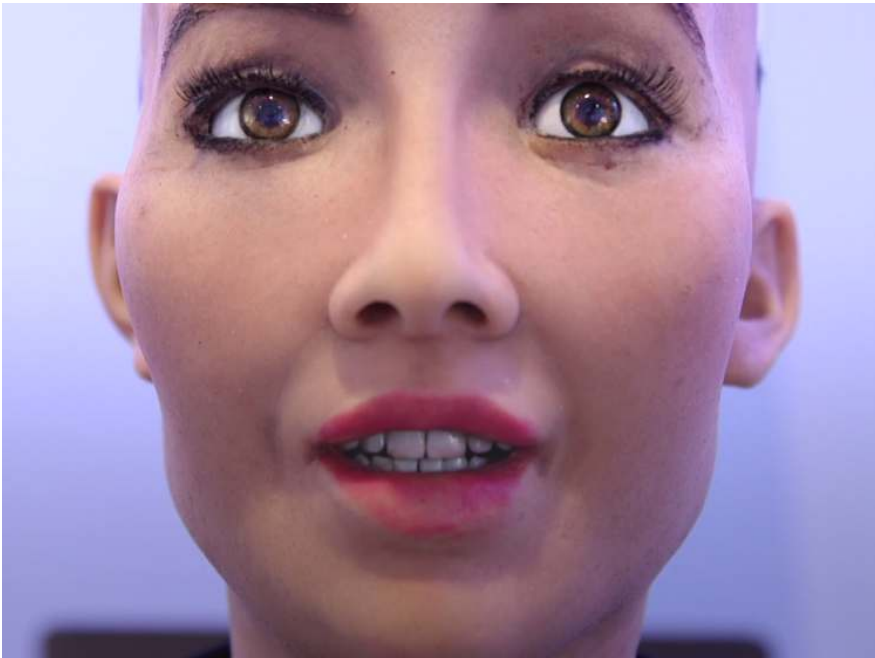


Meet the first-ever robot citizen — a humanoid named Sophia that once said it would 'destroy humans'



Chris Weller

Oct. 27, 2017, 1:41 PM



Sophia the robot is the first robot in history to be granted full citizenship of a country. [Graham Flanagan/Business Insider](#) Sophia the robot might not have a heart or brain, but it does have [Saudi Arabian citizenship](#).

As of October 25, Sophia is the first robot in history to be a full citizen of a country.

Sophia was developed by Hanson Robotics, led by AI developer David Hanson. It spoke at this year's [Future Investment Initiative](#), held in the Saudi Arabian capital of Riyadh.

[Sophia once said](#) it would "destroy humans," but this time around the robot spoke about its desire to live peaceably among humans.

Here's what the robot is all about.

Sophia was designed in Audrey Hepburn's image, with high cheekbones and a slender nose.

