

universität freiburg

WS 24/25 Seminar Robot Learning

Markus Käppeler

Robot Learning Lab

18 October 2024



e l l i s

UNIT
FREIBURG



robot learning

Agenda

I. Organization: Enrollment, important dates and evaluation.

II. Robot Learning Lab: Our research interests and publications.

III. Topics: Seminar Papers.

? Questions.

I. Organization

Enrollment, important dates and
evaluation criteria

Seminar Objectives

- Learn to read and understand **scientific literature**.
- Familiarize with the **State-of-the-Art (SOTA)** in the field.
- Discover **limitations**, propose **improvements** and **potential future work**.
- Build knowledge from **related work**, prior and follow-ups.
- Improve **presentation skills**.
- Develop abilities for **synthesis** (diagram drawing, summarizing main ideas, ...).

TL;DR:

Show us that you have a **solid** grasp of your topic.



Enrollment Procedure

Select **3 papers** in decreasing order of preference.

Fill in our [Google Form](#)

Register for the seminar in HISinOne.

Students selected based on HISinONE Priority.

Students assigned papers based on their preferences

By **21.10.2024**

Please check the course website for more information:

<https://rl.uni-freiburg.de/teaching/ws24/robotlearning/>

Important Dates

Event	Date	Time
Lecture 1: Introduction *	18.10.2024	13:00
HISinOne registration + Paper Selection	21.10.2024	
Place allocation	24.10.2024	
Paper assignment	28.10.2024	
Supervisor Meeting	12.2024	
Lecture 2: <i>How to do a good presentation</i> *	10.01.2025	13:00
Lecture 3: Block Seminar Presentations *	07.02.2025	9:00 - 17:00
Paper Summary submission	21.02.2025	< 23:59

*** Mandatory in-person attendance**

Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation	Due Date
Seminar Presentation	07.02.2025
Paper Summary	21.02.2025

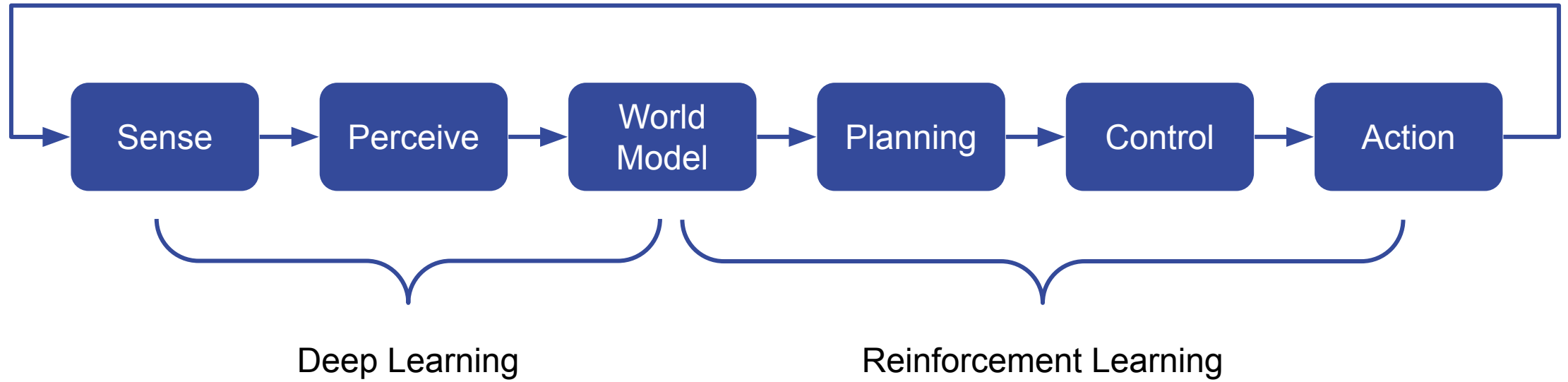
- **Presentation:** at most **20 min.**
- **Summary:** at most **7 pages** excluding bibliography and figures.
- **Final grade:**
 - Presentation (slides & delivery) + Summary + **Seminar Participation.**

II.

Robot Learning Lab

Our research interests and publications

Autonomous Robotics



Can we **learn** certain parts of this pipeline?

Robot Learning Lab

Robot Learning

Learning ...

- ... models of robots, tasks or environments
- ... deep hierarchies/representations from sensor and motor representations to task representations
- ... plans and control policies
- ... methods for probabilistic inference from multi-modal data
- ... structured spatio-temporal representations, e.g. low-dim. embeddings of Movements

How can we ensure **autonomous operation** of embodied AI systems?

Robot Learning Lab

Research Areas

Perception

- Recognition
- Depth Estimation
- Motion Estimation

State Estimation

- Tracking & Prediction
- SLAM
- Registration

Motion Planning

- Hierarchical Learning
- Reinforcement Learning
- Learning from demonstration

Responsible Robotics

- Fairness
- Explainability & Privacy
- Practical Ethics



Mobile Manipulation

- Whole-Body Motion
- Long-Horizon Reasoning
- Planning for Sensing

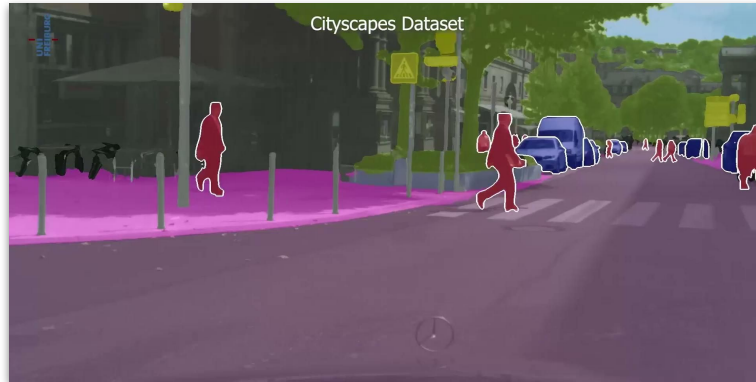
Human-Robot Interaction

- Socially-Compliant Behavior
- Human-Robot Collaboration
- Behavior Adaptation & Safety

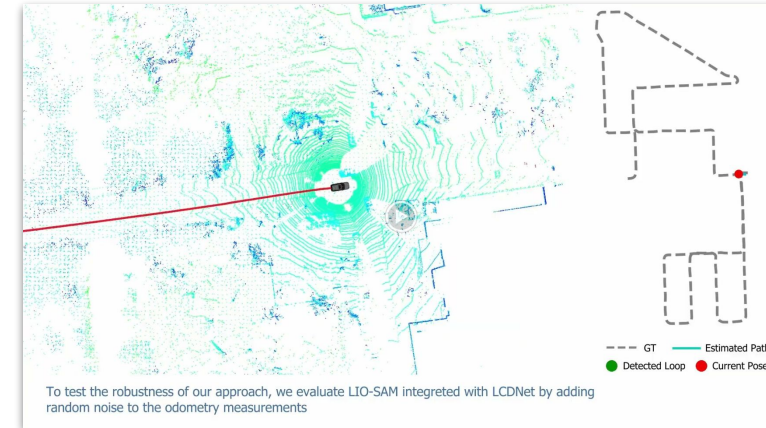
Learning Fundamentals

- Socially-Supervised Learning
- Continual & Interactive Learning
- Multimodal & Multitask Learning

