HUMANITY CENTERED ROBOTICS INITIATIVE

BROWN

Beth Altringer

Piaggo Fast Forward, Harvard University

"Humanity-centered Robotics: What Piaggio Fast Forward is Learning About Mobility Extension"

Wednesday, September 13, 2017
Noon-1pm
CIT 477 Lubrano Conference Room

Abstract: When Piaggio Fast Forward created Gita, we built it with a fundamental premise: to extend human mobility, by which we mean enabling greater freedom, pleasure, and efficiency of human movement. Gita is designed to follow its owner, carry heavy loads and navigate intuitively through indoor and outdoor ADA-compliant spaces. In the future, our robots might help humans with additional tasks that free our hands and enable us to extend our cognitive and physical functionality. Dr. Altringer will share some of what PFF has been learning about ways that robotics, and Gita in particular, might help with mobility extension for all ages and abilities.

Beth Altringer is a founding team member and leads design research and intuitive HRI for Boston robotics company, Piaggio Fast Forward (PFF). She is also senior (practice-based) faculty at Harvard's engineering and design schools, where she founded and runs the Desirability Lab to apply behavioral science to design practice. PFF designs products to enhance human autonomy, pleasure, and efficiency in movement. Early in 2017, they launched 'Gita', a human-helper cargo-carrying robot, and engineered it with the same attention to safety, braking, balancing, vehicle dynamics and performance as a motorcycle or car. Since then, Gita has been featured in Time, CNN, Wired, WSJ, and The Economist, and received the MITx Disruptive Genius Award, a Mass TLC Leadership Award for Innovative Tech of the Year in Robotics, and is a London Design Museum Beazley Awards finalist.

Host: Peter Haas/HCRI