

# Student/Research Internship: Robot Learning based on Long-Horizon Visual-Language-Action Models

Location: Vienna, Austria

Duration: 6 months to 1 year

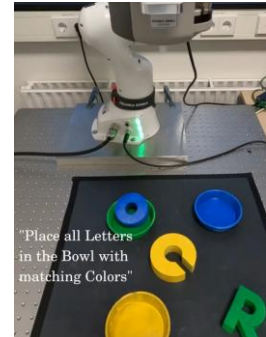
Start Date: Summer/Autumn 2026

Affiliation: UAS Technikum Wien, Competence Center Digital Manufacturing, Automation and Robotics

## Overview

We invite applications for a Research Internship in Robot Learning focused on visual-language-action (VLA) models for long-horizon robotic tasks. The project addresses a central challenge in embodied intelligence: enabling robots to interpret language instructions, ground them in visual observations, and execute coherent multi-step behaviors over extended temporal horizons.

Recent advances in multimodal learning have led to strong progress in language-conditioned robotic control. However, long-horizon tasks remain challenging due to compounding errors, partial observability, delayed dependencies, and the need for robust subgoal reasoning, temporal abstraction, and recovery from failure. This internship focuses on learning-based approaches for building VLA systems that can support reliable sequential decision-making in complex robotic environments.



## Research Focus

The internship may involve one or more of the following directions:

- Visual-language-action models for long-horizon manipulation or mobile manipulation tasks
- Language-conditioned policy learning from multimodal robotic data
- Sequence modeling of actions, observations, and task progress over extended horizons
- Hierarchical policy learning, skill composition, and subgoal prediction
- Memory-based architectures for temporally extended decision-making
- Comparative analysis of learning-based and planning-based methods for long-horizon robotics

## Responsibilities

- Participation in a robotics team with research responsibilities.
- Design and implement visual-language-action models for robotic task execution
- Train models using multimodal datasets containing visual observations, actions, trajectories, and language annotations
- Investigate architectures for multimodal grounding, sequence prediction, memory, and hierarchical control
- Evaluate model performance in simulation and, where applicable, on robotic platforms
- Analyze generalization across tasks, environments, and instructions
- Study failure modes and improve robustness in long-horizon execution
- Document experiments and contribute to research reports or publications

## Qualifications

Applicants should be enrolled in a Master's or PhD program in Robotics, Machine Learning, Artificial Intelligence, Computer Science, Electrical Engineering, or a related field. Exceptional undergraduate students may also be considered.-----

Preferred qualifications include:

- Strong programming skills in Python
- Experience with PyTorch or similar deep learning frameworks
- Background in machine learning, robot learning, or robotics
- Familiarity with one or more of the following:
  - imitation learning or reinforcement learning
  - transformer-based sequence models
  - robotic manipulation
  - VLAs
- Interest in long-horizon decision-making for robotic systems

## Application

Please submit:

- CV
- short statement of interest
- links to relevant projects, code repositories, or publications

In your application, please describe any prior work related to robot learning, reinforcement learning, robotic manipulation, or VLAs.

**Contact: Dr. Zlatan Ajanović**

**Email: [zlatan.ajanovic@technikum-wien.at](mailto:zlatan.ajanovic@technikum-wien.at)**

**Website: [zlatanajanovic.com](http://zlatanajanovic.com)**

## References:

[1] J. Luijckx, R. Ma, Z. Ajanović, and J. Kober, "LLM-Guided Task- and Affordance-Level Exploration in Reinforcement Learning," in *2026 IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA)*, IEEE, 2026. doi: 10.48550/arXiv.2509.16615.