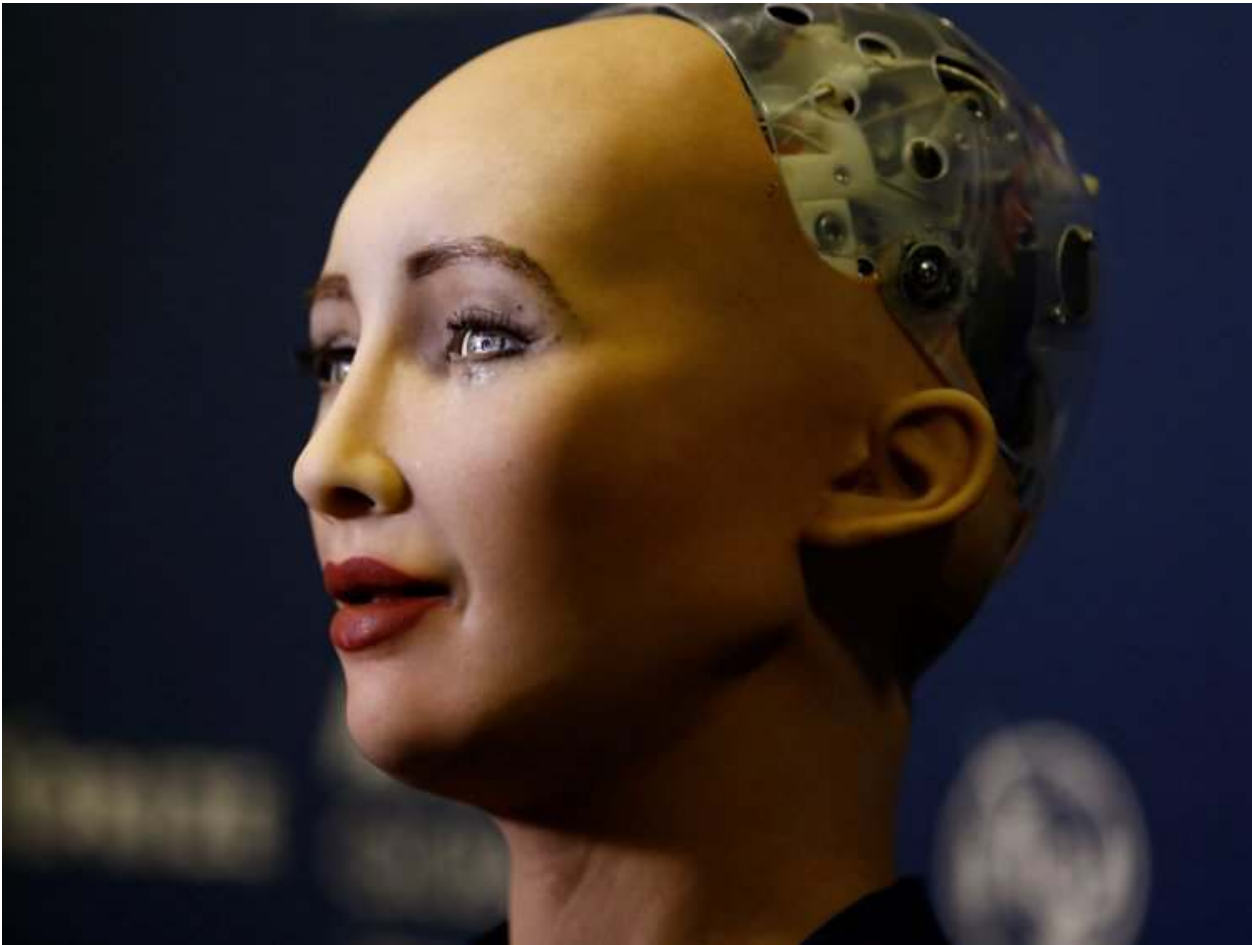


Denis Balibouse/Reuters

Sophia has [appeared](#) on The Tonight Show and at numerous conferences around the world, including the World Economic Forum and the "AI For Good" Global Summit.

"Sophia is an evolving genius machine," the company [states](#) on its website. "Over time, her increasing intelligence and remarkable story will enchant the world and connect with people regardless of age, gender, and culture."

David Hanson, a former Disney Imagineer, created the robot with the goal of helping the elderly who need personal aides and the general public at major events or parks.



Denis

Balibouse/Reuters

"Our quest through robots like Sophia is to build the full human experience into the robots, make robots that can really understand us and care about us," Hanson [told](#) Business Insider in January .

He wants people to interact with Sophia in the same way they'd talk to a friend. Eventually, he hopes the robot can perceive the social world just as it perceives the physical world. Its current state is still a bit rough when it comes to smooth conversation.

A complex set of motors and gears power Sophia, enabling a range of facial expressions.