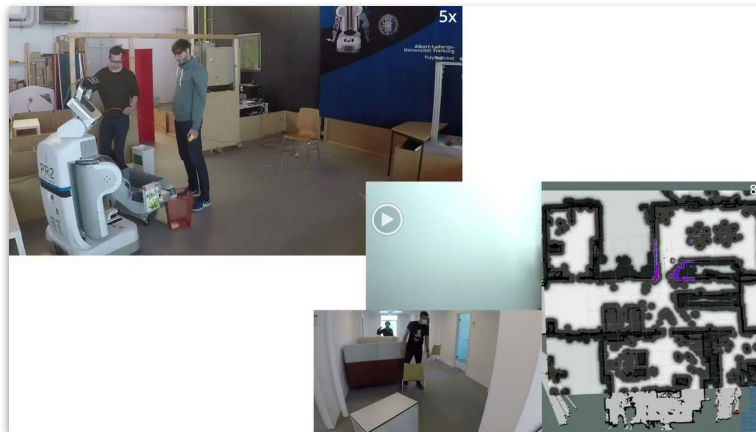
Many Seminal Works



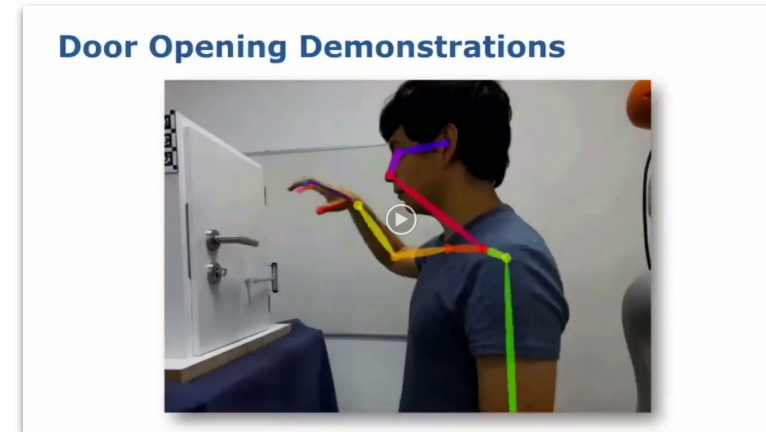
Scene Understanding



Simultaneous Localization and Mapping

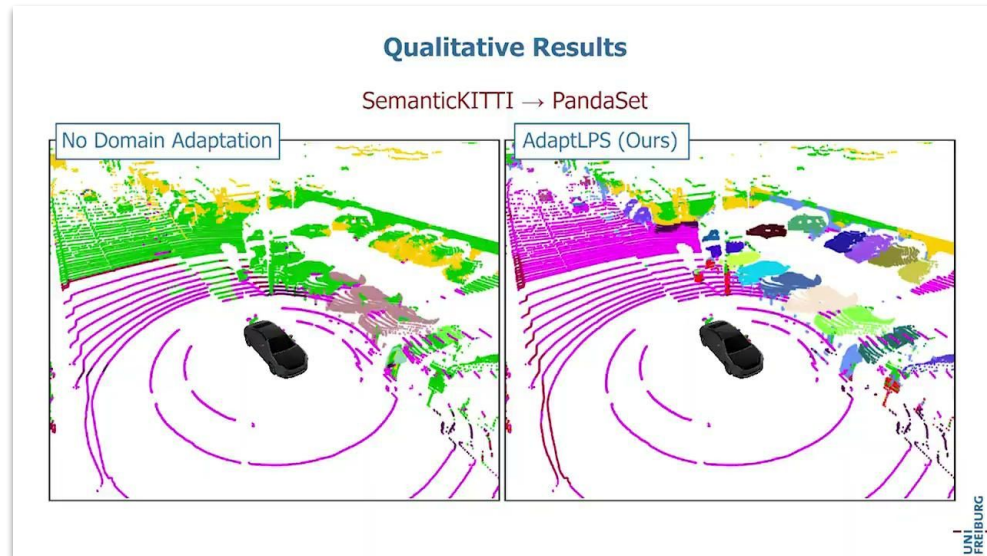


Motion Planning



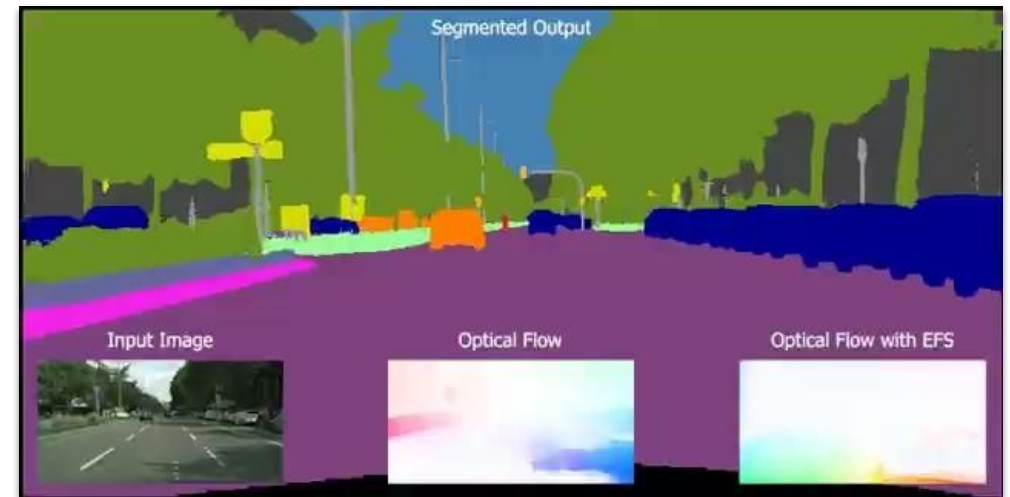
Learning from Demonstrations

Robotic Perception — Mobility



Unsupervised LiDAR Domain Adaptation

Besic, Gosala, Cattaneo, Valada
RA-L '22

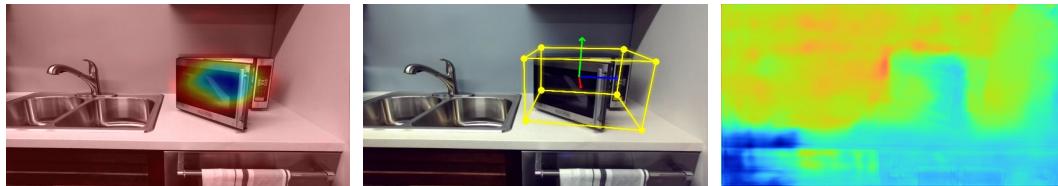


Semantic Motion Segmentation

Vertens, Valada, Burgard
ICRA '17

Robotic Perception — Manipulation

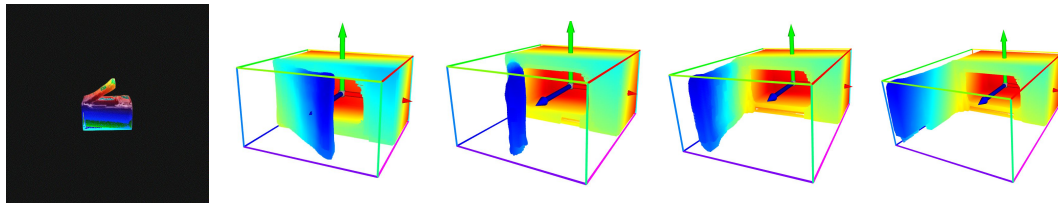
Single-Shot Reconstruction



Heatmap

Poses and Bounding Box

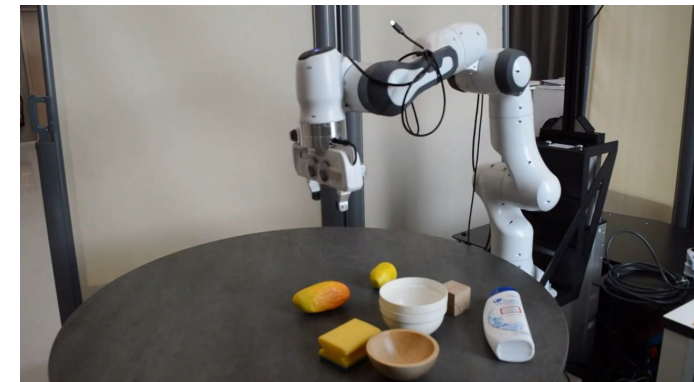
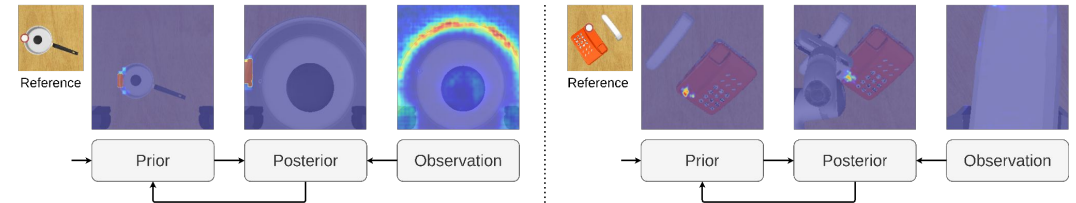
Auxiliary Depth Prediction



