

POWER PLAYERS

Why billionaires Mark Zuckerberg, Jeff Bezos and Peter Thiel want to live longer — and Elon Musk doesn't

Published Mon, Apr 11 2022 • 3:15 PM EDT Updated Mon, Apr 11 2022 • 3:24 PM EDT

 **Megan Sauer**
@MEGGSAUER

SHARE    



Tesla CEO Elon Musk attends the start of the production at Tesla's "Gigafactory" on March 22, 2022 in Gruenheide, southeast of Berlin. Patrick Pleul | AFP | Getty Images

Over the past decade, Mark Zuckerberg, Jeff Bezos and Peter Thiel have all poured money into life-prolonging and anti-aging research. Tesla and SpaceX

CEO ELON MUSK: "I AM NOT AFRAID OF DYING"

RELATED STORIES

 **LAST CALL**
Study finds ChatGPT is 72% accurate in clinical decision-making

 **THE EDGE**
Will humans one day land? These scientists think so

recently told Insider. "It would cause asphyxiation of society because the truth is,



That's a contrarian viewpoint, at least among Silicon Valley billionaires — many of whom have a track record of investing in longevity research. So far, very few — perhaps none — of those investments have panned out.

In September 2021, the MIT Technology Review [reported](#) that Bezos invested an undisclosed sum of money in anti-aging start-up [Altos Labs](#), which officially launched earlier this year. According to its website, the San Francisco-based biotech company focuses on “cellular rejuvenation programming,” a theorized method of reversing disease, injury and disability.

Bezos and Thiel have also both [invested in Unity Biotechnology](#), a South San Francisco-based company that researches “senescent cells,” which stop dividing in humans as they age. The idea, according to the company's website, is to develop “transformative medicines to slow, halt, or reverse diseases of aging.”

Unity Biotechnology raised more than \$300 million in funding before going public in 2018. As of Monday afternoon, it has a market cap of \$73.06 million, down significantly from its September 2018 peak of nearly \$972 million.

Thiel is perhaps one of Silicon Valley's most well-known proponents of anti-aging research. One start-up Thiel helped fund, called Ambrosia, revisited a 1950s practice called parabiosis, which experimented with cutting open and stitching together circulatory systems in rats.

The studies didn't yield concrete conclusions, but the Monterey, California-based company still began similar trials in humans — injecting blood from people under age 25 into participants aged 35 and older — claiming rejuvenation effects.

“It's one of these very odd things where people had done these studies in the 1950s and then it got dropped altogether,” Thiel [told Insider](#) in 2015. “I think there are a lot of these things that have been strangely underexplored.”

RELATED STORIES



LAST CALL

Study finds ChatGPT is 72% accurate in clinical decision-making



THE EDGE

Will humans one day land? These scientists think so

parabiosis. Ambrosia appears to be nonoperational today.



Prize, which annually awards \$3 million to scientists who make “transformative advances toward understanding living systems and extending human life,” according to its website.

“I’m most interested in questions about people,” Zuckerberg said at a [2015 Facebook Q&A event](#). “What will enable us to live forever? How do cure all diseases? How does the brain work? How does learning work and how we can empower humans to learn a million times more?”

According to [The New Yorker](#), Oracle co-founder Larry Ellison has donated at least \$370 million to anti-aging research. Google co-founders Sergey Brin and Larry Page [helped launch biotech start-up Calico](#), an Alphabet subsidiary that researches aging-related diseases like diabetes and Alzheimer’s.

In other words, it seems that Musk — the richest person in the world, with a net worth of \$265.4 billion, [according to Forbes](#) — stands against many of his Silicon Valley peers. “I certainly would like to maintain health for a longer period of time,” Musk told Insider. “But I am not afraid of dying. I think it would come as a relief.”

Bezos, Thiel, Musk, Zuckerberg, Ellison, Brin and Page did not immediately respond to CNBC Make It’s request for comment.

Sign up now: [Get smarter about your money and career with our weekly newsletter](#)

Don’t miss:

[Elon Musk says humans could eventually download their brains into robots — and Grimes thinks Jeff Bezos would do it](#)

[Google’s co-founders and other Silicon Valley billionaires are trying to live forever](#)

**RELATED
STORIES**



LAST CALL

Study finds ChatGPT is 72% accurate in clinical decision-making



THE EDGE

**Will humans one day land
These scientists think so**