[2] J. Luijckx, Z. Ajanovic, L. Ferranti, and J. Kober, "ASkDagger: Active Skill-level Data Aggregation for Interactive Imitation Learning," *Transactions on Machine Learning Research*, Apr. 2025, Accessed: Aug. 07, 2025. [Online]. Available: <https://openreview.net/forum?id=987Az9f8fT>

# Student/Research Internship: Robotic Task and Motion Planning for Long-Horizon Problems

Location: Vienna, Austria

Duration: 6 months to 1 year

Start Date: Summer/Autumn 2026

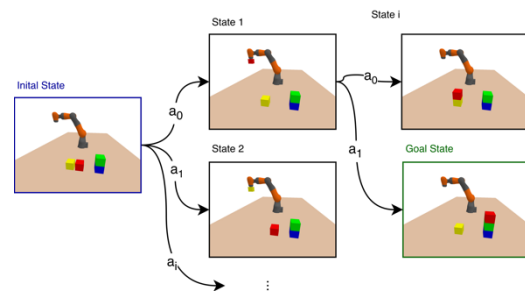
Affiliation: UAS Technikum Wien, Competence Center Digital Manufacturing, Automation and Robotics

## Overview

We invite applications for a Research Internship in Task and Motion Planning (TAMP) for long-horizon robotic tasks. The project focuses on planning methods for robots that must solve complex, multi-step tasks in structured or semi-structured environments, potentially under visual and language-based task specifications.

Long-horizon robotic problems require reasoning across multiple levels of abstraction, including task sequencing, symbolic consistency, geometric feasibility, and execution-aware replanning. Task and motion planning provides a principled framework for addressing these challenges by combining high-level symbolic reasoning with low-level motion generation and feasibility checking.

This internship emphasizes AI planning methods, including search algorithms, PDDL-based modeling, and related approaches to sequential decision-making in robotics. Depending on the project scope, vision-language models (VLMs) may also be incorporated for semantic grounding, subgoal proposal, perception, or search guidance.



## Research Focus

The internship may involve one or more of the following directions:

- Task and motion planning for long-horizon manipulation or mobile manipulation problems
- Symbolic task specification and domain modeling using PDDL or related planning languages
- Heuristic search, plan generation, replanning, and plan repair in robotic settings
- Incorporation of vision-language models for object grounding, semantic abstraction, or planner guidance
- Comparative study of planning-based and learning-based methods for long-horizon robotic tasks

## Responsibilities

- Develop and implement task and motion planning algorithms for robotic task execution
- Formulate planning problems using symbolic representations such as PDDL
- Investigate the use of search algorithms and heuristic planning methods in long-horizon robotics
- Integrate perception, motion feasibility, and execution feedback into planning pipelines
- Evaluate planning performance in simulation and, where applicable, on robotic platforms
- Analyze failure cases, search efficiency, and robustness under execution uncertainty
- Document experiments and contribute to research reports or publications

## Qualifications

Applicants should be enrolled in a Master's or PhD program in Robotics, Artificial Intelligence, Computer Science, Electrical Engineering, or a related field. Exceptional undergraduate students may also be considered.

Preferred qualifications include:

- Strong programming skills in Python
- Background in AI planning, search algorithms, or robotics
- Familiarity with one or more of the following:
  - PDDL or related symbolic planning formalisms
  - classical planning, heuristic search, or automated planning
  - motion planning
  - robot manipulation
  - vision-language models
- Interest in long-horizon decision-making for embodied systems

## Application

Please submit:

- CV
- short statement of interest
- links to relevant projects, code repositories, or publications

In your application, please describe any prior work related to planning, search, robotics, language grounding, or embodied AI.

Contact: Dr. Zlatan Ajanović

Email: [Zlatan.ajanovic@technikum-wien.at](mailto:Zlatan.ajanovic@technikum-wien.at)

Website: [zlatanajanovic.com](http://zlatanajanovic.com)

## References:

[1] S. Azirar, Z. Ajanovic, and H. Blum, "SYMBOLIZER: Symbolic Model-free Task Planning with VLMs," Apr. 20, 2026, *arXiv*: arXiv:2604.17830. doi: 10.48550/arXiv.2604.17830.

[2] Z. Ajanović, E. Regolin, B. Shyrokau, H. Čatić, M. Horn, and A. Ferrara, "Search-based task and motion planning for hybrid systems: Agile autonomous vehicles," *Engineering Applications of Artificial Intelligence*, vol. 121, p. 105893, 2023, doi: 10.1016/j.engappai.2023.105893.