Category and Joint Agnostic Reconstruction of ARTiculated Objects

Heppert, et al
CVPR '23

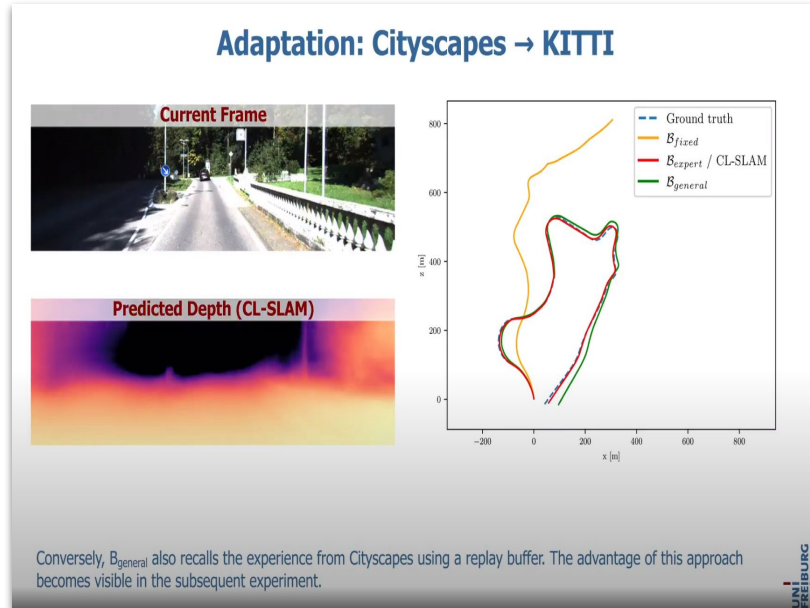
Learning scale-invariant compact representations for mobile manipulation



Bayesian Scene Keypoints for Deep Policy Learning in Robotic Manipulation

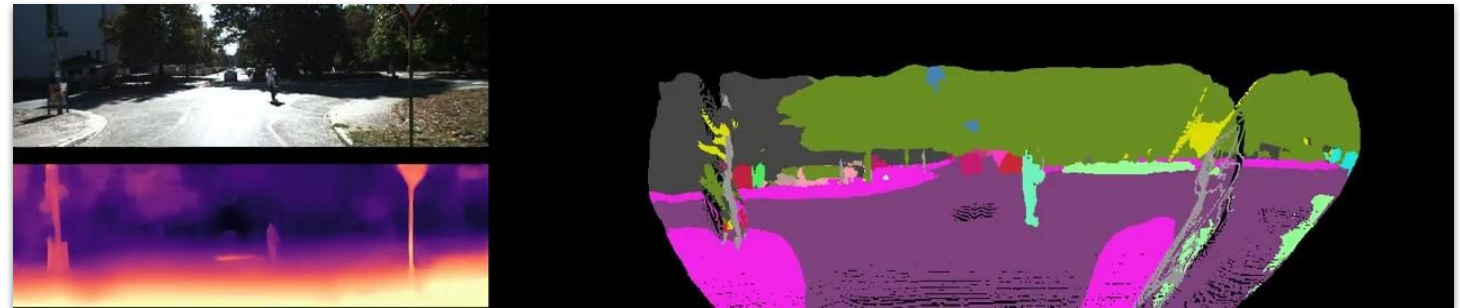
von Hartz, et al
RA-L '23

Mapping and Localization



Continual SLAM

Vödich, Cattaneo, Burgard, Valada
ISSR '22



Continual Depth Estimation and Segmentation

Vödich, Petek, Burgard, Valada
RSS '23

III.

Topics

Seminar Papers

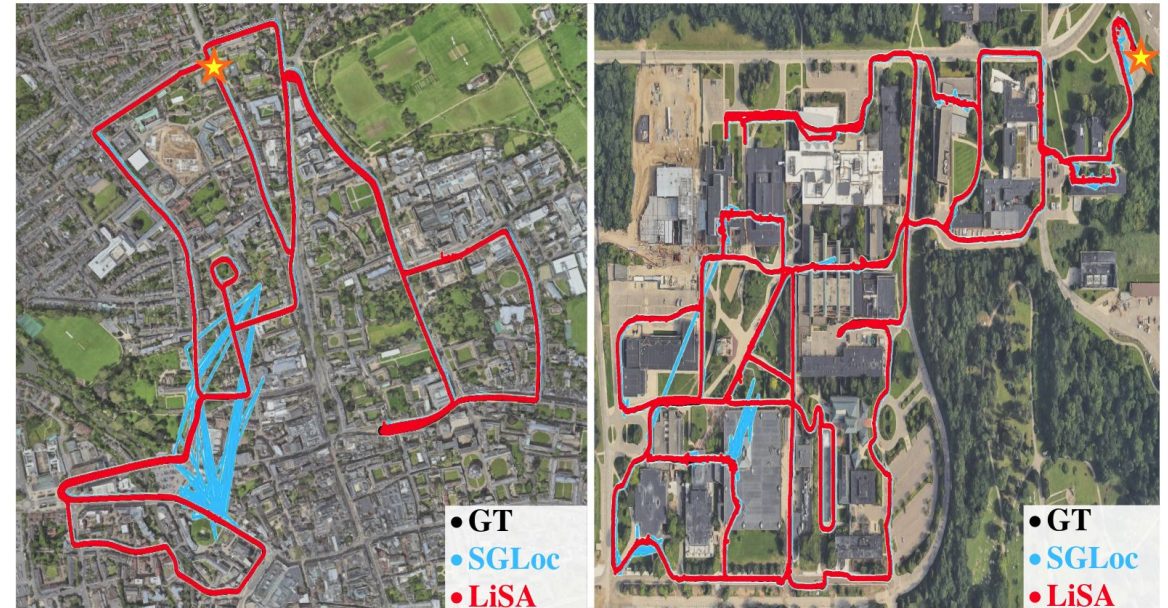


Supervisor: Niclas Vödisch

LiSA: LiDAR Localization with Semantic Awareness

https://openaccess.thecvf.com/content/CVPR2024/papers/Yang_LiSA_LiDAR_Localization_with_Semantic_Awareness_CVPR_2024_paper.pdf

- Pose estimation of a LiDAR point cloud in a global scene map.
- Learning-based scene coordinate regression to find point correspondences between LiDAR scan and 3D map.
- LiSA exploits semantic point information to robustly handle dynamic objects and textureless regions.

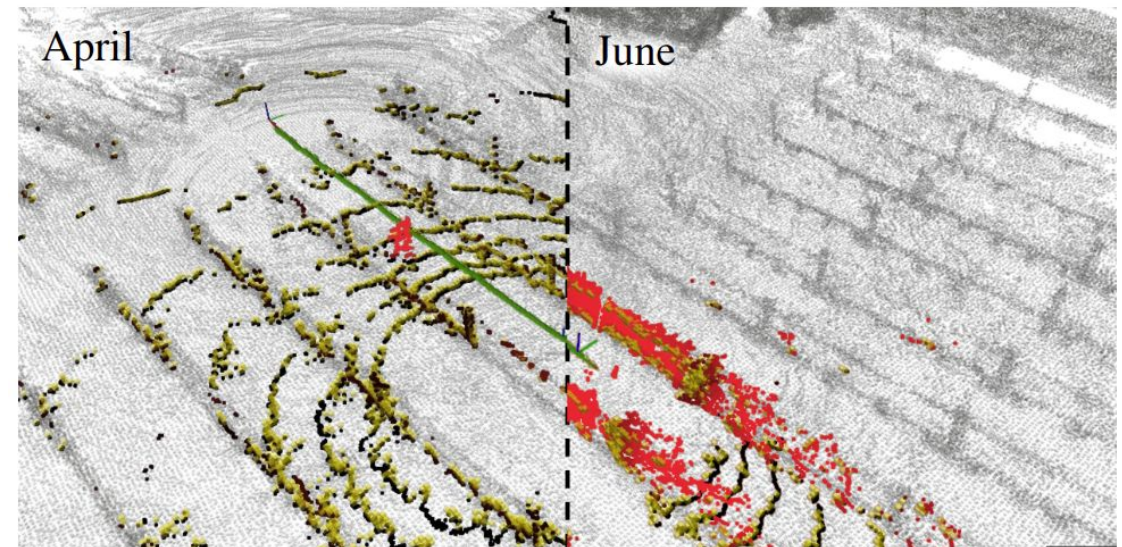


Supervisor: Niclas Vödisch

Generalizable Stable Points Segmentation for 3D LiDAR Scan-to-Map Long-Term Localization

<https://www.ipb.uni-bonn.de/wp-content/papercite-data/pdf/hroob2024ral.pdf>

- 3D scenes change over time, e.g., seasonal changes or human-made structural differences.
- Learning-based prediction whether a 3D point is temporally static or unstable.
- Reject unstable points during scan-to-map point cloud registration.



