([www.uaparc.es/en](http://www.uaparc.es/en)) in the University of Alicante ([www.ua.es/en](http://www.ua.es/en)) (Alicante, Spain).

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