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Press Release

The Institute for Advanced Consciousness Studies
www.TIFACS.org

IASOR has announced the founding of the Institute for Advanced Consciousness Studies (TIACS),

www.TIFACS.org. The purpose of TIACS is to promote the study of phenomena that strongly challenge prevailing theories of the mind-brain relationship, and as such these topics tend to be ignored in academia. They includes (a) the nature and source of artistic, musical and mathematical genius, (b) autistic, acquired and spontaneous savants, (c) near death experiences (NDE), (d) terminal lucidity (people with advanced Alzheimer's who become remarkably lucid just prior to death), (e) multiple-witness sightings of apparitions of the dead, (f) extreme mental control of physiology, (g) psychic abilities (i.e., telepathy, clairvoyance), and (h) mystical, contemplative, and psychedelic states. These and related phenomena are all well-established, either because they are self-evident (genius, savants), repeatedly demonstrated through modern scientific experiments (psychic abilities, extreme physiological control), or have been meticulously documented for decades or even centuries (NDEs, terminal lucidity, apparitions, mystical and related states of consciousness).

The initial goal of TIACS is to raise \$450 million to support the Institute's mission. The Institute will be administered under the umbrella of a multi-university consortium directed by academics in the neurosciences, artificial intelligence, mathematics, cognitive and social psychology, cosmology, religious studies, anthropology, philosophy, quantum physics, and other fields.

TIACS is founded as a 501(c)6, an organization of nonprofits. All donations will be tax deductible and the 501(c)6 will be directed by its board of directors and by representatives of its member universities and institutions.

Defining the scope of TIACS should be part of the research goal. We're not smart enough yet to fully design it. But what we can suggest at this point are the kinds of topics TIACS will address. Besides those noted above, to keep the focus on consciousness, gender and transgender issues become part of a larger effort to understand the nature of personal **identity**. Likewise, religious issues become part of the grand effort to understand the nature of **meaning**. Under these grand categories a host of interesting sub-topics can reside. Through this we can avoid making it appear that TIACS is really just interested in transgender studies, or religious studies, or ... you name it. We want to avoid those perceptions, not only because they tend to be divisive, but also because they aren't the actual focus. There is no denying however that these topics become part and parcel of our overall efforts and our work will have derivative consequences across a broad range of social and political issues.

Donations to a 501(c)6 should also not be linked to expectations about ROIs. This is not a commercial investment. The goal is not to make billionaires more money, but to invest in making the world a better place by improving our understanding of who and what we are. TIACS's assumption is that virtually every problem humanity has ever faced can be traced to deficits in understanding ourselves. This is the message of virtually every great leader and religious figure.

To put it more crudely, say you happen upon a stream where you see drowning babies floating down river. There are two approaches a compassionate person can take. (1) Jump into the river and save the babies, or (2) go upriver and find out why babies are in the river in the first place. Most philanthropists jump into the river. This is an understandable response, but it will not solve the problem. The more difficult but ultimately much more successful approach is to go upriver and understand the source of the problem. We're all very happy that others are attempting to fix the immediate problem. But TIACS is going upriver.

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