



University College London Officially Launches ETHNO-ISS: An Ethnography of an Extra-terrestrial Society

Principal Investigator Victor Buchli and his UCL-based team examine one of the most extreme places where people live: Low Earth Orbit on the International Space Station

London/Low Earth Orbit, October 9 2020, 12:00PM GMT/UTC - [ETHNO-ISS](#) is a University College London Anthropology based project with [European Research Council funding](#) (grant agreement No. 833135). Today marks the official launch of the project, when its project members begin their work studying the International Space Station (ISS) as an anthropological site. The project is expected to run for 5 years.

The ISS remains the longest-running extraterrestrial society. Truly international and borderless, it has even housed scientists from ideological adversaries with the mission of better understanding ourselves and our world from above. Now, ETHNO-ISS will invert the lens and re-examine this extraterrestrial space of both cutting edge technology and daily human life - all to understand one of the most extreme extensions of human habitation. In a holistic approach, the project comprises numerous ethnographic sites: the United States, Russia, Europe, and Japan.

"For twenty years now the inhabitation of the ISS in low-Earth orbit challenges our understandings of Earth and human habitation in new unprecedented ways," Principal Investigator Victor Buchli explains, *"the ETHNO-ISS project aims to understand these processes holistically on Earth and in low-Earth orbit across the various communities that make up this new realm of human habitation."*

[Buchli](#) and [team](#) will re-examine and consider the assumptions about life in Outer Space - and all that goes with it. Project members will bring their expertise in digital spaces, architecture, religion, and medical anthropology to challenge these assumptions in their fieldwork.

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