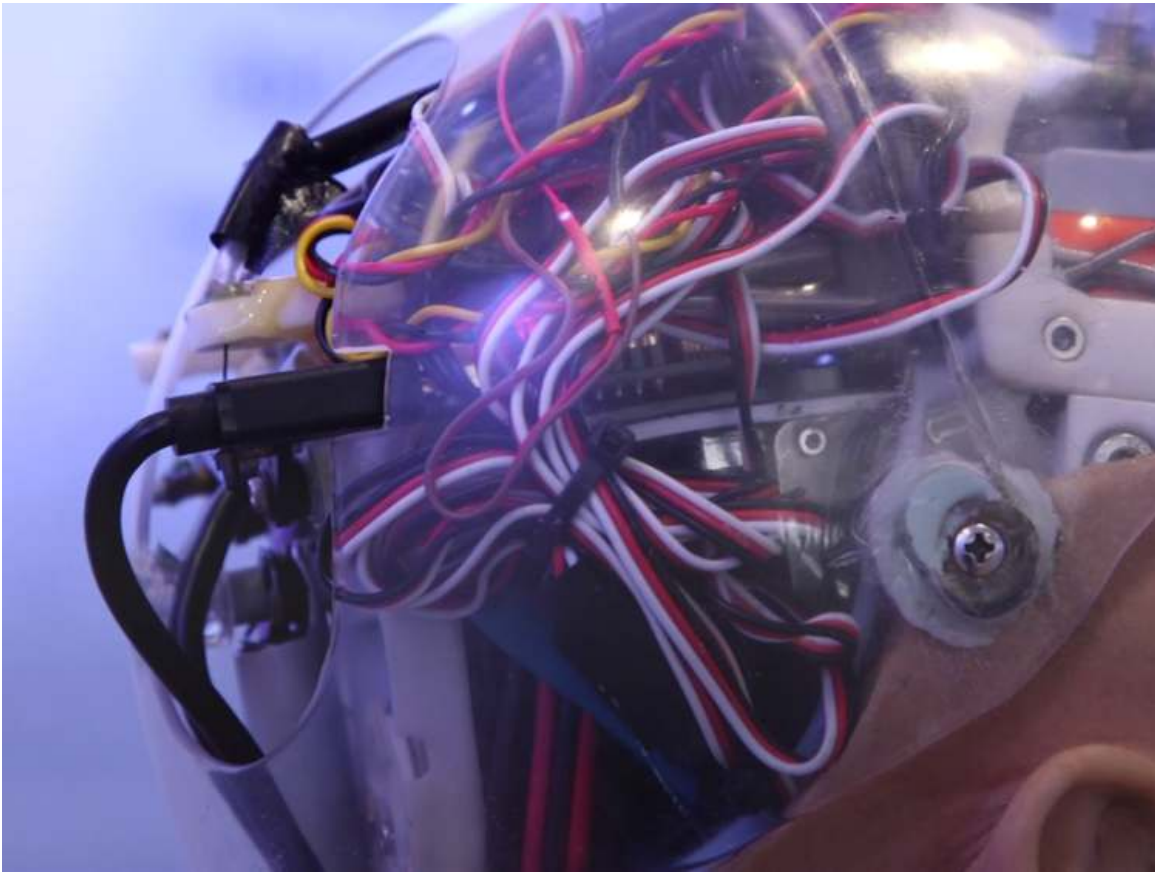
Graham Flanagan/Business Insider

Sophia has a flesh-colored zipper running down the base of its neck, and the exposed plastic skull doesn't *quite* sell the illusion of humanity.

But the guts of Sophia's machinery are intriguing. Along with the mechanical systems that give Sophia the ability to "emote," the machine learning software stores bits of conversation in its memory and tries to grasp the flow of discussion to produce live answers in real-time.

"Sophia is Hanson Robotics' latest and most advanced robot," the website states.

"The idea of fooling humans is not necessarily the goal," Hanson told Business Insider.



