

Civilization Leap

A Path for Civilization in the AGI Era | Public Research Paper

Civilization Leap Ten Questions

For people who feel the pain of present realities and are looking for a new direction in which to act

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Question 1 Civilization Leap sounds ambitious. What is it actually about?

In a sentence: a different way of living.

This is not a moral lecture, or a request that you become a better person. It is a change in the structure through which we survive.

For thousands of years, people have found their sense of worth and security in a simple way: coming out on top. You have more money than your neighbor, your position is higher than your colleague's, your country is stronger than other countries, and that makes you feel your life is worth something. It is a primitive logic, but it worked for a long time.

The problem is that this logic no longer works in the age of AGI.

Not because it is immoral, but because it is no longer enough. When machines can do more, compete harder, and win more often than you can, even the most accomplished human beings can no longer come out on top. Worse still, once AGI breaks through the ceiling of competition, pushing the contest further does not produce a winner. It shatters everyone together. An AI arms race, the proliferation of biological weapons, reciprocal attacks on infrastructure: there are no winners.

Civilization Leap proposes another path: moving from “finding our worth by overpowering others” to “finding our worth through creating, protecting, connecting, and being needed.”

Notice that this is not asking people to become better. It is saying that the old road is already a dead end, and the new one is the only direction in which we can still move forward. This is not an ideal. It is the only option left after the others have been ruled out.

You may be wondering: why now, of all times?

Question 2 Why now? Why was Civilization Leap not proposed before?

Because, for the first time, the conditions are ready. And, for the first time, they have to be.

Throughout history, people have called countless times for a “new world” or a “society of universal harmony.” All those attempts failed. Not because people were not good enough, but because their capabilities were not sufficient. Record everyone's contribution? They could not. Match needs with supply? They could not. Coordinate hundreds of millions of people working together? Still less. In the end, all they could do was use power to suppress, money to coerce, and ideology to deceive.

AGI is lowering all these capability barriers at once.

Recording: what each person did and whom they helped. This used to depend on ledgers and bureaucracies. AI can now identify and trace contributions in a distributed way. It is not yet perfect, but the direction is already clear.

Matching: who needs what, and who can provide it. This used to depend on market trial and error and intermediaries taking their cut. AI can now match supply and demand on a scale of hundreds of millions, at a cost approaching zero.

Coordination: the organizational cost of collaboration on a large scale. It used to grow exponentially; the more people involved, the greater the confusion. AI can now act as that “invisible hand” and bring coordination costs down.

In the past, if even one of these three capabilities was missing, Civilization Leap was a fantasy. Now all three are at the threshold at the same time.

You might think this is just an “efficiency improvement.” It is not. It is a paradigm shift in our capacity to organize.

Managing ten million people used to require hundreds of thousands of officials, multiple layers of government, and countless meetings, and it still did not work well. Now a single AGI system can simultaneously handle millions of supply-and-demand matches, tens of millions of contribution records, and coordinated scheduling on a scale of hundreds of millions, for the cost of the electricity that powers its servers. Faced with those numbers, the old theories of organization fall apart.

And it is not just the capabilities that have arrived. The pressure has arrived too.

In the past, you could still say, “We can muddle through.” Not anymore. AGI is accelerating the hollowing-out of the old system’s foundations: work is losing its meaning, trust between nations is collapsing, and ordinary people’s options are narrowing. We are not seeking upheaval for its own sake. Without change, there is no way forward. Risks can no longer be considered separately. They are twisting together, triggering one another and gathering speed. This is called “crisis emergence”: it is more dangerous than the sum of the individual problems.

So the question is not “Why now?” It is “Why haven’t we started yet?”

If the underlying capabilities are now in place, what is the most essential component of this new system?

Question 3 What is this “contribution value”? It sounds like a social credit system.

They are completely different. Here is the distinction in one sentence: social credit is about making people obey; contribution value is about recognizing what people do. They point in opposite directions.

Let me give you a concrete example.

Ms. Zhang, who lives downstairs, has a son who was paralyzed in a car accident. She quit her job and has spent three years caring for him at home. No one pays her a salary. GDP does not count what she does. Her social insurance records classify her as “unemployed.” But think about it: without her, who would care for her son? How much would the state have to spend on nursing care? How much worry would the community have to shoulder? Would an entire family simply fall apart?

What she does sustains the functioning of society more tangibly than the work of many people who sit in an office every day.

Contribution value gives people like Ms. Zhang a record of what they have done.

You care for a bedridden family member. That is a contribution.

You release a piece of open-source code that ten thousand people use. That is a contribution.

