CZECH INSTITUTE of informatics, robotics, and cybernetics ctu

Jugoslávských partyzánů 1580/3, 160 00 Prague 6, Czech Republic

Prague, 21 January 2020

media contact | Alena NOvakova

alena.novakova@cvut.cz, +420 725 734 830

# Wolfgang Wahlster received honorary degree from Czech Technical University: as a god-father of Industry 4.0 he helped its prominence in the Czech Republic

**On January 21 in Bethlehem Chapel professor Wolfgang Wahlster was awarded an honorary title doctor honoris causa during ceremonial assembly of the Scientific Council of CTU in Prague. Professor Wahlster is one of the most prominent figures of the German artificial intelligence and a scientific god-father of Industry 4.0. He also contributed to its advancement to the Czech Republic. Since the 1990s he has supported Czech science and developed cooperation between Czech Institute of Informatics, Robotics and Cybernetics CTU (CIIRC) and one of the most prestigious institutions in the field of artificial intelligence - the German Research Centre for Artificial Intelligence, DFKI, which he founded and until recently led, now he acts there as a Chief Executive Advisor.**



Wolfgang Wahlster has pioneered entirely new fields at the cross-section of Computer Science, Manufacturing Science and the Internet of Things like semantic object memories - digital product twins, the cyber-physical production architecture and hybrid teams of robots and workers for the industry of the future. He called this revolutionary vision Industry 4.0. Prof. Wahlster’s research results in Industry 4.0 do represent a breakthrough in the concepts of industry of the future. His pioneering use of AI-based manufacturing in Industry 4.0 paved the way to the synergistic collaboration between humans and robots in smart factories for mass customization. These visions are helping to change the way of thinking in industry, transportation, smart cities, energy distribution etc. and can be considered an important step towards the change of thinking needed for the Society of the future.

*“Wolfgang Wahlster is a unique scientific personality. He has worked with Czech scientists since the 1990s and it has always been an equal cooperation, providing researchers the confidence they needed to compete in the international environment. He has created a number of professional attachments in the Czech Republic, contributed to the integration of the Czech AI community into European research by supporting it in the European Coordination Committee and helping Czech researchers around the world,”* explains CTU Rector doc. Vojtěch Petráček.

Wolfgang Wahlster has always strongly supported CTU and especially CIIRC CTU since its very beginning and established here fruitful cooperation with one of the most renowned AI institutions – DFKI, which he founded and which has become the most prominent non-profit centre of Ai in the world with more than 1000 researchers. This Czech-German cooperation has a European dimension and is currently characterized, for example, by the RICAIP project, which is part of the European TEAMING program, valued more than a billion Czech crowns.

*“Wolfgang Wahlster is not only a world-renowned person, but also a great personality and a true collaborator whom I have known for over 30 years,”* explains Professor Vladimír Mařík, Scientific Director of CIIRC CTU, the nature of cooperation with prof. Wahlster. *“In the past decade, his research in AI has shifted from computational linguistics and spoken dialog systems to industrial applications, the Industry 4.0 concept. From his previous cooperation he recognised the potential of the Czech environment and evaluated it as optimal: well-prepared and with a high-quality scientific background. This is one of the reasons why this concept was quickly adopted to the Czech environment,”* adds Professor Mařík.

*“I feel deeply honoured by the decision of the Scientific Council of CTU in Prague as one of the oldest and best technical universities of Europe to award me the prestigious honorary title Doctor honoris causa. It gives me great joy and satisfaction that this award underlines the impact of Artificial Intelligence and INDUSTRIE 4.0 on the Czech and German research on advanced manufacturing as well as on the economy of both countries. The digitalization of industrial production, products, and services plays a critical role for the future of both countries. The intensive collaboration of the two leading institutes in industrial AI, CIIRC and DFKI, ensures that both countries remain the globally leading suppliers for the next generation of smart factories. My cooperation with CTU was always based on my deep respect for the scientific excellence at CIIRC, the reliability of all Czech project partners and their very hard-working staff, as well as the shared socio-economic values and principles,”* Wolfgang Wahlster comments on the distinction he received from CTU.

In his various top advisory roles to the German government for Chancellors Dr. Schröder and Dr. Merkel, Prof. Wahlster has defined and shaped many large-scale and long-term national research programs between academia and industry.

In 2006, he was awarded the Federal Cross of Merit, first Class, of the Federal Republic of Germany for his outstanding contributions to human-technology interaction. In 2019, the President of Germany awarded him the Great Cross of Merit. Also, he was named one of the 10 most influential figures in history of AI in Germany by the German Informatics Society.

*Photo: Wolfgang Wahlster portrait: Jim Rakete, photos from the ceremony: CIIRC CTU*

**Czech Institute of Informatics, Robotics and Cybernetics** is a modern scientific and research institute of the Czech Technical University in Prague (CIIRC CTU), which brings together excellent research teams, young talents and unique know-how to push technological boundaries and build on the best of Czech tradition in technical education. The focus of CIIRC CTU's research work focuses on four basic pillars: industry, energy, smart cities and a healthy society, both in basic and applied research. CIIRC CTU was founded in 2013 starting its full operation in newly built facility in 2017. The Institute currently has nearly 300 employees working in 8 research departments complemented by Centres and Testbed units for Industry 4.0. CIIRC aims to concentrate on an excellent research in the fields of robotics, intelligent, distributed and complex systems, automatic control, computer-aided manufacturing, bioinformatics, biomedicine and assistive technologies. CIIRC CTU creates a unique ecosystem of academic-industrial cooperation in which it uses diversified forms of project financing from national, European and private sources. More information at [www.ciirc.cvut.cz](http://www.ciirc.cvut.cz).

**Czech Technical University in Prague (CTU)** was founded in 1707 and is one of the oldest technical universities in Europe and currently the major technical university in the Czech Republic. Offering high quality education and long tradition of cutting edge science and engineering, CTU counts approx. 1.7K members of academic staff, 18.5K students, 8 faculties (civil engineering, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, nuclear and physical engineering, architecture, transport, biomedical engineering, information technology), and 5 institutes (incl. CIIRC CTU). For the academic year 2019/20, CTU offers its students 170 accredited degree programs, including 53 in foreign languages. CTU in Prague is currently in the 498th position according to the QS World University Rankings ranking, which rated 1,620 universities around the world, and 9th in the regional ranking of “Emerging Europe and Central Asia”; in the area of "Computer Science and Information Systems" at 251 – 300th place. More information is available at [www.cvut.cz](http://www.cvut.cz).