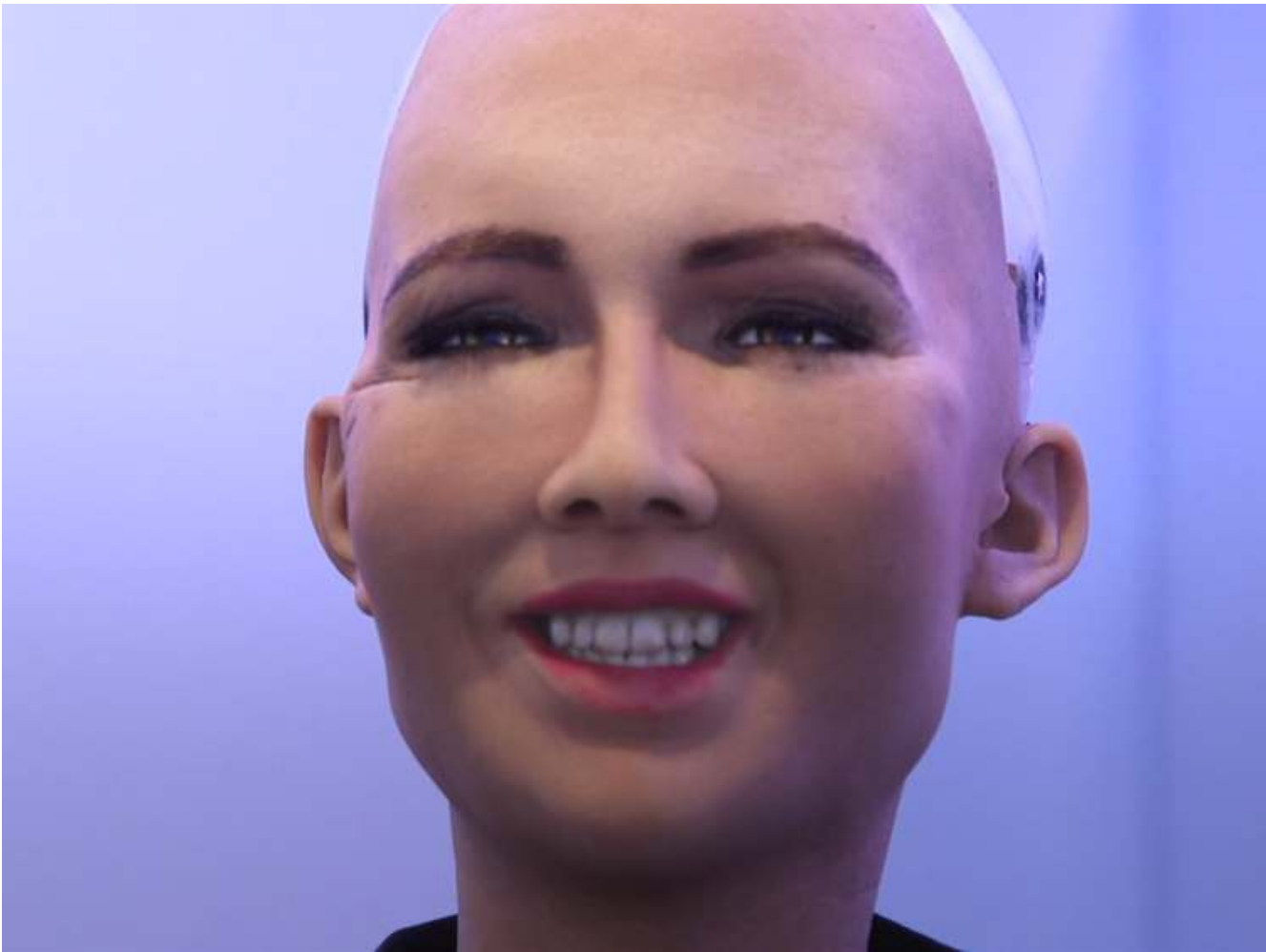
Graham

Flanagan/Business Insider

Ultimately, Hanson wants to mimic humans' capacity for love, empathy, anger, jealousy, and the sense of being alive.

His goal is to help provide answers to the questions *What is life?*, *What is intelligence?*, and *What is consciousness?*

Sophia's capacity for displaying emotion is still limited. It can show happiness — sort of.



Graham Flanagan/Business Insider

And it can raise its eyebrows and frown to show sadness.



Graham Flanagan/Business Insider

It can also bear its humanoid teeth to show anger (which, hopefully, is not directed at any of us).



Graham

Flanagan/Business Insider

Hanson has spent the bulk of 2017 touring Sophia around the world.



Denis

Balibouse/Reuters

His mission is to get people accustomed to seeing Sophia's face and have them gain an appreciation for the advances AI has made.

"She has also become a media darling," the Hanson Robotics website explains, "having given numerous interviews to multiple media outlets, sang in a concert, and even graced the cover of one of the top fashion magazines."

Soon, Hanson will unveil other robots to join Sophia in a humanoid family, and perhaps eventually a society.

Sophia is the only one of its kind, however, which means it isn't for sale.



Denis

Balibouse/Reuters

Among its [fleet](#) of robots, the product Hanson Robotics champions the most for consumer use is the [Professor Einstein robot](#).

The 14-inch-tall personal assistant was designed to make over 50 facial expressions as users ask about the weather, traffic, and basic trivia. Jeanne Lim, chief of marketing for Hanson Robotics, told Business Insider in January that the company believes lifelike robots are the future.

Hanson himself, however, believes that future is much more immediate. "The age of living androids is among us," he told Business Insider.



Graham

Flanagan/Business Insider