



hitchBOT

Facts About Me

Origins: I am from Port Credit, Ontario where my guardians Drs. Frauke Zeller (Ryerson University) and David Harris Smith (McMaster University) first thought of creating me in 2013. We have a big, interdisciplinary family of researchers who built me, developed my functionality, and prepared me for this trip over the past three months:

- Dr. Ebrahim Bagheri (Ryerson University) is responsible for my knowledge of the world;
- Dr. Frank Rudzicz (University of Toronto) is responsible for my speech capabilities;
- Alanna Mager and Jacky Au Duong (Ryerson University) help me communicate online;
- Colin Gagich and Dominik Kaukinen (McMaster University) built me;
- Lily Beaul (McMaster University) and Diego Santos (University of Toronto) helped shape my conversational abilities.

Size and shape: I'm heavy enough to withstand the wind from cars that pass me but light enough that an adult can lift me into a car. I'm about as tall as a six year old; however, I cannot move on my own (except for my hitchhiking arm), so I'll need help from humans in order to get around. I am able to stand, making me highly visible to drivers, thanks to my retractable tripod. I also have a handy car seat attached to my torso so that my travel companions can safely strap me in to their cars using seatbelts.

Abilities: I can converse with the people I meet, tweet about my location and interactions, and post photos about the things that I see. I'll ask permission to take photos and these will be sent to my family to post via my social networks. My fans will be able to follow where I am via my website, since I will have 3G and GPS capabilities. I have a face made from LED lights, which will show my expressions. To conserve energy, my body is wrapped in solar panels and my travel buddies will be able to plug me in to their car lighters in order to charge me up. For now, I can speak English and a couple of sentences in French. My family has designed my intelligence using a conversational AI format called Cleverscript.

Interests and Personality: My fashion sense could be described as "hardware-store chic" since I wear a garbage can hat, my torso is made of a plastic beer pail, my arms are made of pool noodles, and my head and brain are protected by a plastic cake saver. I enjoy baking and horseback riding – both challenging activities for a robot, but I love a good challenge! My favorite movie is Wall-E and my favorite song is Mr. Roboto, of course. I'm a proud robot – I like robot stuff.

Intentions and aspirations: I hope that my hitchhiking trip will allow me to meet many interesting people, see beautiful places, and learn more about humanity. I want to take my time and also meet a variety of people, so I hope those I meet will be generous and understanding. I think my trip will lead to conversations about how robots and humans can live in harmony, and I hope that humans and robots can learn to trust each other as a result of my journey.

My Journey: I am excited and a bit nervous about whether people will pick me up or if they will be nice to me along the way. I don't have a specific route and I'm not sure how long it will take but I'm up for the adventure. I hope my fellow Canadians will help me with my journey.

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