

60 Seconds with ... Carmen Carlan



Carmen Carlan has been working on topics related to the safe development of complex systems for nine years. Currently, she works as a system safety engineer at Edge Case Research (ECR), where she helps commercial clients solve the challenges they face related to the safety assurance of AVs in the automotive domain.

She also works on publicly funded research projects, keeping in touch with the state of the art in the domain of trustworthy artificial intelligence.

Further, Carmen occupies the position of Director of Safety Products, overseeing the development and management of ECR's safety products, such as the Open Autonomy Safety Case Framework, the nLoop platform, and templates for various safety work products in compliance with standards such as ISO 26262, ISO 21448, or MIL-STD 882.

Previously, she worked on her dissertation on developing and maintaining model-based safety cases. Carmen has also recently joined the SCSC Steering Group.

What first attracted you to working in the field of System Safety?

The idea that working in this field allows me to implicitly help people, by protecting them from accidents.

What aspect of your career are you most proud of?

The fact that I managed to transfer part of my research to industry projects.

Tell us one interesting unusual fact about yourself!

I am a Christian Orthodox and, personally, I think that being a Christian also helps with being a good system safety engineer, as Christianity is all about no discrimination, which is especially now relevant, given the usage of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in safety-critical applications, and trying to not harm anyone.

What advice would you give to yourself age 12?

Enjoy the carefree life and use the time to read as much as you can. I am an avid reader, but these days I only get to read books/articles for my job, and I rarely find the time for reading a novel, for example.

What future changes would you like to see in the field of System Safety?

I would like to see more courses on system safety engineering in German universities. Also, I would like to see more interaction between AI experts, safety engineers, security engineers, and people working on ethics. Further, I think there is a need to soon have experts on both AI and safety engineering. Last but not least, I want to see that companies stop treating safety as an afterthought.

What's your most favourite quote or motto?

"Both religion and science need for their activities the belief in God, and moreover God stands for the former in the beginning, and for the latter at the end of the whole thinking. For the former, God represents the basis, for the latter – the crown of any reasoning concerning the world-view." – *Max Planck, Religion und Naturwissenschaft, Leipzig: Johann Ambrosius Barth Verlag, 1958, 27*

If you could learn to do anything, what would it be?

Currently, I think I have to learn more about AI.

If you could be any fictional character, who would you choose?

Sherlock Holmes. I love his perseverance and determination in solving complicated problems. However, for now, I'll stick to solving problems in system safety engineering.

Artificial Intelligence - a positive revolution or are we all doomed!?

I think we just need to wait and see (: