

Commissioner for Deep Time

Health –

It's a great pleasure to report that the future belongs to healthy, happy humans who can live as long as they want. We will achieve this goal gradually, through many stages. In fact, the first of them are being undertaken right now. Every year, we obtain deeper understandings of our bodies and minds, and of the ways in which we best live together. I know there are obstacles yet to overcome, and there will undoubtedly be surprises along the way, but these will be negotiated through the careful application of social innovations designed to ensure humanity's ongoing existence—using the wisdom we gain from living longer to enjoy ever-more fulfilling lives.

Climate –

The world is changing. You've probably heard this a lot, not just from the Commissioner for Deep Time—but how about this? Instead of stopping the change, or even reversing the change, why not live *with* the change instead? By altering our bodies and our societies to fit nature instead of the other way around, we can make ourselves partners rather than enemies of the world in which we live. Medical research will provide the tools for this advanced self-evolution, and a deeper understanding of economics and other social sciences will ensure that both humans and our environments can dynamically flourish—together.

Work –

In my department, we are champions of the post-scarcity future, wherein, by harnessing our growing scientific knowledge and technological skills, every physical need will be met freely and without exploitation of either natural resources or people less fortunate than us. Those who labour will do so because they desire to, not because they have to, and their work will take many forms, in areas such as tourism, education and the arts. Transitioning to this model of employment begins right now with the establishment of a universal basic income, funded by ethical taxation. It sounds like Utopia, but it really can be the future everyone deserves.

Education –

One innovation that I champion is prosthetic knowledge: using mind-enhancing technologies being explored today to plug children into the collective wisdom of all humanity. This will allow everyone to begin their education with practically unlimited potential to discover the universe around them. This is not to say that traditional methods of learning won't still exist. Artificially intelligent teachers created and overseen by humans will be provided in circumstances where teachers are unavailable, ensuring that critical understandings will be transferred to everyone, freely and fully, thus ensuring that the future will remain unflinchingly bright.

Culture –

Are you human? Am I? In my role as Commissioner for Deep Time, that question vexes me more than any other. With people evolving to live in space, on worlds very different to ours, and in a thousand other new ways, defining who is human and who isn't will remain as important to our distant descendants as ever. Is there a line dividing the human from the non-human, and where might it lie? Answering these questions have absorbed humanity for the entirety of its existence, and one day we will possess the tools to address it with inclusivity and empathy rather than hatred and violence.

Justice –

Today, when people die, digital echoes of them survive until they are deleted. In the far future, these echoes might themselves be independent, intelligent avatars that make today's social media look like cave paintings. The issue of whether these memory echoes deserve to live on after their creators' deaths is one the Commission for Deep Time considers very seriously. We don't, today, erase an artist's works on their deaths or burn the diaries of our deceased loved ones (unless they specifically request us to). Perhaps, in the very depths of time, when humanity itself has passed into memory, these future echoes might be all that remain of us and our wildest dreams . . .