

# Robotics researchers turn the public's ideas into 'robo-fish' reality

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Credit: University of Surrey

A robot fish that filters microplastics has been brought to life after it won the University of Surrey's public competition—The Natural Robotics Contest.

The robot fish design, which was designed by a student named Eleanor Mackintosh, was selected by an international panel of judges because it

could be part of a solution to minimize plastic pollution in our waterways.

The competition, which ran in the summer of 2022, was open to anyone who had an idea for a bio-inspired robot, with the promise that the winner would be turned into a working prototype.

Dr. Robert Siddall, Lecturer at the University of Surrey and the [contest](#)'s creator, says, "We don't know where the vast majority of plastic dumped into our waterways ends up. We hope that this robo-fish and its future descendants are the first steps in the right direction to helping us to find and, eventually, control this [plastic pollution](#) problem."

The contest received ideas from across the globe, from forest-protecting bear robots to crab-inspired space rovers—even a robotic sea urchin.

The [robot](#) fish is about the size of a salmon and features a set of gills which filter the water as it swims. Its design is open source and free to download on the [contest website](#). Anyone with a 3D printer can own one.

Dr. Siddall added, "The robo-[fish](#) will join other pollution-fighting robots under development at the University of Surrey, helping to make the world more sustainable."

Provided by University of Surrey

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