Future technology: Ideas about to change our world

NASA has challenged designers to develop a conventional drone to work inside a space station, navigating with no ‘up’ or ‘down’. The winning design, ArachnoBeeA, would use cameras and tiny beacons to manoeuvre its way around. How popular drones would be in such a confined space is a different question.

Hate commuting? Imagine, instead, your train carriage hurtling down a tunnel at the same speed as a commercial jet airliner. That’s the dream of PayPal, Tesla and SpaceX founder Elon Musk. His Hyperloop system would see ‘train’ passengers travel at up to 760mph through a vacuum tube, propelled by compressed air and induction motors. A site has been chosen with the goal of starting test runs in two years. Once built, the loop will ferry passengers between San Francisco and LA in 35 minutes, compared to 7.5 hours by train.