

Robots in Society: 2125

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What Is the Delphi Methodology?

The **Delphi method** is a structured, expert-driven approach for reaching informed consensus on complex, uncertain, or long-range questions. Originally developed at the RAND Corporation to support national defense and policy forecasting, the Delphi process has since been applied across fields like healthcare, business strategy, ethics, and emerging technology—where decisions must be made in the face of uncertainty and conflicting perspectives.

Unlike a traditional workshop or survey, the Delphi method unfolds over multiple **rounds of anonymous input and structured feedback**, allowing experts to refine their views in light of others' insights – without the pressure of groupthink or hierarchy.

How It Works

1. **Curated Panel of Experts** – A diverse set of participants is selected for their domain knowledge and lived experience—across academia, industry, government, and the public sector. The panel is intentionally interdisciplinary and inclusive, ensuring that a wide range of technical, ethical, societal, and practical considerations are represented.
2. **Round 1: Independent Forecasting and Judgment** – Experts are asked to respond to a series of questions—often involving future trends, opportunities, risks, and desirable outcomes. These responses are submitted independently and anonymously.
3. **Aggregation and Controlled Feedback** – The responses are synthesized by a neutral facilitation team. Summary statistics, representative rationales, and themes of agreement and divergence are shared back with the group—still anonymously—so that participants can reflect on the diversity of thought.
4. **Subsequent Rounds: Iterative Refinement** – Experts are invited to revise or reaffirm their responses in light of group feedback. This iterative process continues until responses stabilize or key areas of consensus and persistent disagreement emerge. The process typically concludes in 2–4 rounds.
5. **Final Synthesis and Roadmap Integration** – The outcome is a well-documented record of expert perspectives—highlighting not only converging insights but also unresolved tensions or open questions. These findings form the basis of a strategic roadmap, policy guidance, or technology vision.

About Our Partner: CPAP at Georgia Tech

The **Center for Public Administration and Policy (CPAP)** at Georgia Tech is a cross-disciplinary initiative that brings academic rigor and policy expertise to bear on society's most pressing challenges. CPAP specializes in connecting research with actionable public policy—particularly in areas involving emerging technologies, governance, and long-term societal planning.

In the context of the *Human-Robot Society in 2125* roadmap, CPAP serves as a key partner in:

- Designing an inclusive and transparent Delphi process,
- Ensuring methodological integrity,
- Bridging academic insight with real-world policy relevance,
- And helping align roadmap outcomes with the needs of public stakeholders.

Their involvement reinforces our commitment to producing not just visionary ideas, but implementable strategies grounded in responsible governance and civic trust.

Why Use Delphi for the Human-Robot Society in 2125?

Designing a roadmap for a **human-centered, ethically grounded, and technologically ambitious future**—one a century away—requires more than guesswork. It demands a disciplined approach to **foresight**, one that incorporates diverse perspectives and balances bold thinking with critical reflection.

The Delphi method ensures that this roadmap is not shaped by a few loud voices or narrow constituencies, but by a **broad, deliberative coalition of stakeholders** who challenge each other's assumptions and collaboratively identify shared priorities and values.

This process provides:

- **Credible insight**, grounded in expert deliberation, not speculation.
- **Transparency**, as each step of consensus-building is traceable.
- **Rigor and balance**, especially across interdisciplinary and ethical boundaries.
- **A foundation for action**, enabling sponsors and policymakers to align their strategies with robust, inclusive foresight.

Why It Matters to Sponsors

By supporting this Delphi panel, you are not simply underwriting an academic exercise. You are participating in a **thoughtfully designed effort to shape the social, technological, and policy landscape of the next century**.

Sponsors gain:

- **Early access to key insights** and draft findings before public release.
- **Visibility and recognition** in final reports, events, and public materials.
- A **direct connection to thought leadership**, helping align internal innovation strategies with where the field is going – not just where it's been.

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- The opportunity to **shape the conversation**, ensuring your organization's values, use cases, and challenges are represented in future-oriented dialogue.