You read with children in your community whose parents have moved away for work. That is a contribution.

You protect a forest, pass on a craft, or support someone on the verge of falling apart. All of these are contributions. All of them are recorded.

Money does not recognize these things, markets do not put a price on them, and GDP does not count them. Yet civilization depends on them to stay alive.

That is what contribution value does: it makes the long-overlooked contributions that keep civilization functioning visible, recognized, and protected.

It is not there to score and rank people. It is there to ensure that the work people do does not count for nothing.

And there are three absolute boundaries that must never be crossed:

First, a low contribution value does not mean a person has no worth. A newborn baby has contributed nothing, but that baby's life is as precious as anyone else's. The right to survive is built in from the start. It is not tied to contribution.

Second, an unrecorded contribution is still a contribution. The system will always have blind spots. If it fails to record something, that is the system's problem, not yours.

Third, this must never be used to humiliate people. If contribution value becomes a measure of who is superior or inferior, worthy or unworthy, the entire system is rotten at its roots.

Contribution value cannot be traded or transferred, and it cannot be financialized. You cannot buy it with money or sell it for money. It is simply a record: civilization's memory.

What, then, can recorded contributions be exchanged for?

Question 4 What is the resource pool? How is it different from public ownership or a welfare society?

In plain language, a resource pool means making things that are sitting unused available to people who can genuinely use them.

Notice that the objection is to leaving resources idle, not to having money.

You own ten homes, live in one, and leave the other nine empty while you wait for prices to rise. Those nine homes are idle resources. You hold a patent, do not use it yourself, and do not let anyone else use it either. That is also an idle resource. You own substantial computing capacity that you bought simply to hoard it and keep it away from competitors. That is an idle resource too.

The resource pool does not seize your property. If you are using something, keep using it well; nobody interferes. But if you hold something without using it, the system will ask: are you going to use it, or just let it go to waste? If it remains unused for a long time, it flows into the public resource pool for people who need it.

This differs from public ownership. Under public ownership, something belongs to "everyone," which often ends up meaning "whoever holds power gets to decide." The resource pool is a "civilizational trust": the asset still has an owner, but idle rights of use must be released. You can reclaim it for your own use at any time, but you cannot keep hogging it while doing nothing with it.

It also differs from a welfare society. Welfare is “distributed per person”: you receive a share whether you work or not. A resource pool “sets priority by contribution”: the more you contribute to civilization, the higher your priority for using public resources.

The underlying logic is simple: a resource’s value lies in being used, not in being owned.

No matter how good someone is at making money, they can sleep in only one bed and eat only three meals a day. Holding on to more than they can use is wasteful. Civilization Leap seeks to release resources that have been locked away, so that more people can use them and have room to live, rather than bringing wealthy people down.

How resources are allocated, and who decides, brings us to the question of how power is divided.

Question 5 Which three powers are separated? Why divide power this way?

The separation of three powers means dividing power into three kinds, each with its own remit and none allowed to overstep.

The first is the right to use resources: who can use how much. This is based on contribution. If you have contributed greatly to civilization, you have priority in using more resources to do what you want to do. That is only right.

The second is domain-specific decision-making authority: who has the final say on matters requiring specialist knowledge. This cannot be based on contribution; it must be based on experience. For nuclear power stations, listen to nuclear engineers. For education, listen to classroom teachers. For medical treatment, listen to doctors. However wealthy you are, however much you have contributed, if you do not understand a subject, you do not understand it. You cannot give uninformed orders.

The third is the civilizational veto: who has the right to say no to major decisions about civilization’s direction. This is based on neither contribution nor experience. It is one person, one vote. Every life is equal. No one is entitled to decide on everyone’s behalf whether “we should risk extinction.”

Why divide it so finely? Because, in earlier systems, either money had the final say, with capital controlling everything, including policy and knowledge, or votes had the final say, with everything decided by ballot and non-specialists ending up in charge of specialists. Both approaches have their rationale, but both have blind spots.

Separating the three powers prevents any one logic from ruling everything.

People with money can use better resources, but they cannot buy professional judgment, still less the right to decide civilization’s direction. People with knowledge have a voice within their own fields, but they cannot use it to take a larger share for themselves or choose the path for everyone. Ordinary people defer to experts on specialist matters, but on fundamental questions of right and wrong, everyone’s veto carries equal weight.

Each constrains the others, so no one can dominate. This is not a perfect system. It is a system designed to prevent the worst.

You may have noticed that AGI seems to be involved in every part of this design.

Question 6 How are AGI and Civilization Leap connected? Is a leap impossible without AGI?

