

Puh Prize goes to Yaskawa and Faculty of Mechanical Engineering of the UL

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Puh Prize for outstanding achievements in the field of industrial robotic technology

In the Grand Union Hall was taking place a solemn bestowal of the highest national awards and prizes for the most outstanding achievements of Slovenian scientists, awarded by the Committee of the Republic of Slovenia for bestowing prizes and awards for outstanding achievements in scientific research and development activities.

Dr. Hubert Kosler, Erih Arko, Damjan Širaj from Yaskawa company and Prof. Dr. Niko Herakovič and Associate Prof. Dr. Matija Jezeršek from the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering of the University of Ljubljana received as a group the Puh Prize. In collaboration, they have achieved top results in the introduction of new scientific achievements into the development and production of industrial robotic technologies and performance excellence, including the integration of laser technologies into manufacturing processes and the upgrading of digital production based on the principles of a smart factory.

After successfully realizing research achievements in the market, this group of

researchers and engineers gained such confidence of Yaskawa Electric from Japan that this entrusted them with the design of the first factory of robots in Europe namely in Slovenia, which is built and already in operation. The factory, with all the details of the processes, was completely conceived in a digital environment before construction even began, which is a remarkable technical achievement that puts us on the world map in this field. This was the first such approach in the wider region. The first robots were manufactured in November 2018. With the new 150 highly skilled jobs, the production will reach according to present forecasts 6,000 robots by 2022, worth approx. 100 million EUR per year with a maximum production capacity of up to 10,000 robots per year. All this is of extremely great importance for Slovenia, and especially for the municipality of Kočevje, which has so far faced 25% unemployment. The achievements are to the fullest extent possible a result of close cooperation between Yaskawa company and the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering of the University of Ljubljana.

