

For an international longevity station. The Death of Death. September 2018. N° 114.

People will vote with their feet once those technologies offer significant benefits. At the moment they have concerns about nature or God, but that will change if you can double somebody's lifespan with genetic engineering (...).

People will use genetic engineering if you can ensure that your child won't get Alzheimer's disease (...). When it offers spare organs and the cure of aging, then of course it will be used.

Julian Savulescu bioethicist, September 2015, [Source](#).

Theme of the month. A global mobilization for a common goal is possible

The International Space Station (ISS)

Sometimes at night [we can see it with the naked eye](#). It is a point of light more visible than a star and which goes around our planet every 97 minutes. It passes at an altitude of 400 kilometers, far from the tiny film of atmosphere that envelops all the forms of life we know, everything we have, from our wildest dreams to our most horrible nightmares.



In this hostile environment, the United States, Russia and other nations including France have created a tiny oasis of 388 cubic meters of living space, continuously occupied since 2000. It is an object made of components so strong that they can withstand the vacuum of space and temperature variations that would kill us in a few tens of seconds, and yet so fragile that a meteorite of a few grams would be enough to destroy it.

Why are we talking about an international space station? Because the word station in French and English can mean, in addition to a place where you stop, a place where you can make scientific observations and the facilities that are located there.

The international station is one of humanity's major collective projects. One of its objectives is prestige, but a prestige that is not directed against other groups. In

this sense, this technological achievement is more collective, more united and more universal than the Apollo project of the 1960s. Because after Neil Armstrong's "small step for man but giant leap for mankind", the first flag to be flown was not the United Nations flag but the American flag.

In the international station, most of the real work is scientific work. Unfortunately the ISS's [Space Station Biological Research Program](#) was never started, particularly following the destruction of the space shuttle Columbia. Nevertheless, experiments are frequently carried out, some of which concern the [aging process in living creatures](#).

Other international scientific projects

Can an international scientific project be hosted on the surface of the planet without being part of a state? Yes, certainly. First, the majority of the world's surface does not legally belong to a state. This is the part of the oceans that is outside [territorial waters](#). Then there is the Antarctic continent, which does not belong to any state, under an [international treaty dating from 1959](#). This treaty, which was particularly relevant in the context of the Cold War, was intended to be peaceful and also scientific, as precisely [expressed in article 2](#): *Freedom of scientific investigation in Antarctica and cooperation toward that end (...) shall continue.*

By means of an international treaty, other territories could be removed from the jurisdiction of a state. However, this is not essential for an international terrestrial station. Many international projects have been carried out without this requirement.

CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research with 22 member states, has played an important role in the development of the Internet. CERN was responsible for the creation of the first ["web browser"](#). It should be noted from the point of view of international symbolism that CERN's buildings are located on Swiss and French territory.

UNESCO created the concept of [world heritage of humanity](#). Science is well represented there since the first category of item on the list is what represents a masterpiece of human creative genius. However, the emphasis is more often placed on beauty than on science. There is a symbolic international aspect since inscription on the list assumes that these things also belong to "Humanity".

The World Health Organization (of which almost all the world's states are members) carries out, among other things, the International Classification of Diseases (ICM), the [11th revision](#) of which is currently in progress.

The [Human Brain Project](#) aims to provide an excellent understanding of the human brain. The project, which has been controversial, includes a [medical platform](#). It is a work that brings together 117 institutions from 17 states, most of them from the European Union but also from Switzerland, Israel and Turkey.

An international longevity station / An Apollo project / A Manhattan project?

An international project for longevity would be a collective and united way of seeking to achieve one of humanity's oldest dreams. It would also be a means of implementing a little-known part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states in Article 27 that *Everyone has the right to (...) share in scientific progress and its benefits*.

If the project starts on a non-governmental basis, it could be promoted by [The International Council for Science](#). The ideal place would be a place where [borders meet](#), but it could also be an international place for symbolic reasons as well as by choice of the participants.

An international station of longevity could involve:

- The part of the "Human Brain Project" that deals with medical issues. As far as we know, there is no living species with a complex nervous system that does not die of aging. Neurodegenerative diseases are therefore at the heart of human aging mechanisms.
- World Health Organization services and workers specifically concerned with age-related diseases.
- An international committee (Nobel Prize winners, specialists...) to examine the most innovative proposals.
- The best-performing scientists in the fields concerned.
- Researchers in the field of artificial intelligence competent in health issues.
- An international IT platform for providing data on longevity studies carried out and in progress. These are first of all human studies, but also animal studies. It is important that failures are also known.
- An international database of human genetic data relating to health for the exclusive use of public sector (and therefore non-commercial) research. The information, coming from scientific bodies competent in public health, is collected in a secure environment and specifically designed to collect information related to the extension of healthy life expectancy.
- An international group of doctors, nurses, health practitioners who were experimenting with new longevity therapies. These experiments involve elderly volunteers, well informed and concerned to enable those who wish to live in good health to do so for much longer.
- A team of ethicists, economists and lawyers to examine ways to accelerate research. The aim is to implement, as soon as scientifically possible, the

universal duty to assist people suffering from age-related diseases and wishing to benefit from medical progress.

The good news of the month: Longevity Festival in California

From September 20 to 23, at San Diego [Raadfest](#) was held - the world's largest annual event for longevity activists. This year, Ray Kurzweil spoke about the progress made in terms of longevity. Among the dozens of other specialists who spoke enthusiastically, some spoke of ongoing research, others of possible financial investments.

For more information:

- heales.org, sens.org, longevityalliance.org and longecity.org
- [Photo source](#)