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Professor Noel Sharkey

Editor of *Connection Science*

World famous for his various roles in the public eye, Noel Sharkey is a leading expert in robotic technology and artificial intelligence. He acts as advisor to a range of organisations as well as Editor-in-Chief of *Connection Science*.

Noel Sharkey is a Professor in the [Department of Computer Science](#) at the [University of Sheffield](#), and [EPSRC](#) Senior Media Fellow (2004-2007). Having held a number of research and teaching positions in the UK (Essex, Exeter, and Sheffield) and the USA (Yale, Stanford, Berkeley), Noel has moved freely across academic disciplines, lecturing in departments of engineering, philosophy, psychology, cognitive science, linguistics, artificial intelligence and computer science. He holds a Doctorate in Experimental Psychology, is a chartered electrical engineer and a chartered information engineer. He has also published over a hundred academic articles and books on programming, linguistics, psychology, artificial intelligence, safety critical systems, machine learning and robotics, as well as articles and web chats for BBC web pages and regular popular magazine articles.

Noel's greatest passion has always been with the nature of mind, and it is this quest that has dominated his interest in the diverse areas he has worked in. Another enduring theme, developed at the time he was completing his doctoral dissertation, is machine learning; neural computing and evolutionary methods. His interest in robotics began in 1990, after considerable thought about the nature of the Artificial Intelligence work that he was undertaking: "The worry was that AI was ungrounded; it has no hook into the world interactions that animals have and was therefore vacuous."

So he decided to conduct some new research using a robot, quickly becoming engrossed in robotics. In writing articles, editing journals and running workshops on the subject, "I found myself firmly with my passion for mind and mechanism, and in a more general way than my specialisation in psychology had allowed." Noel Sharkey has stayed with robotics ever since.



Now as a senior academic, Professor Sharkey has taken up the challenge of raising public awareness of his subject with great gusto. He is a regular feature on TV, radio, magazines and newspapers, notably as chief judge for the *Robot Wars* series and an onscreen expert for the BBC's *TechnoGames*. He also makes regular appearances at science festivals and hosts robot shows around the world.

Noel has also been responsible for setting up robotics workshops for children and young adults both in the UK and internationally. In the UK he has worked in conjunction with the EPSRC, BBC and [NESTA](#). His belief in the importance of taking "raw" science to the public has led to a number of high profile futuristic robotics exhibitions in museums, and he is chief international exhibitions advisor for the Shanghai Museum of Science and Technology. In 2003 he was chosen as the creative face of British engineering to represent the British Council in China. This resulted in the creation of a televised National Creative Robotics in China.

For further information about Noel Sharkey and his work, please visit his [homepage](#).