**PRESS RELEASE**

**German computer scientist receives European Inventor Award for breakthroughs in computer vision**

* **Cordelia Schmid is the winner of the ‘Research’ category of the European Inventor Award**
* **The European Patent Office (EPO) honours Schmid for her innovative contributions that enable computers to understand visual information as humans do**
* **Her computer vision research enhances AI's utility in sectors such as healthcare, where it has potential applications in monitoring and care**

**Munich, 9 July 2024** – The European Patent Office (EPO) is pleased to announce Dr Cordelia Schmid as the winner in the 'Research' category of the esteemed European Inventor Award 2024. A prominent figure in the field of computer vision, Schmid has been pivotal in enabling machines to understand and interact with the visual world, a cornerstone of modern artificial intelligence. Her innovative work stands out at the forefront of technological advancements that continue to shape the interaction between humans and intelligent systems. Also recognised in this category as finalists were Tonio Sant and Daniel Buhagiar, from Malta, for their new age energy storage system under water, and a French team led by David Devos and Caroline Moreau for a pioneering Parkinson’s disease treatment.

“*Receiving this award is excellent news and a great honour. It acknowledges the importance of innovative research and its impact on society. Artificial intelligence and computer vision are now part of everyday life. If developed responsibly, they can revolutionise society in the same way as steam power and electricity did in the past,*” said Dr Cordelia Schmid.

Schmid's patented technologies have set new standards in how machines perceive and understand visual data. Her development of sophisticated algorithms allows computers to see and analyse images and videos with a near-human level of understanding. This capability is critical in today's technology-driven world where visual data dominates.

**Transforming machine perception**

The implications of Schmid's work extend across multiple sectors, **leveraging AI's enhanced capability to 'see' and interpret complex visual data in real time.** In healthcare, her technologies could potentially aid in elderly care, with applications that include robots providing assistance or detecting falls. Additionally, her research opens up possibilities for human-computer interaction in sectors such as automotive and environmental monitoring, where AI could play a role in developing self-driving cars and detecting weather-related changes.

*"Developed responsibly, artificial intelligence has the potential to revolutionise our society in the same way that steam power and electricity did in the past. AI can help us to solve some of the world's most pressing problems, from sustainability to health,"* Schmid remarks.

As the world looks toward a future where AI integrates more seamlessly into every aspect of life, **Schmid’s work offers a glimpse into the new possibilities that ethical and well-designed AI systems can bring.** Her dedication to solving complex problems not only leads to technological advancements but also inspires a new generation of scientists to pursue research with real-world impacts.

*“What motivates problem-solving for me is being presented with a difficult problem for which the solution is not obvious and requires exploration. The first step is to come up with a possible solution. If this solution doesn’t work, you have to understand why and then explore other solutions and attack the problem differently.”*

**The winners of the 2024 edition of the European Inventor Award were announced at a hybrid ceremony today in Malta.** You can stream the ceremony [online](https://www.epo.org/en/news-events/european-inventor-award/streaming?mtm_campaign=EIA2024&mtm_keyword=pressrelease&mtm_medium=press).

[Find out](https://www.epo.org/en/news-events/european-inventor-award/meet-the-finalists/cordelia-schmid?mtm_campaign=EIA2024&mtm_keyword=pressrelease&mtm_medium=press) more about the invention’s impact, the technology and the inventor's story.

**Next generation of the Young Inventors Prize in 2025 to take place in Iceland**

During today's ceremony in Malta, the European Patent Office (EPO) was excited to announce a new concept for the award, starting in 2025. From next year onward, the award will be held biennially, with the upcoming edition focusing on young innovators below 30 years-old whose inventions address one or more United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). An independent jury of former finalists will evaluate the entries, ensuring a fair and insightful selection process that honours the innovative spirit and achievements of the next generation of inventors. The 2025 edition will be celebrated in Iceland, marking the first of these newly biennial-focused awards, and the [nominations period](https://www.epo.org/en/news-events/young-inventors-prize/nominations?mtm_campaign=EIA2024&mtm_keyword=pressrelease&mtm_medium=press) for all technological fields remains open from today until the end of September.

In alternating years, starting in 2026, the EPO will return to the original concept of the European Inventor Award, featuring its traditional categories of ‘Industry’, ‘Research’, ‘SMEs’, ‘Non-EPO countries’, ‘Lifetime Achievement’ and ‘Popular Prize’.

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**About the inventor**

Cordelia Schmid embarked on her journey into the world of computer science with her studies at the University of Karlsruhe, where she earned her M.S. in 1992. She then pursued a Ph.D. at the Institut National Polytechnique de Grenoble, focusing on "Local Greyvalue Invariants for Image Matching and Retrieval," which was recognised as the best thesis by INPG in 1996.

After a postdoctoral stint at the Robotics Research Group at Oxford University, Schmid joined the French National Institute for Research in Digital Science and Technology (Inria) in 1997. At Inria, she has spearheaded groundbreaking advancements in the field of computer vision, significantly impacting the development of technologies that enhance machine understanding of visual data.

**About the European Inventor Award**

The European Inventor Award is one of Europe's most prestigious innovation prizes. Launched by the EPO in 2006, the award honours individuals and teams, who have come up with solutions to some of the biggest challenges of our time. The finalists and winners are selected by an independent jury comprising former Award finalists. Together, they examine the proposals for their contribution towards technical progress, social and sustainable development, and economic prosperity. All inventors must have been granted a European patent for their invention.

**About the EPO**

With 6,300 staff members, the [European Patent Office (EPO)](https://www.epo.org/?mtm_campaign=EIA2023&mtm_keyword=EIA-pressrelease&mtm_medium=press&mtm_group=press) is one of the largest public service institutions in Europe. Headquartered in Munich with offices in Berlin, Brussels, The Hague and Vienna, the EPO was founded with the aim of strengthening co-operation on patents in Europe. Through the EPO's centralised patent granting procedure, inventors are able to obtain high-quality patent protection in up to 45 countries, covering a market of some 700 million people. The EPO is also the world's leading authority in patent information and patent searching.