



Gathering of Animated Lifelike Agents

to be held at IVA 2006, 21-23 August, Marina del Rey, California, USA

First Call for Participation

GALA in a nutshell

GALA is an annual festival to showcase the latest animated lifelike agents created by university students and academic or industrial research groups. GALA was launched in 2005. GALA provides:

- the **GALA Final** event, to demonstrate the state-of-the-art in the technology of virtual humans;
- the **GALA Jury Award** for student projects and the **GALA Public Award** for any entry;
- the permanent **GALA Gallery** on the web with the best entries, exhibited for further study and re-use.

An international jury will select entries for the GALA Gallery, to be presented live at the GALA Final.

GALA is the major event for demonstrating your interactive virtual humans, exploiting techniques in real-time graphics, animation, multimodal interaction, agents, emotion modelling, dialog management and related areas. The quality and interactive capabilities of the animated lifelike agent are to be presented in a short movie (see Submission details). GALA is different from and complementary to scientific conferences where demonstrations are at most illustrations of talks, often not included in proceedings and thus hard to reproduce. GALA specifically encourages university students at all levels to submit their work prepared in a shorter time, preferably as a project related to their university curriculum, unlike the output of larger-scale research presented at conferences.

Participants tracks

1. Student

Students from any university, individually or as a group, may submit in this track. For each student submission a supervisor should be named, who can be contacted should the jury want to clarify some issues concerning originality of the work or status of the authors. The works submitted in this track must be prepared within a year prior to submission, preferably as a student project related to a university curriculum. However, animated lifelike agents created in the context of a larger research project or industrial application are welcome too, as well as ones made on their developer's own initiative, i.e. without any background context. In the first case, the contribution of the student to the project as well as the earlier results built upon should be specifically emphasized.

2. Other

In this track work from academic institutions and industry, as well as from multi-party national or international projects, is welcome.

All submissions are candidates for the short list of entries, to be presented at the final show and to be included in the repository. Submission categories and formal requirements (see below) are identical for both tracks.

Submission categories

1. GALA Presenter

The animated lifelike agent – a talking head, or a full-body character – is to present GALA. The character should provide information either in a monologue, or in a more or less interactive manner, based on a partly set text. Even if the presenter is non-interactive, it is encouraged to provide some attentive capabilities. In both cases, the character should be life-like and engaging. The adaptability of the used computational framework (for a different presentation task) should be made clear.

2. Animated Lifelike Agent Application

The animated lifelike agent is developed for an application. The movie shows the animated lifelike agent in the application context. The points of interest are novelty of application, smoothness of interaction, appeal, general design, consistency, etc.

3. Animated Lifelike Agent Creation

In this category, a special feature (e.g. lip-sync, body design, facial animation, hand gesturing) of the animated lifelike agent is to be presented. The points of interest are modules or tools used to create certain aspects of animated lifelike agents, in an easy way and convincing quality.

In the last two categories, the embodiment (head/full body, realistic/cartoon-like), the cast of role (e.g. information provider for the user, actor in interactive drama, educator, chatbot) and the media (e.g. Virtual reality, PC, palmtop, mobile phone) is open. Novel application domains, designs and media are encouraged. The only restriction is that the animated lifelike agent must have **reactive and/or interactive capabilities**, as opposed to virtual characters animated for a single purpose (e.g. CG animation for a film, direct usage of Motion Capture). Physical robots are not eligible for GALA.

Submission format

The animated lifelike agent is to be demonstrated in a movie of 2-4 minutes, in the first round. The international jury will invite the entries for the second round, which will be presented at GALA in public. For the set text and technical details of submitting, see <http://hmi.ewi.utwente.nl/gala/submission>

The **submission deadline is 15 June 2006**.

Organizers

Chair Zsófia Ruttkay (University of Twente, The Netherlands)

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GALA web page <http://hmi.ewi.utwente.nl/gala>