

Dyson gives glimpse of secret work on cleaning robot prototypes

Dyson has given a behind the scenes glimpse of top secret work it is doing at its Wiltshire campus on autonomous robots capable of performing household chores.

The company – known for its vacuum cleaners and fans – has said it is looking to create the UK's largest and most advanced robotics centre at Hullavington Airfield, and to bring the technology into homes by the end of the decade.

The firm is half-way through its [largest engineering recruitment drive in its history](#), which includes the creation of 900 UK-based roles mostly based at its Wiltshire and Bristol sites.

Dyson, which recently opened its [new global headquarters in Singapore](#), said 2,000 people had joined the global business this year, of which half were engineers, scientists, and coders.

It revealed it had secretly refitted one of the main aircraft hangars at Hullavington Airfield over the past six months to prepare for the arrival of 250 robotics engineers it is currently recruiting for.

The move is part of the next stage in the group's [£2.75bn investment plan](#) announced in 2020 in new technologies, products and facilities, £600m of which is to be spent this year.



A robot arm picks up a dish during research at Dyson's Wiltshire campus.

(Image: Dyson)

In a video released on Dyson's social media, chief engineer Jake Dyson – the son of the company's billionaire founder and owner Sir James Dyson – examined new prototypes being developed, including robotic arms tidying away toys, dishes and setting a table.

Until now, Dyson's robots have been floor-based vacuum cleaners – the first of which, the DC06, was designed 20 years ago.

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The film, released ahead of the firms' appearance at the International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA) in Philadelphia on Wednesday (May 25), provided glimpses of new research into robot learning and how machines can visually map their surroundings.

Jake Dyson said: "Dyson employed its first roboticist 20 years ago and this year alone we are seeking 250 more experts for our team. This is a 'big bet' on future robotic technology that will drive research across the whole of Dyson, in areas including mechanical engineering, vision systems, machine learning and energy storage. We need the very best people in the world to come and join us now."

Dyson said it was hoping to "woo the brightest in the field of robotics", a field it is expecting to hire 700 more engineers in over the next five years.

The company recently announced its first wearable technology product – a set of [air-purifying headphones](#), which it says "simultaneously" tackle the issues of air quality and noise pollution in urban areas.

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