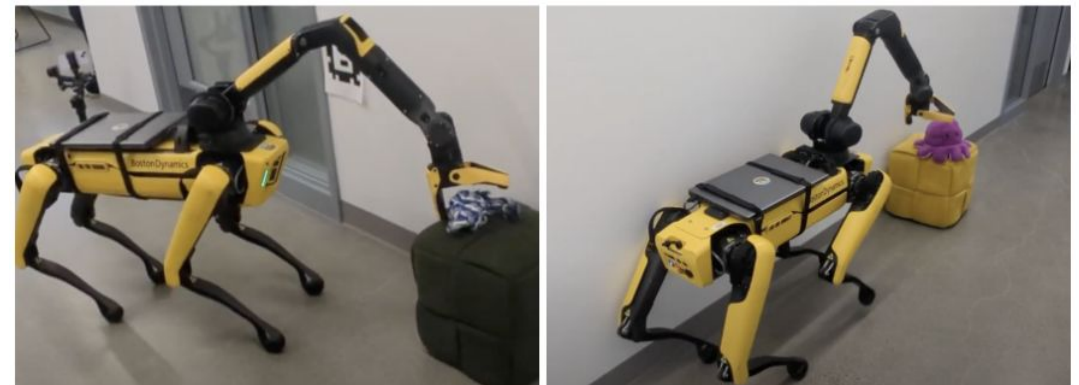
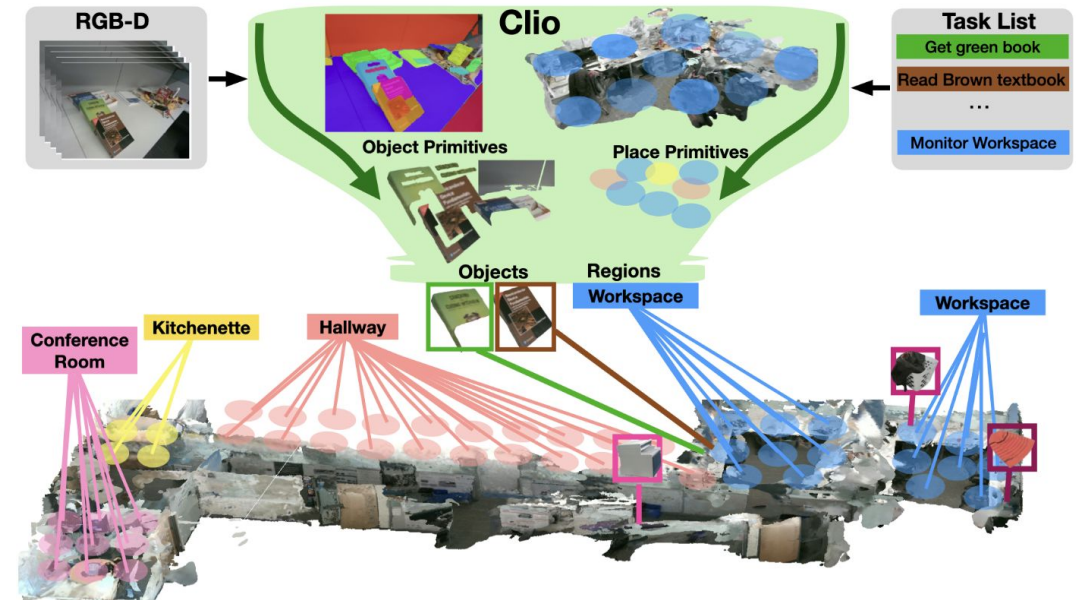
■ Stable Points ■ Unstable Points ■ Submap Voxels

Supervisor: Niclas Vödisch

Clio: Real-time Task-Driven Open-Set 3D Scene Graphs

<https://arxiv.org/pdf/2404.13696>

- Scene graphs are an efficient representation to store hierarchical dependencies in complex environments, e.g., office buildings.
- Clio relies on vision-language foundation models to gather open-set semantic understanding
- Experiments include real-time scene graph generation with object pick-up tasks.

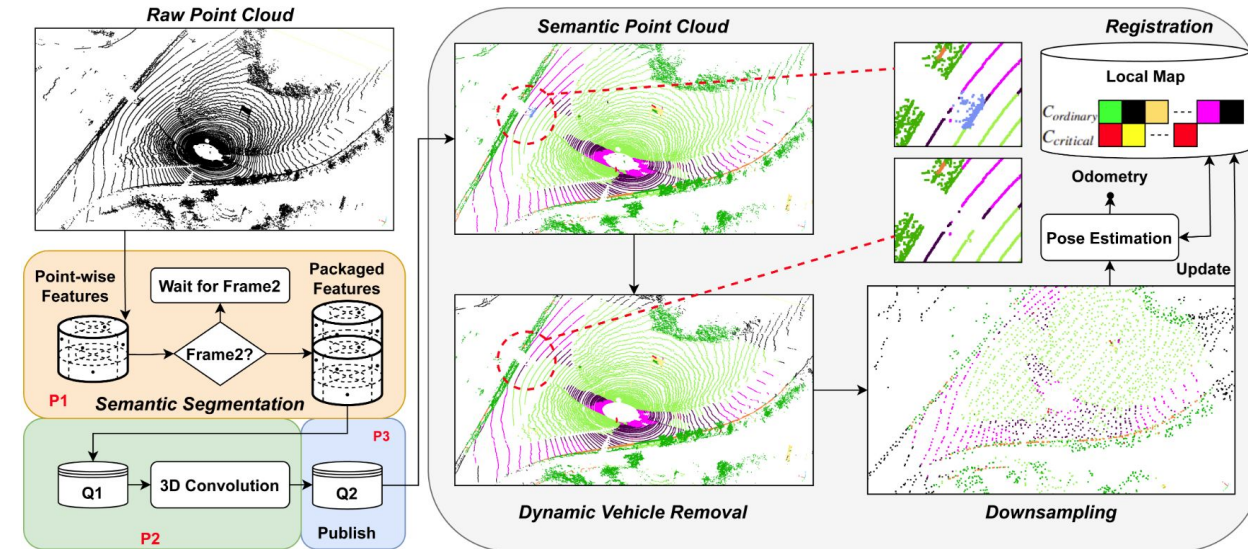


Supervisor: Niclas Vödisch

SAGE-ICP: Semantic Information-Assisted ICP

<https://arxiv.org/pdf/2310.07237>

- The iterative closest point (ICP) algorithm regresses the transformation between two point clouds.
- SAGE-ICP extends the point-to-point approach with semantic information to avoid wrong correspondences.
- Semantics are further used for adaptive voxelization, i.e., keep details where required (e.g., poles) but reject where unnecessary (e.g., road surface).

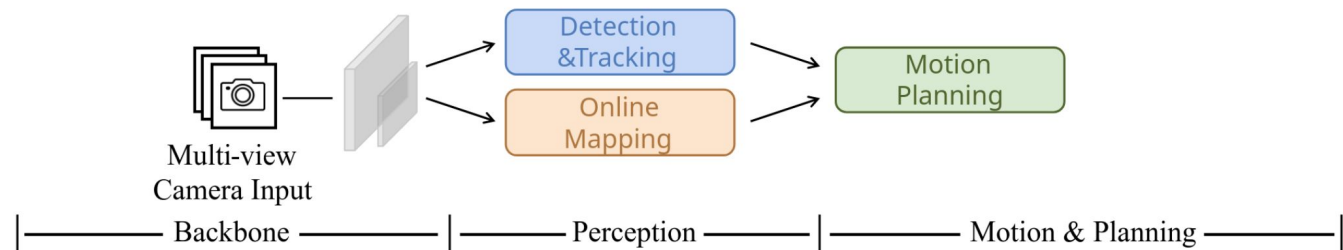


Supervisor: Markus Käppeler

SparseDrive: End-to-End Autonomous Driving via Sparse Scene Representation

<https://arxiv.org/abs/2405.19620>

- Fully differentiable autonomous driving network that leverages perception outputs to optimize towards the ultimate goal of planning.
- Unified sparse perception networks to avoid computationally expensive bird's-eye view (BEV) features.
- Joint prediction and planning with a planning selection strategy that takes possible collisions with other agents into account.

