

Embodied AI launches a robotic workforce to shape the global future of physical AI and solve the European manufacturing crisis

Embodied AI aims to restore the competitiveness of European manufacturing through a safely deployable robotic workforce capable of learning directly in the field.

September 2026 - What Europeans take for granted - high quality of life, wages and strong protections - is not guaranteed. With most of high-volume production moving to Asia, European competitiveness is being quietly eroded. Once Europe loses the capability to produce products at a quality-to-price ratio better than competitors in other regions, production inevitably moves elsewhere. The result is a structural decline in industrial capacity, **with Europe ceasing to be a manufacturing continent and becoming primarily an importing one.**

Robotic automation is one of the few real answers to this problem. Yet, the billions that are currently being deployed in this field often solely result in demos and promises for omni-capable robotic forces, and there are no available solutions for European manufacturers yet.

Embodied AI, a Europe-wide start-up based in Lausanne, launches today to tackle the most compelling automation challenges of current time. The company is at the forefront of developing a **new generation of intelligent robots designed to operate in real-world environments alongside humans.** To stay competitive, automation needs to move past hardcoded pick-and-place and into the work that has been too flexible and too delicate for robots until now: high-mix production with frequent changeovers, and dexterous tasks that demand genuine fine motor control. Moving fast and bringing practical solutions for this work is how Europe wins the Physical AI race. The company is contributing to the development of a European Embodied AI ecosystem, **connecting academic research with industrial expertise to reinforce Europe's technological leadership** and strategic autonomy in next-generation robotics.

Embodied AI was created to address an increasingly urgent challenge for Europe: **automating the repetitive tasks that limit productivity and undermine the quality of work**, at a time when global competitive pressure and the transformation of supply chains leave no room for inaction. Embodied AI partnered with global industrial players to deploy in some of the most critical

industrial applications, including **electronics production, kitting and flexible cable handling.**

Embodied AI flywheel: a combination of autonomy, adaptability, and safety

To meet this need, Embodied AI proposes an innovative yet pragmatic approach. The start-up does not follow the market trend of building a future single general purpose AI model, but proposes an **“Embodied AI flywheel”** that can pragmatically deliver results on complex tasks. The company is working on a platform that allows **data gathering and training of custom small AI models** that can be efficiently trained in production while guaranteeing uptime.

The solution combines autonomy, adaptability and safety through an orchestration of task-specific AI models designed to handle a wide range of operational scenarios, enabling robust performance while maintaining the flexibility needed to manage task variability. A human-in-the-loop system ensures **uninterrupted production by allowing operators to remotely intervene and correct robot behavior whenever necessary**, instantly resolving edge cases while continuously improving the underlying models through every interaction and progressively advancing the robot toward full autonomy. This is complemented by **robotic hardware engineered from the ground up with physical safety embedded directly into its mechanical design**, providing a foundational safety layer based on first principles.

Made possible through a large first financing round led by **Faber VC** - with participation from a pool of prominent investors including **Techshop Capital, Look AI Ventures, Kickfund, Plug and Play San Francisco, Excellis and Vento.**

Faber VC Statement

“Our thesis around Embodied AI was centered on backing exceptional teams with the potential to redefine how robotics is built and deployed, and we believe the company represents exactly that kind of opportunity. By vertically integrating proprietary soft-robotic hardware, teleoperation and autonomy-ready software, Embodied AI is creating a fundamentally new robotics platform, inherently safe, cost-effective and designed for real-world deployment. We believe this approach can remove key barriers to adoption and position Embodied AI as one of the defining companies in the emerging physical AI landscape.”

Sofia Santos, Partner, Faber VC

Techshop Capital Statement

“As a venture investor, we’ve made a strong bet on physical AI, backing several companies in the space already because we anticipate the next wave of value creation will come as intelligence moves off the screen and gets into the real world. What convinced us most about Embodied AI was the team’s genuine ambition and strong technical expertise, together with its pragmatic focus on real industrial needs. We believe that is what it takes to define a new paradigm in the robotic workforce.”

Aurelio Mezzotero, Partner, Techshop Capital

In the short term, **the funding will enable the company to bring its Physical AI directly onto production lines, delivering immediate benefits for key European OEMs.** In a second phase, Embodied AI will invest the funds to **scale up production and** refine the development of our data collection and model training pipeline, **which is essential to support continental manufacturing.** To support its ambitious technological and commercial roadmap, a significant portion of the funding round will be allocated to talent – with plans to bring on top researchers, engineers and commercial leaders in their offices in Lausanne and Rome in the months ahead. The company is determined to own and control the entire robotic ecosystem (full-stack), drastically reducing robot implementation times whilst ensuring reliable performance for customers (e.g. Fortune 500 manufacturers).

The team: cutting-edge research serving industry

The founding team is complemented by a **strong technical team of scientists and engineers from the world's most competitive universities** – including Oxford, TU Delft and MIT – alongside a commercial team with a proven track record of scaling deep-tech ventures from zero to market. At the helm of the team there are **Francesco Stella** (CEO), who holds a PhD in Robotics and AI from EPFL in Lausanne (awarded ABB and EPFL best thesis awards) and undertook research at MIT CSAIL; **Kai Junge** (CTO), who built his first robot at the age of 10 and has consistently demonstrated his prodigious talent in robotics, eventually receiving support from the Masason Foundation (SoftBank), with a Master’s degree from Cambridge and a Ph.D. in robotic manipulation from EPFL in Lausanne; and **Max Polzin** (COO), trained at ETH Zurich and EPFL, who has already gained extensive entrepreneurial experience as the first employee to lead the growth and successful exit of the company Seervision.

The scientific board includes **Prof. Cosimo Della Santina** (TU Delft, German Aerospace Center, and MIT) and **Prof. Josie Hughes** (EPFL, Cambridge, and MIT), both leading global researchers in the field of embodied robotics.

The team is already serving some of the largest manufacturers in Europe, deploying robots directly on the factory floor for electronics production, logistic cases and automotive assembly. As further confirmation of the project's high technological impact, the start-up has also been selected as **Google DeepMind** partner and is part of the **Nvidia Inception programme**.

“Our approach prioritises practicality over the hype of the moment. We are starting by deploying robots with a physically safe design that learn through remote operations. This allows us to focus on learning the specific task at hand, pushing the boundaries of what can currently be automated. The capital raised will enable us to bring our technology stack directly onto our customers’ production lines, demonstrating ROI, and to lay the groundwork for the development of our European robotic workforce. Thanks to these funds, we plan to scale our robotic production and bring in the team new talented individuals over the course of the coming year”, says **Francesco Stella, Co-founder & CEO of Embodied AI**.

About Embodied AI

Headquartered in Lausanne (Switzerland), with offices opening in Rome and an existing presence in Delft (Netherlands) and Boston (USA), Embodied AI is an international deep-tech start-up whose mission is to automate work humans were never meant to repeat. Born from the vision of world-leading robotics experts from institutions such as EPFL, TU Delft, MIT, ETH and Cambridge, the company develops a robotic workforce capable of continuous learning in the real world. Designed to be safe in human interactions and to integrate into existing processes, Embodied AI's systems are the technological answer to the current challenges facing the global manufacturing and logistics sectors.

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