

Tokyo airport to be 'scattered' with robots for 2020 Olympics

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Communication robot "Cinnamon" could be greeting visitors to the 2020 Olympics

Visitors to the 2020 Tokyo Olympics can expect to arrive at an airport "scattered" with robots to help them, an official said Tuesday as he unveiled seven new machines to perform tasks from helping with luggage to language assistance.

Among the seven robots on show was a fluffy cat mascot that can carry out simultaneous interpretation in four [different languages](#).

Visitors speak into a furry microphone, and translations appear instantly on a smart screen.

Travellers may also be approached by a small white humanoid [robot](#), Cinnamon, asking if they need its help.

The sleek white robot can converse with visitors through its AI system and give directions.

Another robot on display can carry luggage through the [airport](#) alongside the traveller.

Yutaka Kuratomi, a representative from the Japan Airport Terminal, hopes that by 2020, the terminals will be "scattered with robots", and it will be "normal" to see visitors communicating with machines.

They are also aimed especially at foreign visitors, who already have high expectations that Japan will show off its world-beating technology in the upcoming Tokyo Olympics.

"We want foreign tourists to think that the Japanese people are cool when they come here," Kuratomi told AFP.

The launch of the robots also comes as Japan grapples with a labour shortage against the backdrop of an ageing population.

With Tokyo hosting the 2020 Olympics, Haneda Airport is bracing for a sharp increase in [visitors](#) from abroad and hopes robots can compensate for a lack of staff.

The robots will be on a trial for a month at Haneda from January 9.

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