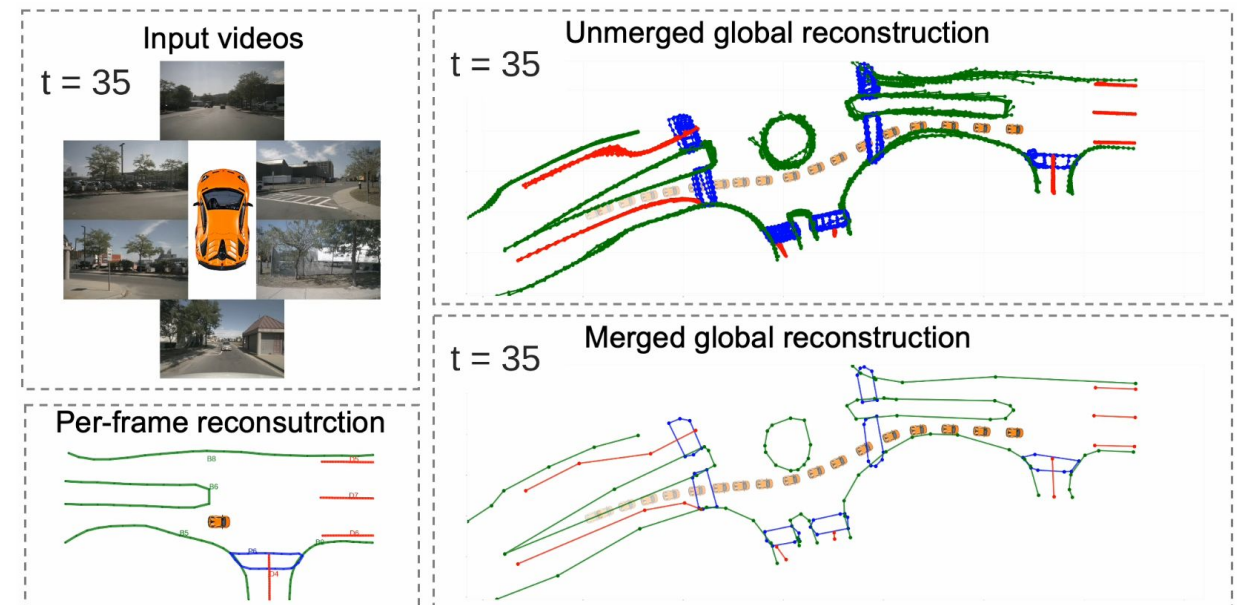


Supervisor: Markus Käppeler

MapTracker: Tracking with Strided Memory Fusion for Consistent Vector HD Mapping

<https://map-tracker.github.io/>

- Consistent vector HD mapping system to enhance the safety and stability of self-driving cars.
- Formulate vectorized mapping as a tracking task and use memory latents from previous frames to get a consistent mapping over time.
- Rasterized bird's-eye view (BEV) features and vector latents (queries) of individual map elements as latent representations for the sequence memory.

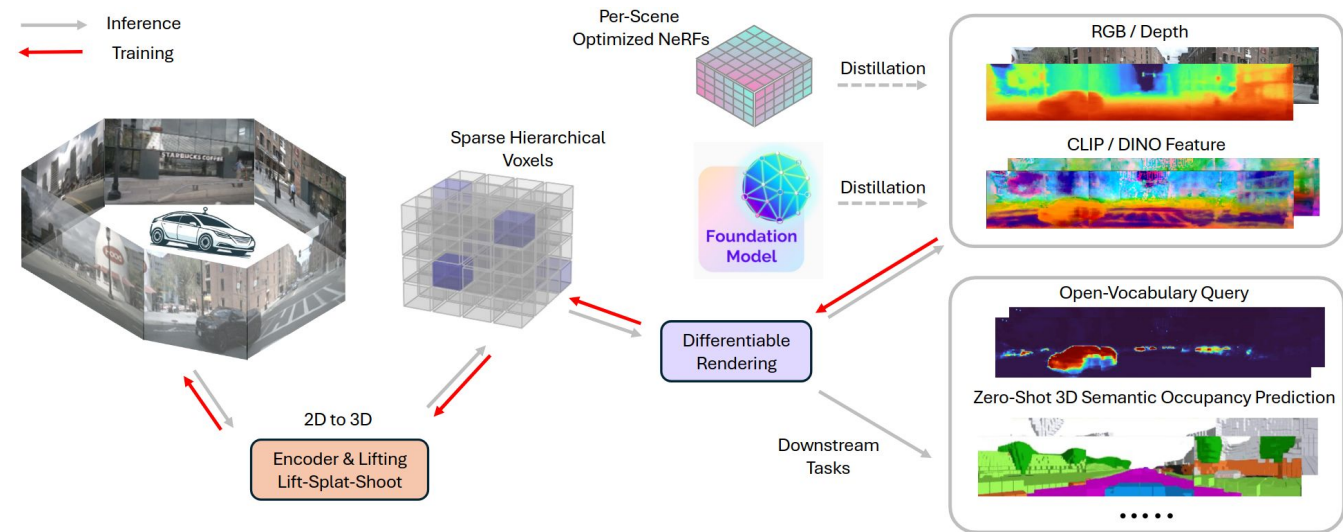


Supervisor: Markus Käppeler

DistillNeRF: Perceiving 3D Scenes from Single-Glance Images by Distilling Neural Fields and Foundation Model Features

<https://distillnerf.github.io/>

- Understanding 3D environments is crucial for autonomous driving.
- Network predicts a generalizable 3D neural scene representation from 2D camera images.
- Self-supervised training via differentiable rendering to reconstruct RGB+depth from a per-scene optimized NeRF and feature maps from a vision foundation model.

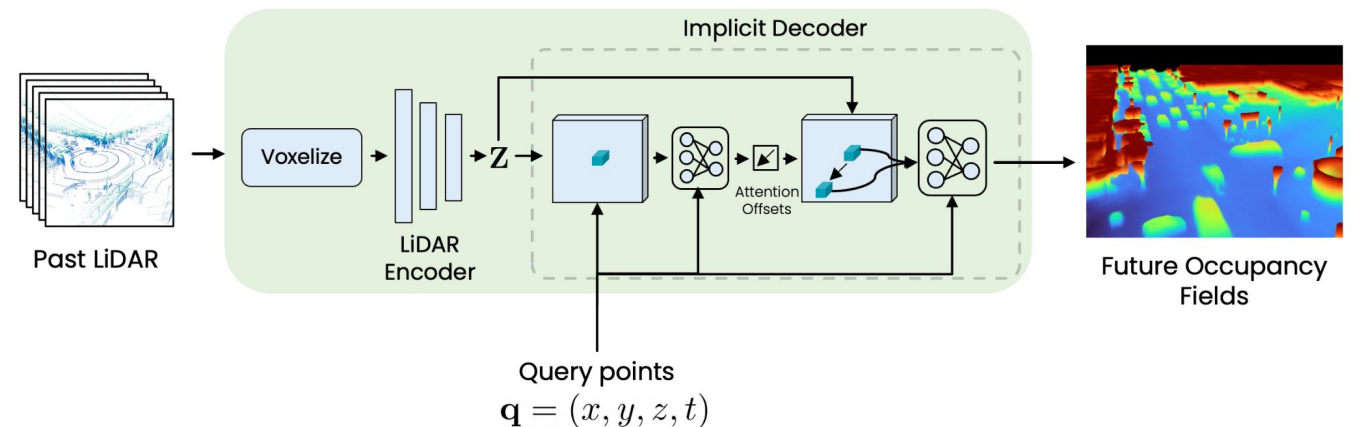
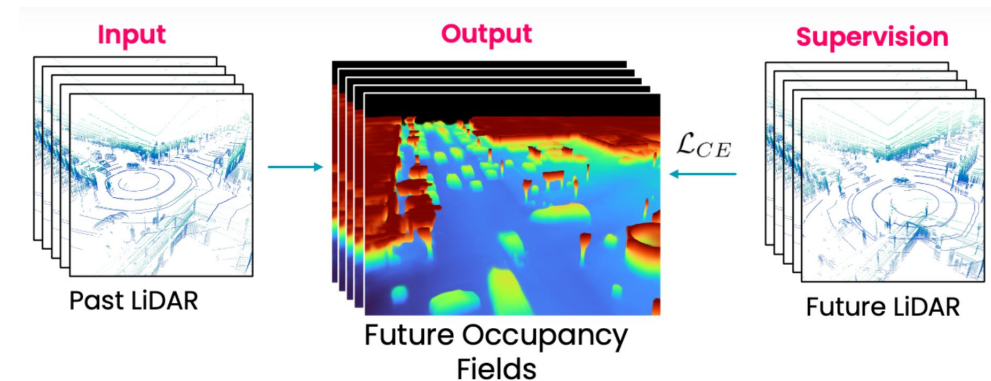


