

What has been dubbed as the “world’s smartest website” and think tank from the UK’s *Guardian* and *Observer*, amongst others, The Edge Foundation, has just received substantial backing from science philanthropist and Edge member, Jeffrey Epstein, and his foundation The Jeffrey Epstein VI Foundation.

Founded in 1996 by John Brockman, a cultural author, agent and expeditor of everything thought-provoking and *avant-garde*, the Edge Foundation, Inc., otherwise known as “Edge”, is an online venue for the greatest minds in the sciences, social sciences and literature to share their ideas—but not just random ideas; cutting-edge ideas outside the frontiers of common knowledge. Ideas that challenge the constancy of the speed of light, the existence of a gravitron and things like that.

“We live in a mass-produced culture where ...people, even ...established cultural arbiters, limit themselves to secondhand ideas. Show me people who create their own reality, who don’t accept an ersatz, appropriated reality. Show me the empiricists ...who are out there doing it, rather than talking about and analyzing the people who are doing it,” Brockman asserts.

The roster at Edge is nothing less than a treasure trove of over 660 virtuosi, geniuses, masterminds and prodigies including countless heads of university departments, authors, doctors and a host of Nobel Laureates including: physicist, Frank Wilczek, chemist, Kary Mullis, economist, Daniel Kahneman, theoretical Physicist, Gerard t’ Hooft, theoretical physicist, Warren Heisenberg, biochemist, Eric Kandel, chemist and physicist, Leon Lederman, neurologist and biochemist, Stanley Prusiner. Well-known writers include Brian Greene, Richard Dawkins, Leonard Susskind, Freeman Dyson and Ian McEwan.

Unlike the exclusive salons of the 18th Century, or present day mensa-type institutes, The Edge is proudly open to the public. Anyone can go to its website www.edge.org and read the daily conversations and essays by Edge members and the responses to Brockman’s annual question to members, which this year is: “What is your favorite, deep, elegant or favorite explanation?” This open approach stems perhaps from its humble roots: a roving gathering of intellectuals in New York City, called The Realty Club, which regularly met from 1981 to 1996 in restaurants, artist lofts, board rooms at Rockefeller University, the New York Academy of Sciences, ballrooms, museums and elsewhere. But its openness also comes from Brockman’s philosophy of challenging the public with mind-breaking ideas.

“Great ideas are meaningless, if they are not shared,” Jeffrey Epstein remarked, whose own foundation supports science education and research around the world. “They challenge, teach and inspire a whole new generation of maverick thinkers. And that is what we need, less we become too arrogant to improve ourselves.”