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# 25<sup>th</sup> National Science Week

## CNES and ESA present Thomas Pesquet's mission

**The 25<sup>th</sup> National Science Week, organized by the Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Research from Friday 7 to Sunday 16 October, opened today at the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie in Paris. On this occasion, French ESA astronaut Thomas Pesquet, the patron of this year's event, presented his future Proxima mission on the International Space Station (ISS) to the public and several hundred children. CNES and ESA also took advantage of the event to sign an agreement covering the scientific experiments he will be performing on the ISS.**

Created by Hubert Curien in 1992, National Science Week is an outreach event designed to engage the public and promote science by giving them the opportunity to meet scientists. This year, the Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Research is organizing the 25<sup>th</sup> successive edition in partnership with 15 research bodies<sup>1</sup>. The high point for CNES and invited partner organizations will be *Science en Direct*, a two-day event mediated by Fred Courant and his team of presenters from the TV programme *l'Esprit Sorcier* on 8 and 9 October at the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie.

Ahead of this year's science week, the event's patron Thomas Pesquet—currently getting ready to depart for the ISS—came to the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie to meet an audience of several hundred children alongside Najat Vallaud-Belkacem, the Minister of Education, Higher Education and Research, Thierry Mandon, Secretary of State for Higher Education and Research, and CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall. The children were given a presentation of CNES's Echo experiment that will enable astronauts to perform an ultrasound self-scan in space using a tele-operated scanner probe. Besides its utility on the space station, improving this system will also bring significant benefits here on Earth, in particular by providing better medical care for populations living in remote regions.

Another important event of the day was the signature by CNES and ESA of the cooperation agreement covering Thomas Pesquet's Proxima mission. This agreement outlines the legal framework governing the experiments (see attached document) that Thomas will be performing. In addition to experiments to be conducted by ESA, CNES is developing innovative instruments designed to enable closer insights into aspects of human physiology (Echo, Everywear and Perspectives), better control of living conditions on the ISS (AquaPad and Matiss) and a deeper understanding of how fluids behave in space (Fluidics). The ESA/CNES experiment programme encompasses five main topics: human physiology, the space environment, fluid physics, fundamental physics and education. Twenty of these experiments will be under the responsibility of the CADMOS centre for the development of microgravity applications and space operations at the Toulouse Space Centre, in charge of planning, organizing and monitoring microgravity experiments.

<sup>1</sup> BRGM, CEA, CNES, CNRS, Genopole, IFPEN, IFREMER, INERIS, INRA, INRIA, INSERM, IRD, IRSTEA, Meteo-France and Evry University.

<sup>2</sup> <https://cnes.fr/fr/fete-de-la-science-2016>

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