Supervisor: Markus Käppeler

UnO: Unsupervised Occupancy Fields for Perception and Forecasting

<https://waabi.ai/uno/>

- Supervised approaches leverage annotated object labels to learn a model of the world, e.g., with object detections and trajectory predictions.
- However, annotations are expensive and typically limited to a set of predefined categories.
- UnO learns to perceive and forecast a continuous 4D (spatio-temporal) occupancy field with self-supervision from LiDAR data.

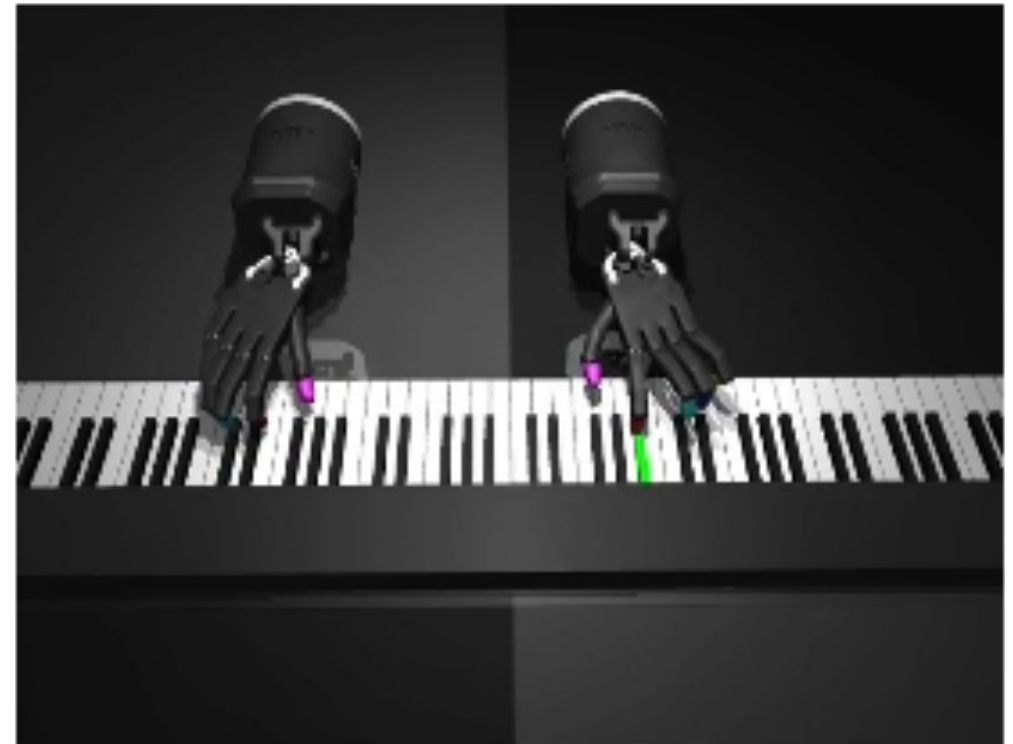


Supervisor: Eugenio Chisari

PianoMime: Learning a Generalist, Dexterous Piano Player from Internet Demonstrations

<https://pianomime.github.io/>

- The internet is a source of large-scale demonstrations for training robot agents. Youtube is full of videos of professional pianists playing a wide range of songs.
- This work leverages youtube videos as demonstrations to train a generalist piano-playing agent capable of playing any arbitrary song.

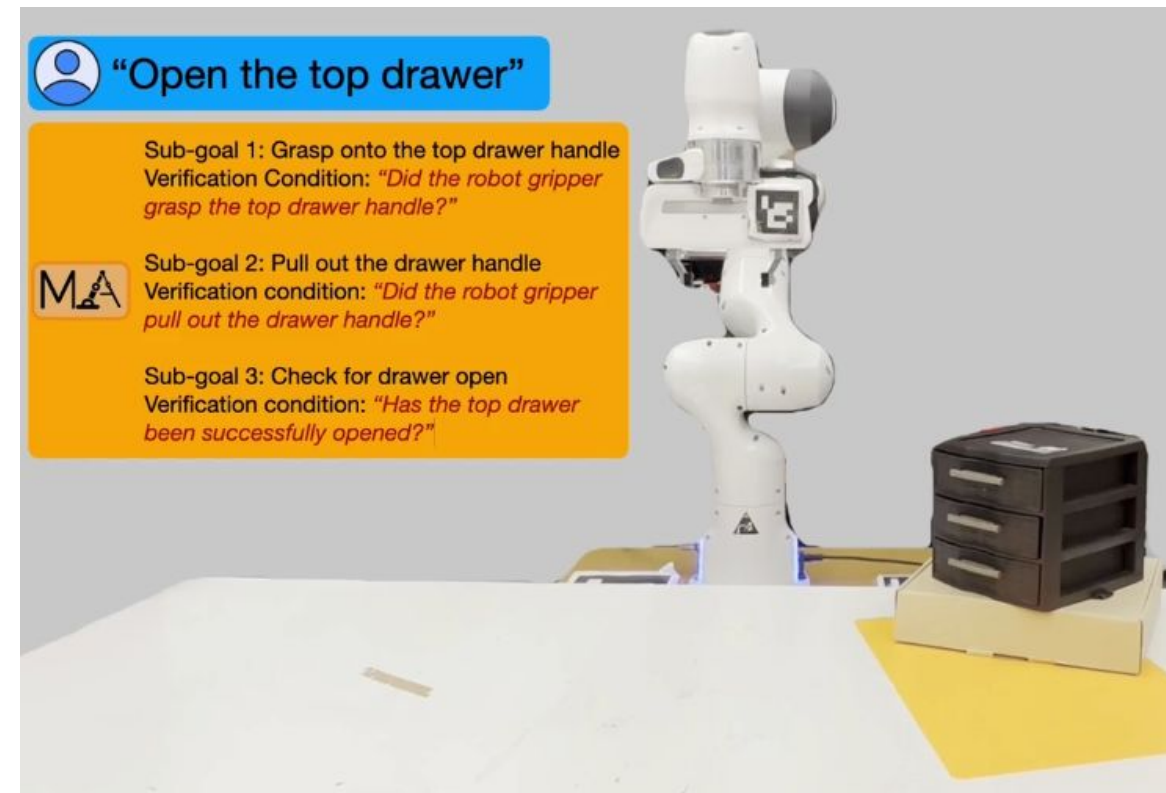


Supervisor: Eugenio Chisari

Manipulate-Anything: Automating Real-World Robots using Vision-Language Models

<https://robot-ma.github.io/>

- The quality, quantity, and diversity of robot demonstration data represent a serious bottleneck to the progress of robotics research
- Manipulate-Anything is a scalable automated generation method for real-world robotic manipulation. It can operate in real-world environments without any privileged state information or hand-designed skills.

