



# Halfway to the Future

A two-day symposium in Nottingham, UK exploring the past, present, and future of HCI and design-based research.

**Symposium proceedings**

**19th and 20th November 2019  
Nottingham, UK**

[www.halfwaytothefuture.org](http://www.halfwaytothefuture.org)

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# Introduction

In early 2018, thoughts at the Mixed Reality Laboratory at the University of Nottingham turned to the impending 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the lab's foundation, in 1999. It was suggested by someone—who will remain nameless—that it would be great if we hosted a small 'celebration' to mark the occasion. Skip forward in time to November 2019 and we find ourselves hosting an international conference with a full programme featuring 6 keynotes, 42 long and short papers, and a substantial number of attendees.

How did this happen? Put simply, Halfway to the Future *grew organically*. The logic of symposium had always been to explore the theme of past, present, and future of HCI and design-led research, with a focus on work that we felt had been deeply formative in shaping the research culture of the Mixed Reality Lab throughout its 20 year existence. It was on this basis that we selected themes and keynotes.

As we began to reflect upon the past 20 years, 6 themes emerged. These themes were then anchored around a particular piece of highly influential work. These all turned out to be very broad and formed the basis of 6 sessions. Unlike a typical conference with one or two keynote speakers that are kept separate from the main proceedings, we wanted each session to mix keynotes with peer reviewed long and short papers, and to bring together all participants in each panel to conclude with a discussion. Our six themes were:

- **Mixed Reality** with a keynote by Steve Benford, reflecting on the paper *Orchestrating a Mixed Reality Performance* (published in 2001)
- **Arts and Design-led Approaches** with a keynote by Bill Gaver, reflecting on the paper *Ambiguity as a Resource for Design* (published in 2003)
- **Artificial Intelligence, Humans, and Machines** with a keynote by Lucy Suchman and Alex Taylor, reflecting on the book *Human-Machine Reconfigurations: Plans and Situated Actions* (published in 2007, following earlier work in 1987)
- **Ubiquitous Computing** with a keynote by Yvonne Rogers, reflecting on the paper *Moving on from Weiser's Vision of Calm Computing: Engaging UbiComp Experiences* (published in 2006)
- **Public and Private Spaces** with a keynote by Christian Heath and Paul Luff, reflecting on the paper *Collaboration and Control: Crisis Management and Multimedia Technology in London Underground Line Control Rooms* (published in 1992)
- **New Approaches to Research and Design** with a keynote by Susanne Bødker, reflecting on the paper *When second wave HCI meets third wave challenges* (published in 2006)

We look forward to seeing what the next half of the future holds.

Joel E Fischer, Sarah Martindale, Martin Porcheron, Stuart Reeves, and Jocelyn Spence  
*General Chairs*

# Thanks

## Support

The organisers are grateful for support received from the Mixed Reality Laboratory, the Faculty of Science, and the Creative and Digital Interdisciplinary Research Cluster, all at the University of Nottingham. Additionally, ACM SIGCHI provided financial support. Thanks to their support, we were also able to offer a significant discount for students to attend the event. Finally, we wish to thank all of our sponsors.

## Organising Committee

The Halfway to the Future symposium has been put together by the following members of the Mixed Reality Laboratory in the School of Computer Science at the University of Nottingham. The committee would like to thank all members of the lab who have lent their support to the symposium.

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Joel E Fischer, Sarah Martindale, Martin Porcheron, Stuart Reeves, and Jocelyn Spence

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