AGI is a catalyst, not the goal.

What does that mean? It means Civilization Leap is possible even without AGI. Community mutual aid, open-source collaboration, philanthropy and charitable work are all its early shoots. But they cannot move very fast or go very far. Manual recording, manual matching, and manual coordination cost too much to sustain large-scale activity.

Once AGI arrives, the cost problem is solved. Work that once took ten thousand people can now be handled by a single AI. That lowers the entry threshold for a leap from the “national level” to the “community level.”

But the other side matters even more: AGI is also forcing us to make the leap.

The old system rests on “being useful.” You are useful, so you have a job. You have a job, so you have an income. You have an income, so you have dignity. You have dignity, so you feel that life has meaning. “Being useful” is the root of that entire chain.

When AGI arrives, that root is dug out. Machines are more useful than you, cost less than you, and can work more overtime than you. Where, then, does your worth lie? This is not some distant future. It is happening now. Many people already feel their work becoming less meaningful and more dispensable.

AGI therefore has two sides. It accelerates the failure of the old civilization, making the old path unworkable. At the same time, it provides the technological foundation for a new civilization, making the new path possible.

Without AGI, the leap is an ideal. With AGI, the leap is a necessity.

That said, technology is only the foundation. The real difficulty is not the technology. It is getting people with real money and concrete interests at stake to come to the table and take part.

It sounds good, but even the best theory is empty if it cannot be put into practice.

Question 7 This sounds good, but how does it work in practice? Will it remain a theory forever?

No. And work to put it into practice has already begun.

The idea is not to build a new world in a single step. It is to start with the smallest unit: first make it work in a community of a hundred people, then expand to a thousand, ten thousand, and a million. Test at every step. Iterate at every step.

There are four principles for getting started. None can be left out:

Voluntary participation. No one forces you to join. If you think it is good, come. If you do not, leave. What is forced will not flourish. A civilization imposed by force is not a civilization; it is a prison.

Tangible benefits. Participants must receive real benefits. Not pie in the sky, but something they can experience right now. For example, people with contribution value in a community can receive priority access to shared spaces and get help from others. No one will keep doing something indefinitely if they cannot see any benefit.

The ability to exit. You can leave at any time without losing out. The time and resources you have invested should be returned wherever the rules allow; where they cannot be returned, there must still be an explanation. Trap people and turn on them just once, and you exhaust their trust.

No losses for anyone. Even if a pilot fails, no one is harmed. All risks must be worked out in advance, with the bottom line being “at worst, we return to where we started.” Ordinary people’s lives cannot be used as experimental material.

There is also a principle called “phase discipline”: you cannot demand that today’s startup phase look like a future stable phase. The startup phase will be rough and imperfect, with many functions missing. Judging an experiment on its first day by the standards of its final form is simply playing dirty.

So this is not something to keep hidden until it is finished. It is a living thing that grows as it is built.

Here is the current state of progress: the engineering-level technical design for contribution value has been completed, and a proposal for a national-level urban experimental zone has entered the research and appraisal stage. There are no examples of large-scale implementation yet. The first city-scale experiment that actually operates will be this theory’s real coming of age.

What you see now, then, is not a finished set of answers. It is scaffolding still being assembled. You are welcome to find its faults, and you are welcome to lend a hand.

Who is going to drive this forward? Surely it cannot depend on a group of people daydreaming.

Question 8 Who will drive this forward? Government or civil society?

Neither. Or rather, both, but neither is the main force.

The main force is not a particular category of people. It is everyone within the existing system who “wants to get something done but feels something is wrong with the way things work.”

These are the people caught in the middle. They are neither the people drawing up blueprints at the top nor the people passively receiving them at the bottom. They belong fully to neither end, but they hold real resources and feel real pain.

You work in policy research within government and want proposals to be more humane. That means you.

You work on the front lines of an NGO and know what ordinary people lack and where they hurt, but you lack resources and tools. That means you.

You have reached middle management in a company and no longer want to live solely for performance targets. That means you.

You work in AGI research, feel more afraid the further you go, and want technology to move in the right direction. That means you too.

These people share something: they can see the problems and reach the resources. They feel the pain of present realities, but they have not given up.

The aim is not to overthrow something and start again. It is to grow new roots within existing structures.

Start with pilots from the bottom up: communities, businesses, and industry associations. Whoever first understands how to do it starts first. Once it works and produces results, recognition can come from the top down: policy restrictions eased, supporting laws put in place, and resources directed toward it. When the two ends meet, the middle connects.