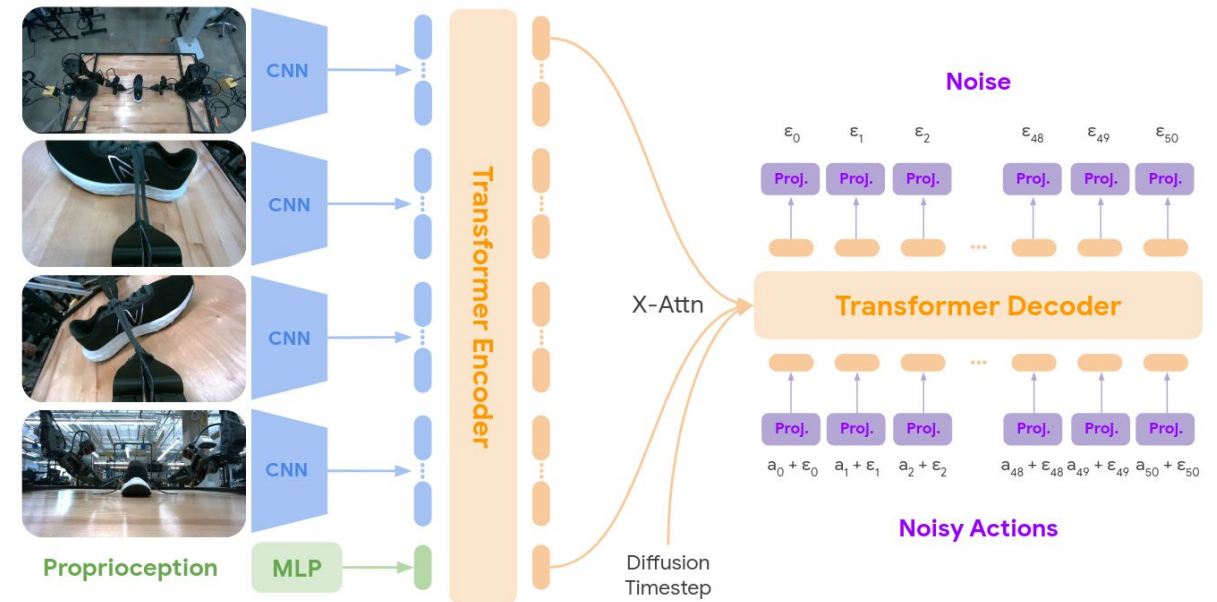


Supervisor: Eugenio Chisari

ALOHA Unleashed: A Simple Recipe for Robot Dexterity

<https://aloha-unleashed.github.io/>

- This work addresses the question of how far can we push imitation learning for challenging dexterous manipulation tasks.
- The authors demonstrate how to solve challenging bimanual manipulation tasks involving deformable objects by combining diffusion policies with a scalable transformer architecture.

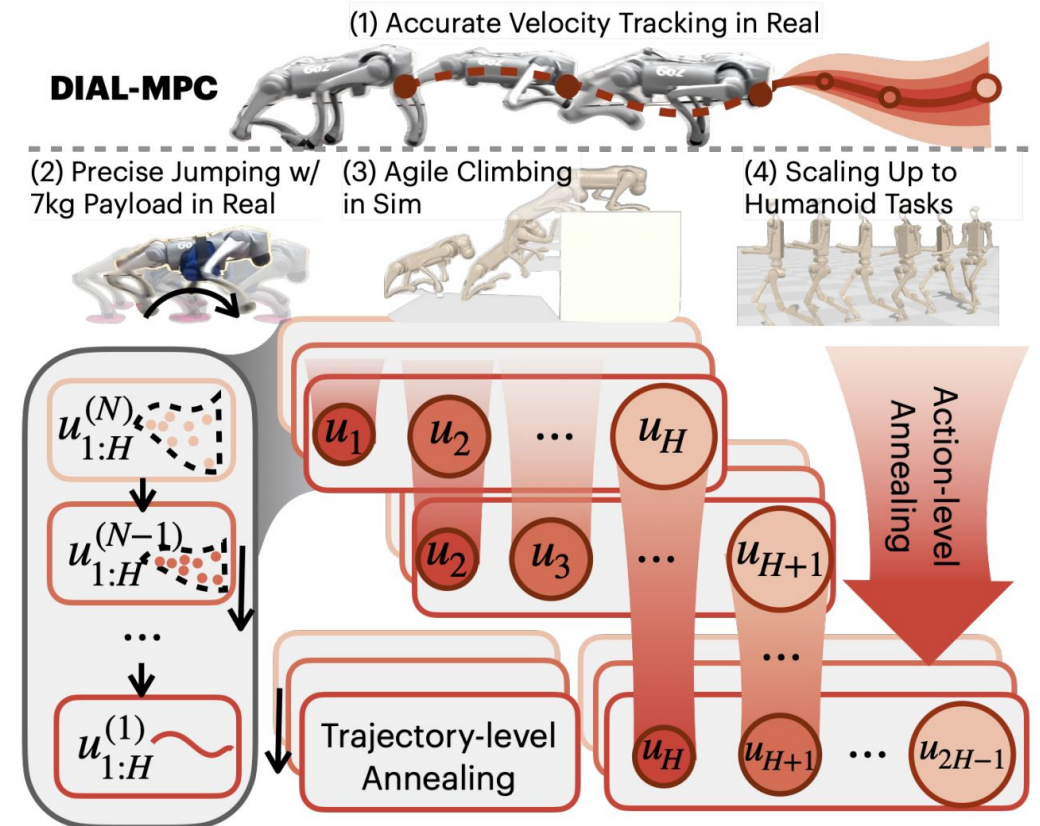


Supervisor: Eugenio Chisari

Full-Order Sampling-Based MPC for Torque-Level Locomotion Control via Diffusion-Style Annealing

<https://lecar-lab.github.io/dial-mpc/>

- Due to high dimensionality and non-convexity, real-time optimal control using full-order dynamics models for legged robots is challenging.
- This work introduces DIAL-MPC, a sampling-based MPC framework with a novel diffusion-style annealing process.
- DIAL-MPC is the first training-free method that optimizes over full-order quadruped dynamics in real-time.

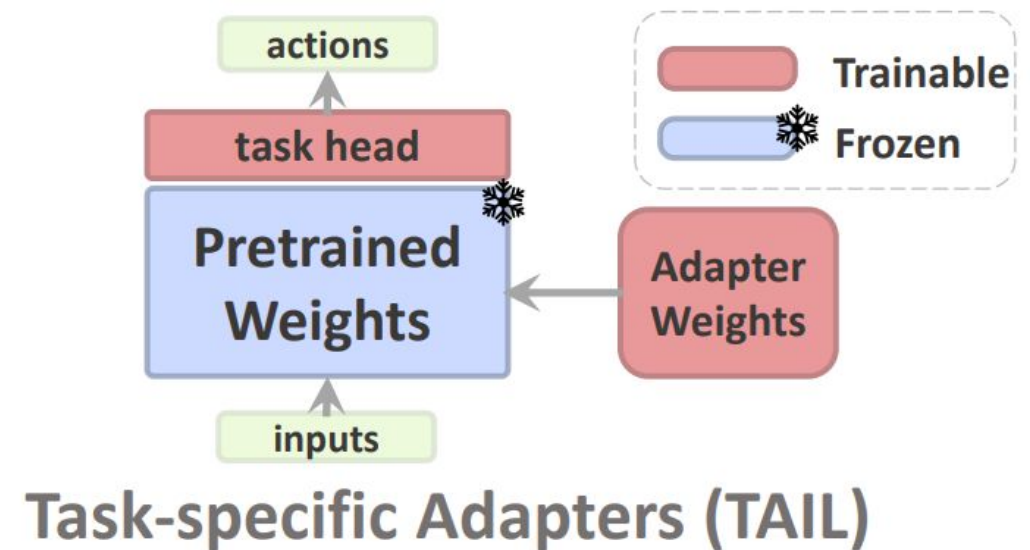


Supervisor: Nick Heppert

TAIL: Task-specific Adapters for Imitation Learning with Large Pretrained Models

<https://arxiv.org/abs/2310.05905>

- Pre-training of robotic control policies that allows continual adaptation for new task demonstration (imitation learning)
- Exploring different fine-tuning techniques
- Using Low-Rank Adaption (LoRA) only a few parameters needs to be trained (1%)

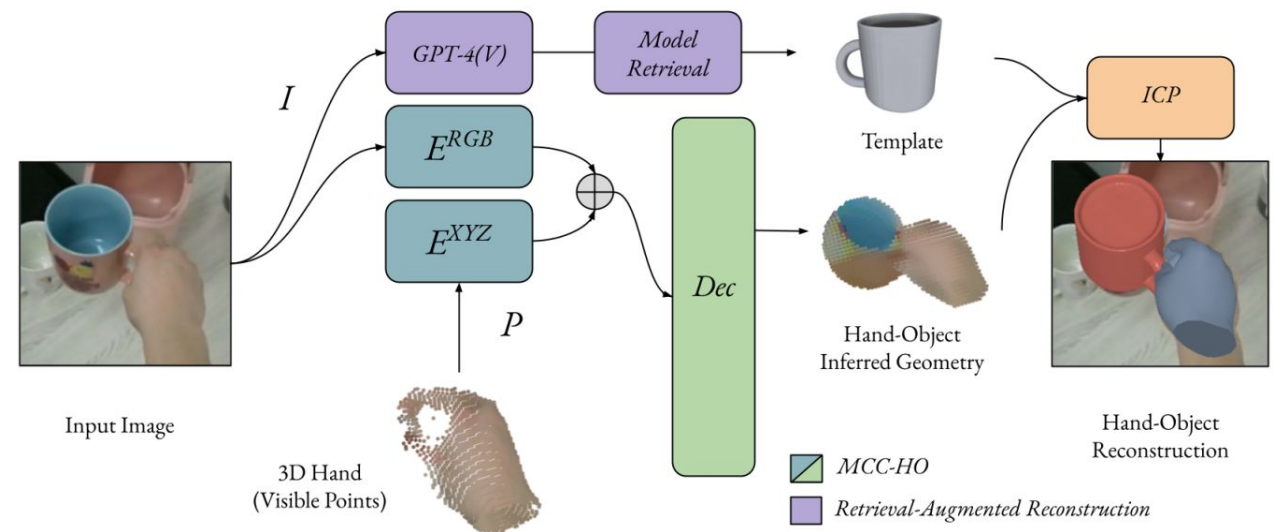


Supervisor: Nick Heppert

Reconstructing Hand-Held Objects in 3D

<https://arxiv.org/pdf/2404.06507>

- Reconstructing objects held in hands is a challenging task since objects are small and occluded but the hand gives a prior on location and scale of the object
- The proposed method reconstructs hand and objects jointly followed by a retrieval-augmented reconstruction.

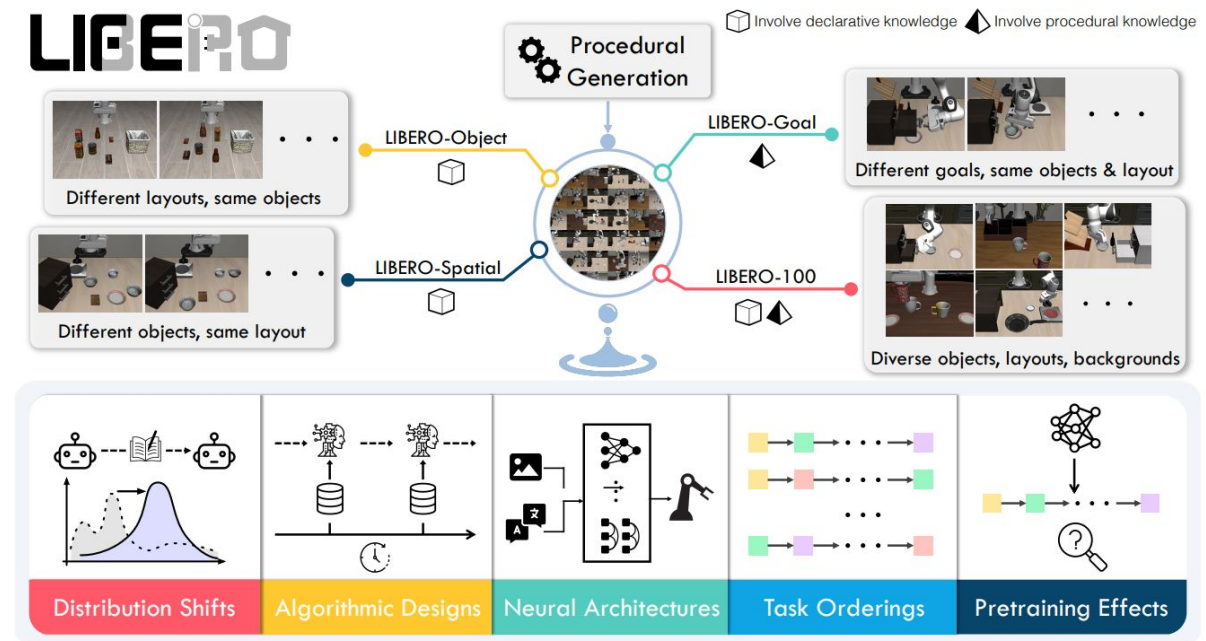


Supervisor: Nick Heppert

LIBERO: Benchmarking Knowledge Transfer for Lifelong Robot Learning

<https://libero-project.github.io/>

- A novel benchmark for lifelong learning for robot manipulation using procedural generation
- Overview of different lifelong learning techniques and interesting results on the new benchmark.

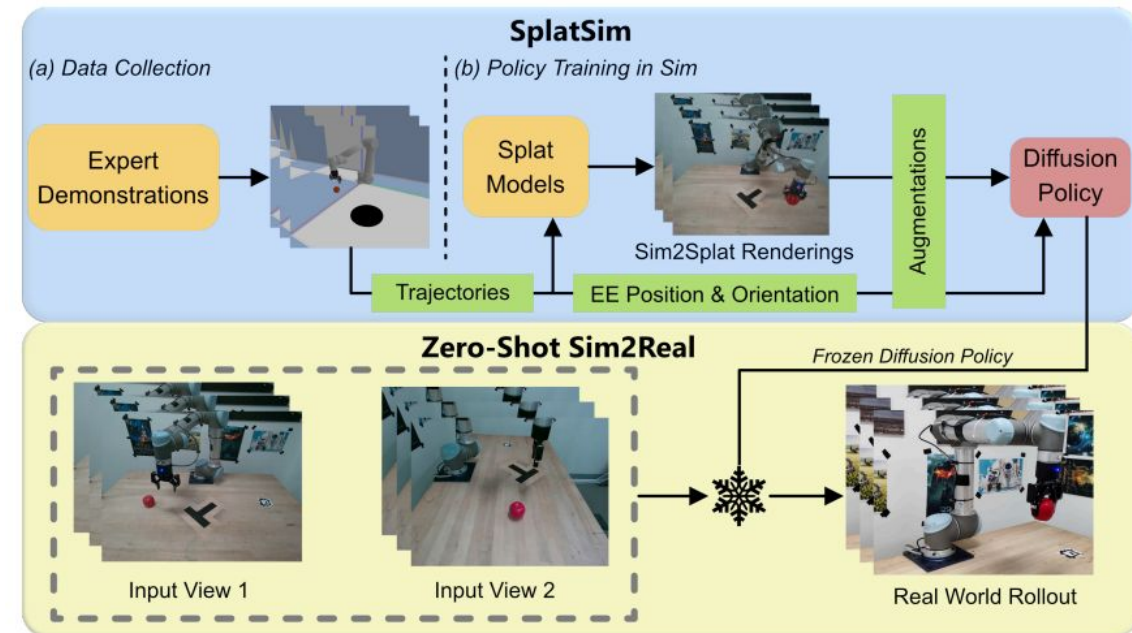


Supervisor: Nick Heppert

SplatSim: Zero-Shot Sim2Real Transfer of RGB Manipulation Policies Using Gaussian Splatting

<https://splatsim.github.io/>

- Sim2Real for RGB-based policies are prone to overfitting.
- SplatSim replaces meshes with object-centric Gaussian Splats, allowing fast and realistic data synthesis resulting in almost the same success rate when trained on real data.



?

Questions

Announcement

Open Positions

- We have multiple **MSc Project** and **Thesis** topics related to many directions of robot learning.

Please check our website for information on how to apply:

<https://rl.uni-freiburg.de/open-positions>

Questions or Comments

Markus Käppeler

Robot Learning Lab

kaeppelem@cs.uni-freiburg.de