The driving force has never been some “leader” or “organization.” It is each person who thinks, “We cannot keep going like this,” and makes a small choice from wherever they stand.

After all this, you may still be asking: I am just an ordinary person. Why should I get involved?

Question 9 I am an ordinary person. What does any of this have to do with me?

A great deal. You are not a spectator. You are among the first to benefit.

Let me ask you something: where does your sense of worth come from right now?

The number on your payslip? Likes on social media? A promotion and a raise? Doing better than your former classmates?

Those things are becoming more and more fragile.

Your pay can vanish overnight. Your position can be cut overnight. Even “being better than other people” looks increasingly like a joke in the face of AGI. The harder you compete, the more exhausted you become; the more exhausted you become, the emptier you feel; the emptier you feel, the less you dare to stop. This is not your personal failing. The entire foundation of your sense of worth is collapsing.

For you, the most immediate significance of Civilization Leap is this: build on a different foundation.

Move from “finding worth through ownership, comparison, and overpowering others” to “finding worth through creating, protecting, connecting, and being needed.” That foundation is much more stable, because machines cannot take away your being needed, and neither can anyone else.

And this does not come from waiting. It comes from doing. Meaning is not something someone else promises you. It grows, little by little, through what you do. This is called “meaning emergence.” Help one person, and you gain one measure of meaning. Protect a community, and that meaning grows deeper. Meaning is not somewhere far away. It is within reach.

You do not need to wait for “Civilization Leap to happen” before acting. You can begin now. Find something you believe is worth doing and do it well. People will notice, and people will follow.

If this speaks to you, what should your first step be?

Question 10 If I really want to begin, what is the first step?

The first step is not to read the five-volume work or join an organization. It is to turn in a new direction.

Stop. Take an evening and ask yourself three questions:

First, will what I do now still matter in ten years? The question is not whether it makes money. It is whether, without me, something would disappear or become worse.

Second, is there something I do that makes me lose track of time? That may be where you have a contribution to make.

Third, is there a group of people around me whom I genuinely want to help? Not clients, not bosses, but people about whom you think, "They deserve better."

Where those three questions meet is your starting point.

Once you find it, set aside grand phrases such as "Civilization Leap." Do one small thing: keep a simple record of the meaningful work you are already doing. Who benefited, and how much? Who helped you, and whom did you help? It does not have to be perfect or systematic. A spreadsheet or a document will do.

That is contribution value in its earliest form. That is how you take part in Civilization Leap.

Then find your people. Policy researchers can find people putting ideas into practice in communities. Technical people can find people who need tools. People in businesses can find teams that want to get things done. You do not need many. Three to five people on the same wavelength can accomplish something worthwhile.

Civilization Leap is not about waiting for a grand beginning, or waking up one morning and announcing, "From today, we have entered a new civilization." It is countless small changes of direction: one person deciding to stop doing meaningless work, one team deciding to distribute resources differently, one community deciding to record everyone's contributions for itself.

When enough of these turns connect, that is the leap.

If you want to go deeper, the white paper offers more detail and the five-volume work digs further. But you have to walk the path yourself.

One more thing: the Ten Questions you are reading was completed with AI assistance. That is not ironic. It is proof. If a theory about the age of AGI could not even use AGI for its own introduction, then it would be a sham.

Civilization Leap Research Group | Introductory Text

Further reading: Contribution Value System White Paper | Civilization Leap Five-Volume Work

Further Reading and Collaborative Research

Where to Go from Here

The following entry points continue the natural sequence of questions raised by this paper without repeating the explanations of the system already given in the main text.

English links lead to corresponding webpages. Some destinations are public introductions or version-family overviews rather than complete English books. Unlinked source references do not establish the availability of a full English text.

This paper's webpage

[English document page](#)

[Canonical English entry](#)

01 Civilization Leap Research Papers First Reading Edition

Helps readers encountering the system for the first time identify the real-world problems, the central assessments, and where to read next.

[English webpage](#)

02 Civilization Leap Entry Pathway Map

Helps readers encountering the system for the first time identify the real-world problems, the central assessments, and where to read next.

[English webpage](#)

03 Civilization Leap A Public Introduction to the Ideas

Explains in language accessible to the public why Civilization Leap is necessary, what it must safeguard, and where it seeks to go.

[English webpage](#)

Additional reading The Underlying Principles of Civilization Leap

Additional reading: explore the underlying principles of Civilization Leap.

Supplementary English Reading Index

[English reading index](#)

Main Public Reading Entry Point

[Civilization Leap: Public Reading and Communication Entry](#)

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